

ACCOUNT OF THE JOURNEY
OF THE
RUSSIAN MISSION TO AFGHÁNISTÁN AND THE
KHÁNATE OF BUKHÁRA

IN
1878-79.

Compiled from the Journal of Dr. I. L. Yavórski, a mem-
ber of the Mission,

VOL. II.

Translated and condensed from the original Russian
by Major W. E. Gowan, Bengal Infantry.

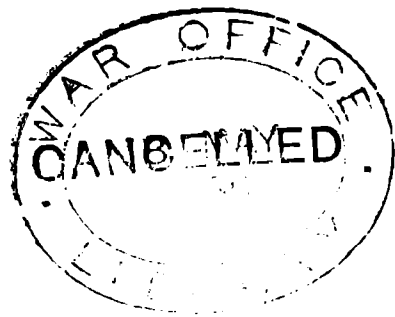


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1885.



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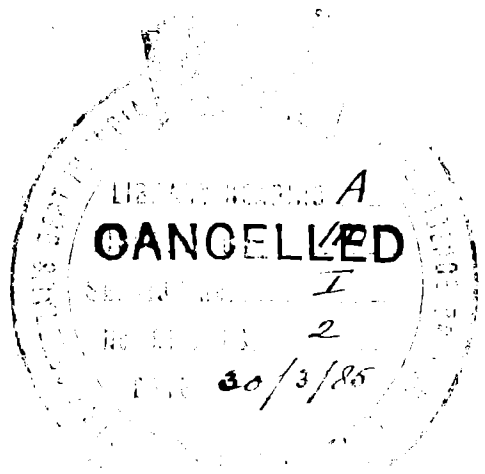
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Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.



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At the beginning of this Volume is a portrait of Sayad-Muzaffar-Khán, Amír of Bukhára.

N.B.—It has not been reproduced for the English edition.)

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AT the end of September (O. S.) 1878, an Imperial order was issued regarding the Russian Mission at Kábul. In virtue of this order, it was to remain in Afghánistán until special orders were sent for its withdrawal.

From General Stolaitoff, who was at Livádia at the time spoken of, hardly any tidings were received at Táshkand; for he had only once sent to General Kaufmann a short telegram, in which he told the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán that he was working day and night at the Afghán question, that he had recently been laid up with fever, and that he had got all right again. About his second journey to Kábul he never said a word; nor was anything known of it at Táshkand. It was, however, at this time sufficiently clear that General Stolaitoff would not come for the second time to Afghánistán, since Major-General N. O. Razgónoff had been nominated the chief of that portion of the Russian Mission that had been left at Kábul. Neither was anything known regarding my second journey to Afghánistán, or, at any rate, I had not received any sort of definite instructions on the subject.

Meanwhile, the Mission required the services of a doctor; for during the autumn season, which had set in, Kábul fevers had caused almost an epidemic of sickness amongst the entire *personnel* of the Mission.

This would not have mattered; for, where there is a supply of quinine, ordinary fevers are not at all terrible. But the matter was altogether of a worse kind. During the month of September an epidemic of typhus had broken out, and General Razgónoff had reported that one of the Cossacks of the escort had sickened with it. After one man had fallen ill, it might be that a second, and even a third, might do so, so that it was impossible to determine how it would all end, and to what limits the sickness amongst the members of the Russian Mission at Kábul might extend.

At the end of October (O.S.) General Razgónoff sent the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán a letter, in which, amongst other matters, he went into particulars regarding the difficult position in which the portion of the Russian Mission was placed, owing to its being left at Kábul without a doctor. In the same letter he expressed the personal desire of the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán, to have with him a Russian doctor, because the throat affection from which he was suffering was worse and his general health was very bad. He particularly complained about a cough, which constantly troubled him. General Razgónoff went on to say, quoting the Amír's words, that "those powders which the doctor-sáhib left here on his departure from Kábul had given him great relief from the paroxysms of coughing." And, therefore, the Amír desired General Razgónoff to bring to the knowledge of General Kaufmann his wish to have the services of a Russian doctor, *viz.*, myself. The result of this letter was an official invitation sent to me by the Governor-General to go and see him and talk about my fresh journey to Kábul. I hastened to comply with the summons, and I then received from General Kaufmann an order to prepare for a second journey to Afghánistán.

To prepare for this second journey, it was necessary that I should receive a much better equipment than during the summer months—(1) because this journey would last for a greater or less time, probably for an indefinite period, (2) because, on this occasion, I should have to follow the Bámián route during the winter season of the year and to cross a round dozen passes, some of which reached a height of from 12 to 13,000 feet above the sea. All the information which I could get about this journey showed me that from the middle of November to the month of April the mountain passes of the Hindu-Kush are covered with snow, and that the roads across them are extremely difficult and at times quite impracticable. In view of all this, it was necessary to be prepared as for a winter campaign and for snow-storms, which might detain me on the road during my passage of the mountains.

In addition to my own personal equipment for the road, I had to get ready a camp dispensary, and on this occasion one on a much larger scale than formerly, because the length of my stay in Afghánistán was not fixed (according to the calculations of the Táshkand authorities, I might be in Afghánistán for a whole year); and further, because it was proposed to make the sphere of my medical activity more extended than on the occasion of my first visit to Afghánistán. Thus, for example, it was now contemplated that I should play the part of sole sanitary physician to the whole Afghán army that had collected to do battle with the English troops.

It was also necessary to take steps to get together the requisite number of pack-animals. Bitter experience, obtained during my first journey, had convinced me that it was important to have light loads. Therefore, in considering the transport required for my journey, I calculated that the average weight of each horse's load should not exceed 4 *puds* (14½ lbs.). Loads of a greater weight in a journey over such a mountainous country as Afghánistán very soon tire an animal, and still sooner make it unfit for further work, by contusing or rubbing the skin off its back. However good a pack-saddle or an animal may be, if the load is too heavy, no back will stand the pressure and chafing imposed for several days together.

As regards my personal equipment, the money grant allotted to me for the second journey was nothing much to boast of. It is true that I now received 300 instead of 200 *roubles* (£30 instead of £20) for transport purposes, the latter being the sum given me for my first or summer journey; but from the former sum a deduction of 16 per cent. was made on account of sick and reserve transport, so that the apparent increase was almost fictitious. In order to give the reader an idea of the money grant allotted me for the various items of expenditure occasioned by my journey, I append below a statement drawn up in the treasury attached to the office of the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán. I think that the reader will not be very angry with me for placing before him these meagre office details.

Daily allowance from 13th (25th) November 1878 to 1st (13th) January 1879.

	<i>Roubles.</i>	<i>Kopaiikas.</i>	Equivalent in		
			£	s.	d.
Dr. Yavórski at 3 <i>roubles</i> a day ...	144	0	= 14	8	0
Assistant-Surgeon at 50 <i>kopaiikas</i> a day ...	24	0	= 1	8	0
Cossack Under-Officer at 50 <i>kopaiikas</i> a day ...	24	0	= 1	8	0
Nine Cossacks at 30 <i>kopaiikas</i> a day each ...	139	20	= 13	18	6
Interpreter at 1 <i>rouble</i> a day ...	48	0	= 16	0	0

Travelling allowances.

Assistant-Surgeon	80	0	= 8	0	0
Interpreter	100	0	= 10	0	0
For the purchase of 3 cow-hair felt-tents, or <i>yulameikas</i>	75	0	= 7	10	0
For the purchase of 16 pack-horses ...	800	0	= 80	0	0
For the purchase of forage for 16 pack horses	320	0	= 32	0	0
For unforeseen expenditure	300	0	= 30	0	0
For the hire of drivers	150	0	= 15	0	0
Total	2,204	20	= 220	8	6

Travelling allowances—contd.

	<i>Roubles. Kopaikas.</i>		Equivalent in		
			£	s.	d.
Loss calculated at 15 <i>per cent.</i> in changing 1,149 <i>roubles</i> and 20 <i>kopaikas</i> of credit notes into Bukhárán <i>tangas</i>	172 38	= 17	5	0
Total	2,376 58	=237	13	6
Add to the above—Loss incurred at the rate of 15 <i>per cent.</i> in changing paper <i>roubles</i> into Bukhárán silver under items Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, and 12 ...					

From this return it will be seen that the transport animals were provided for on a more liberal scale than were the men of the party; the smallness of the grant for the Assistant-Surgeon is especially striking to the eye. But I will only say on the subject that the allotment of the several sums had nothing whatever to do with me. The interpreter, on the supposition of course that he was to be a native, was evidently provided for in a more or less satisfactory manner. And yet I cannot refrain from stating that I could not find one competent and educated person who would consent to go to Afghánistán for the remuneration which had been set apart for the purpose. I was, therefore, obliged to start without an interpreter at all getting along as best I could with my own slight knowledge of Persian, coupled with the small amount of assistance afforded me by a *jigit* and an Orenburg Cossack, who could speak the Tatar dialect fairly well.

The Cossacks were equipped, comparatively speaking, very well. To the daily allowance, granted according to the above return, was added forage money from the particular portion of the army with which they happened to be serving at the time.

From the return the reader can see what was almost the whole of the *personnel* of my party. The Assistant-Surgeon placed under my orders was selected by myself from amongst the best attached to the hospitals in Turkistán. The Cossack escort joined me at Sámarkand.

I lost not a little time in my preparations for the journey. Furthermore, a good deal was lost needlessly, and not through my fault, owing to the habitual dilatoriness in doing business in the office of the Governor-General of Turkistán.

Meanwhile, it was expedient that I should use all dispatch. Every day, indeed every hour, needlessly spent by me at Táshkand, might have very unfavourable results in my journey across the mountains.

At last on the 15th (27th) November I received a bundle of credit notes (more credit notes!) and 400 Afghán rupees.

The Turkistán officials paid me the daily allowance of those members of the Mission who were at Kábul, and this money also took the form of credit notes. What the members of the Russian Mission could do with credit notes at Kábul, where not only were there no money-changing shops, but where no sort of idea existed about Russian paper currency, God alone knows. Perhaps, besides God, the Turkistán authorities had some knowledge on the subject; but they kept the same a secret from me.

General Kaufmann also made over to me a box for General Razgón-off containing various silver articles, which were intended as presents to various Afghán personages. I think that the reader may be interested in seeing a list of these presents, and it seems to me that he may have some reflections and draw certain conclusions therefrom. Here, then, is the bill.

*The Governor-General of Turkistán in account with D. N. Zakho.**

	Roubles.	Kopaikas.	Equivalent in		
			£	s.	d.
2 goblets at 16 roubles each	... 32	0	= 3	4	0
4 ditto at 15 each	... 60	0	= 6	0	0
1 sugar-basin	... 40	0	= 4	0	0
1 ditto	... 38	0	= 3	16	0
1 match-box	... 14	0	= 1	8	0
1 ditto	... 18	0	= 1	16	0
1 purse	... 23	0	= 2	12	0
1 cigarette-case	... 30	0	= 3	0	0
1 ditto	... 33	0	= 3	0	0
1 ditto	... 35	0	= 3	10	0
1 ditto	... 30	0	= 3	0	0
Total	... 353	0	= 35	6	0

*Signed by LARKIN
on behalf of D. N. ZAKHO.*

I will only observe that the selection of the articles intended as presents was not a happy one. For example, why present Afghán-Mussulmáns with goblets? Such a gift would be simply unfitting; for does not the Korán forbid the drinking of wine? Of what use, too, would be costly cigarette-cases, when Afgháns do not smoke cigarettes; for all, from the poor man to the Sirdár, smoke only the *kalián* or *chilam*?

On the 16th (28th) November, I had a farewell audience of General Von Kaufmánn, Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán. After breakfast he, to a certain extent, made me acquainted with the so-called "Afghán question," and with the part that Russia would play in it. He gave expression to very many weighty opinions regarding the struggle which had begun between the English and the Afgháns—opinions that were justified by results with almost mathematical accuracy. Speaking about my approaching journey, he pointed out how the war would more or less interfere with my passage through Afghánistán. General Kaufmánn said: "The difficulties of your journey and the general position of the Russian Mission in Afghánistán will increase, especially

* The largest trading house at Táshtkand.—*Author.*

from the time that the English begin warlike operations against the Afgháns."

In opposition to the general opinion expressed by the Russian Press, that the English were not ready for an immediate campaign in Afghánistán, and that they could not open warlike operations before the spring set in, General Kaufmánn said that by the time I reached Kábul the Anglo-Afghán war would be in full swing. He added to this that Russia could not afford the Amír, Shir Alí, the aid of her troops, notwithstanding the request to this effect which he had made in a letter to His Majesty the Russian Emperor. The Governor-General recommended that both I and all the members of the Russian Mission should exercise the most complete caution and restraint in our relations with the Afgháns.

The same day I received from General Kaufmánn authority to proceed towards Kábul without let or hindrance. The following was the text of the road-warrant, written in Russian and Persian :—

"The bearer of this, the Russian Doctor, Yavórski, has been ordered by me to proceed and join the Russian Mission at Kábul. With him are one Russian Assistant-Surgeon, ten Cossacks, an interpreter, and two Sárt *Jigils*.

"Dr. Yavórski is travelling through Bukhárán territory to Chushka-Guzár and Mazár-i-Sharif.

"I request all authorities along the route taken by Dr. Yavórski to give him every assistance and protection, so that he may get to Kábul without obstruction.

(Sd.) VON KAUFMÁNN, *General-Aide-de-Camp, 1st*
Governor-General of Turkistán."

On the 17th (29th) November, I left Táshkand for Sámarkand.

In driving over the barren steppe, I experienced on this occasion an altogether different feeling to that of which I had been sensible during the summer. Then I was suffocated with the unbearable heat. Now I had to wrap myself up in my fur-coat, as a protection from the severe cold, especially during the night.

All around, however, was the same lifeless landscape as during the summer ; the same skeletons of post-horses strewn here and there by the side of the road ; the same half fallen-in wells with brackish mud instead of water ; the same camels feeding in groups or alone in various parts of the steppe ; the same mirages ; the same monotonous jingling of the bells ; the same state of half-sleep.

(Here follows a long, drawn-out account of Dr. Yavórski's arrival at Jimbai, the last post-station before Sámarkand.)

Dr. Yavórski gives no description of the post road between Táshkand and Sámarkand ; for his thoughts appear to have been entirely taken up with the loss of his aneroid, pocket-case of surgical instruments, compass, several pounds of tea and sugar, &c., all of which he states were stolen from the vehicle in which he performed this portion of his journey.

(Text resumed.)

At Sámarkand, I diligently set to work to collect baggage animals ; and I now had to see to everything myself, and to look into the minutest

details of equipment. I bought all the baggage animals myself; I tried their paces, I looked at all their feet, I examined every tooth in their mouths—in a word, I turned myself, for the time being, into a licensed remount agent. On this occasion the animals were bought at very reasonable prices. All of them, too, were excellently suited to their work; for they got over the march without the slightest contusion, and this notwithstanding that the prices I paid for them were considerably below what were given during the summer. The average price which I now gave was 34 *roubles* (£3-8-0).

I paid particular attention to the tent equipage. It is evident that for the winter one cannot be satisfied with cloth tents, and so those of a felt material have to be procured. The question has then to be settled,—of what pattern shall the tents be made? Throughout Central Asia two kinds of felt tents are in use—viz., *yurtas* and *yulameikas*. Both kinds are very good; but they require either camel-carriage, or a large number of ponies for their transport; and of these animals I had not sufficient. Besides, to pitch them, many hands and much time are necessary: this constitutes a decided disadvantage when travelling, especially during the cold season of the year. I therefore designed tents of a special pattern. These were, in fact, *yulameikas* of large size. I procured 10 or 12 fairly strong sticks, each about seven feet long, and I fastened one of their ends together firmly with a strap. I then sharpened the free ends. The framework, on being set up in the ground, formed a cone of more than seven feet diameter. It now only remained to cover the framework with felt, and a tent was ready which could hold five men. Subsequent marching showed that the pattern was a good one. I made four tents of this kind. For the horses were bought warm felt *jhools*; and the pack-saddles purchased by me expressly for this occasion were also provided with felt *jhools*. Thus a horse was covered with *jhools*, both when marching and also at the halting-ground.

I had now to carry out the financial operation of exchanging Russian paper money into Bukhárán silver; and here I met with a very disagreeable surprise, for in the first transactions I learnt that a Russian paper *rouble* had lost in the Bukhárán market still more of its value than during my journey to Kábul in the summer season. Thus I found that a paper *rouble* would not fetch more than 60 *kopaikas** in Bukhárán silver. What, then, was I to do with the generous allowance for exchange calculated by the Táshkand authorities at 15 per cent. only, when I found that in changing the money entrusted to me I should lose 40 per cent.? Finding myself in such a difficulty, I could think of nothing better than to telegraph about the matter to Táshkand. I accordingly begged that they would either send me silver money, and above all Bukhárán coin, or else remit additional paper money to cover the extra loss of 25 *per cent.* to meet the more depressed rate of exchange. With such limited monetary resources as had been provided for my journey, an additional loss of 25 *per cent.* on account of exchange was a very material one.

* In other words, the value of the Russian paper *rouble* was about 1s. 3d. instead of 2 shillings.—*Translator.*

Meanwhile, I learnt at Sámarkand that the Táshkand treasury must have an amount of silver in Bukháran *tangas*; for some time previously the Amír of Bukhára had subscribed to the Society of the Red Cross 30,000 *tangas* in Bukháran silver.*

I had to wait a very long time for an answer to my telegram, and I had already decided on meeting the further loss of 25 *per cent.*, since it was imperative that I should effect an exchange of my paper money in some way or another. In Afghánistán, Bukháran *tangas* are readily accepted; but of Russian money the Afgháns have no sort of idea.

Meanwhile, all my arrangements for the march had been completed; and the only thing that kept me was the fact that no answer to my telegram had yet come from Táshkand. At last, on the 25th November (7th December), a favourable reply was sent; and I had never received anything more opportunely, for the hook-nosed Jewish money-changer had already discounted several hundreds of paper *roubles* with some Bukháran money when a messenger brought me the expected telegram, stating that silver would be sent me by the first post.

With regard to the native followers necessary for service with the transport, I had made very good arrangements, both in a material and moral sense. First of all, I had to seek out a skilful and trustworthy *caravan-báshi*, and to place him in charge of the whole of the transport, and at the same time to make him responsible for the native followers. I was not loth to engage as *caravan-báshi* the already tried Rajab-Ali-Khán, who had accompanied the Russian Mission to Kábul during the summer. But he was not at Sámarkand at the time; for he was serving at Kátta-Kurgán, under the orders of the officer commanding that district. That very day, however, the Zarafshán Circle officials telegraphed to Kátta-Kurgán as follows: "Send immediately, if possible, to Sámarkand *Jigit* Rajab-Ali, and another *Jigit* to go to Kábul this year."

The next morning both *Jigits* arrived at Sámarkand and appeared before me. I then learnt that Rajab-Ali, in spite of his wish to do so, could not go with me.

Under the orders of the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán, he was going to Badákhshán with various instructions for Colonel Matvaiyeff. I must here explain to the reader that, in September 1878, Colonel Matvaiyeff received orders from General Kaufmann to go to Badákhshán and Káfiristan. The object of this journey was purely scientific.† With him went the astronomer Schwarts, Sub-Lieutenant Trotski, 7 Cossacks, and 2 riflemen. As far as Baisun they were accompanied by the famous *sarant*, Mr. Russoff, who was so prematurely snatched from science and society by merciless Death.

Rajab-Ali had now to go in search of the above expeditionary party, of which no tidings had lately been received, and he was directed to seek them out at any cost.

I had thus to deny myself the services of this man, but I was so fortunate as to be able to supply his place by a still better person. As the

* The Russians appear to make up for the want of Rájahs by sending their subscription lists to the Khán of Khiva and the Amír of Bukhára, even when money is required for a semi-religious object.—*W. E. G.*

† No Russian expedition ever started in peace time which was not stated to bear this character.—*Translator.*

name of this *Jigit* will recur very frequently in the course of my narrative, and as he is far from being an ordinary personage, I will make the reader acquainted with him at once.

Nassir-Khán, whom I made my *caravan-báshi*, is an Afghán by birth, and his age at the time of which I am speaking was 35. He has many relatives in Afghánistán, and his mother, with several members of his family, lives permanently in one of the suburbs of the city of Kábul.

Up to the year 1869 he also lived at Kábul; and his withdrawal from that country was in all probability connected with the final defeat of Abdul-Rahmán and with his flight to Sámarkand.

On his withdrawal from Afghánistán, Nassir-Khán entered the Russian service, and carried out several commissions relating to frontier affairs. Thus, in the beginning of 1878, he went to Kábul with a letter from General Kaufmánn addressed to the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán.

This commission was carried out with his customary success. Nassir-Khán speaks four languages—Turki, Persian, Pushtu, and Hindustáni. Russian he as yet speaks badly, but he understands it well. He is a man whose kinsmen and acquaintances are to be found in every Central Asian town. Such a *caravan-báshi* was to me, therefore, a real treasure.

I further engaged the services of two other experienced *Jigits*. One of these men had already been to Kábul; the other had to fill the place of my interpreter, since a regular interpreter could not, as I have stated above, be procured for the sum assigned to me for the purpose. To these three *Jigits* I gave pay at the rate of 20 *roubles* (£2) a month with everything found except their horses. I further hired 3 drivers, to whom I paid 12 *roubles* (£1-4-0) a month, each with free rations and a mount on my spare horses.

The Cossacks, told off as my escort, were very well equipped. I devoted especial attention to seeing that they were all provided with the indispensable warm clothing, and I insisted that they should have felt foot-coverings and sheep-skin coats.

Amidst all the bustle of my preparations, I took every possible opportunity of enlarging my acquaintance with the Russian society of Sámarkand, and the impressions which I formed in so doing are only good. Even an American city could scarcely exceed its dimensions after so brief a period of existence. The place contains a college for boys and girls, a dispensary whereat medicines are issued to the native populace without payment, a club where certainly amusement and recreation are the objects of bringing people together and not of displaying the latest fashions, as is usually the case at our club meetings at St. Petersburg and Moscow, and other large centres. At the club at Sámarkand he who neither dances nor plays cards need not find the time hang heavily on his hands; for the reading-room contains a good supply of books, whilst papers and periodicals in the Russian, French, German, and even the English languages cover a huge table. I need not add that in the town there is a telegraph station and a branch of the State Bank, &c. I may, perhaps, be allowed to cordially wish this young, vigorous, and healthily constituted town further and still more rapid development.

Let European Russophobists say what they may, let the Russian flag continue to float on the ancient walls of Sámarkand, let Russian civilisation flourish—civilisation that knows no Western ambitious designs such as would suck the very life-blood out of the two colossal nations of Asia. Let this civilisation advance further and still further into the depths of the barbarous countries of the East to which it can bring nothing but prosperity !

The next $12\frac{1}{2}$ pages of this chapter are taken up with an account of the ancient history of Sámarkand, based apparently on the writings of Quintus Curcius, Strabo, Grigorieff, Moorcroft, Yule (*Geography of the Valley of the Oxus*), Wood (*Journey to the source of the Oxus*), Stanislas Julien (*Mémoires sur les contrées occidentales par Hiouen Thsang*), Ibn-Haukál, Amédée Joubert (*Géographie d'Edrisi*), Vámbéry (*Trans-Oxania*), Marco-Polo (*Journey through Tartary*), Défrémery et Dr. Sanguinetti (*Voyages d' Ibn Batoutah*), Clavico, Pavet de Courteille (*Mémoires de Babar*), &c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER II.

FROM SÁMARKAND TO THE AMU-DARIA.

Departure from Sámárkand—Road over the Kára-Tapa pass—Ali again—Shahr-i-Sabz—Meeting with the Amir of Bukhára—He becomes my patient—From the history of Shahr-i-Sabz—I continue my journey—My correspondence with Colonel Matvaiyeff on his return from Badákshán—I write a letter to the Lúináb of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*—I cross the Amu and arrive at Mazár-i-Sharif.

Two days before my departure from Sámárkand, the local Russian authorities sent letters to the Beg of the town of Shaar through which my route lay, and to the Lúináb, Khush-Dil-Khán. The purport of these letters was to acquaint both the Beg of Shaar and the Governor of Afghán-Turkistán of my approaching passage through their respective territories on my way to Kábul.

At 5 P.M., on the 27th November (9th December) 1878, as the twilight was perceptibly setting in, and a whitish mist was gradually taking possession of the low-lying portions of the Zarafshán valley, a long line of pack-horses, forming my transport-train, slowly stretched along the Abramoff *boulevard*. Soon, however, we left behind us the citadel and the Russian town. To the right lay the building and shady garden of the Sámárkand Section; to the left rose up the blue cupola of the tomb of Taimur. For a distance of from 5 to 6 *versts* ($3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles) we had to ride through the tortuous, and here and there very narrow, streets of the native city. Several times the packs fell off and the horses proved obstinate, lashing out to the side of the road in their fright at some passing cart, whilst a good deal of the first hours of our march were taken up in the readjustment of the loads of our baggage animals.

When at length, after innumerable halts and reloadings, we passed out of the limits of the town, the full moon had risen well above the horizon, and was illuminating the vast and level steppe with a powerful and yellow light.

A fresh wind, blowing from the snow-filled gorges of the Sámárkand range, which shuts in the southern horizon of the steppe, imparted a considerable amount of vigour to both men and animals. By degrees, with every step in advance, the mountains, which towered directly before us, rose up clearer and clearer out of the blue haze enshrouding them, and their white snow-clad summits brightly sparkled in the full light of the moon.

After a little time the wind increased, and it became quite cold. The Cossacks, who had been riding in their shirts and blouses only, were soon obliged to wrap themselves up in their grey great-coats. Then the horsemen became sensible of the coldness of the stirrup-irons:* a cold current of wind found its way up the wide sleeves of the great-coat and

* I had in reserve a pair of wooden stirrups of the pattern generally in use amongst the Kirghiz. I had procured them for the passage of the snow-clad passes of the Hindu-Kush.—*Author*.

through the open web of the under-coat, whilst a little later on the wind began to chill the knees in spite of the *chambars** enveloping them.

I had arranged that we were to halt for the night at the village of Kara-Tapa, † distant 30 *versts* (20 miles) from Sámarkand. Whilst at 10 *versts* (6½ miles) distant from the place I have named, I sent on a *Jigit* to prepare a place for our camp, to get ready the tea and our supper, and to do whatever else might be necessary.

Throughout the distance we had already traversed our route had lain over an open and steppe country. At last it turned into a gorge, where, in the distance, flickered the fires of Kara-Tapa. When we reached this village everything was ready for us, and a hospitable *caravanserai* took us in into its gloomy recesses, which to the chilled traveller, however, appeared to be a welcome haven. It was now about 10 P.M., and we were all soon in a dead sleep induced by fatigue.

The next day we had to make a very long and difficult march from the village of Kara-Tapa to the village of Koinár, about 30 *versts* (20 miles). This distance is about equal to the width of the Sámarkand mountain range in this particular meridian. The road crosses the pass of Kara-Tapa or Takhta-Kara-Cha.

At first the track lies through the long gorge of Kátta-Sai, along the sides of which there are here and there small patches sown with winter crops of grain. Occasionally are seen the huts of mountaineers,—here seeming to cling on to the overhanging cliffs, there rising up from the very edge of a precipice. Sheaves of clover placed on the roofs of these huts give us a very attractive insight into the domestic life of the inhabitants. Below roars and boils a noisy torrent with a border of emerald green vegetation, the stream having not yet been arrested by the ice bands of winter.

Here the track becomes more steep and rocky, and soon reaches the frozen slopes of the mountains, the cliffs above being already covered with a coating of snow. The last *verst* (¾ mile) before the summit of the pass is reached is especially difficult. The snow was very deep, but that obstacle could be surmounted some how or another. Much worse, however, was the track in those places where the stream had overflowed and the ground had frozen over, presenting a continuous surface that was smooth, slippery, and like a mirror. The pack-horses constantly slipped and stumbled, and therefore heavily and slowly, and step by step, was this stretch of road got over. It was well that I had thought of having the horses shod in the Russian way. Thanks to the sharp points of these shoes, the animal's foot secured a greater hold and steadiness than if it had been shod in the native manner, *i.e.*, with nails flush with the foot instead of slightly projecting. In spite of this superiority of the Russian pattern of shoe over the native, the natives of Central Asia very unwillingly adopt it. Indeed, on the contrary, the Russians usually take into use shoes of the native pattern. This apparently strange circumstance is explained by the following reasons:—

1. The Russian pattern of shoe can only be turned out, as a rule, in a forge and under a great heat. This circumstance is a difficulty to the

* Leather breeches such as are in general use amongst the Turkistán troops.—*Translator*.

† The height of this village above sea level is, according to Schwarts' measurements, 2,720 feet. Astronomical position, according to Zamochnikoff—E. long. 38° 58' 26"; N. lat. 40° 5' 17".—*Author*.

native of Central Asia, for on the steppe and in the mountains of his own country he can very seldom come across a forge. Since, too, the shoe which a native uses is usually made of very thin plates, shoeing is practicable without heating the metal, so that it can be carried out at any halt, and even during a march.

2. The hoofs of native horses shod with shoes of the Russian pattern very quickly get split, and of this fact I became convinced in the course of my onward journey.

However this may be, on the particular occasion of which I am speaking, shoes of the Russian pattern stood me in good stead.

During the whole of the ascent of the Takhta-Kara-Cha pass, a very severe snow-storm was going on, so that the occasional *archas* (juniper trees) met with on either side of the road were covered with a coating of snow, under the weight of which their flexible branches were bent almost to the ground.

We were now at the highest point of the Takhta-Kara-Cha pass.* Granite boulders and slabs were piled in disorder one above the other. One of these rocks, which stands quite apart from the rest, involuntarily attracts the attention of the traveller, and there is a legend concerning it. Of course popular tradition asserts that this rock could have been brought from the valley below by no one else but the favourite of Central Asian myths and story-tales—Ali himself. Are not the finger marks of the holy Caliph imprinted on the stone?

The devout Mussulmán will, therefore, never pass it by without offering up a prayer. It is nothing to him that the legend does not square with local geology, for in the valley below there are no granite layers. There the principal formations are schist and clay, whilst Ali's particular rock is an exact counterpart of those lying around it, on the summit of the pass, in innumerable quantities. It is no affair either of the said devout Mussulmán that Ali was never in the locality; indeed, that during his life time not one single pioneer of Muhammadanism ever reached these particular mountains and valleys.

I halted for some minutes on the summit of the pass, for the pack-horses were greatly in need of rest. The snow-storm had suddenly come to an end, and the sun was clearly lighting up the serrated crests of the cliffs around, covered as they were with the purest snow.

From this point there opens out a splendid view of the Shahr-i-Sabz valley, which looks to the eyes of the spectator like a bay in a coastless ocean of the Turanian lowlands, bounded on the north by the Sámar-kand mountains, and on the south-east by the western spurs of the His-sár range. Its eastern corner is shut in by the massive mountain group of Hazrat-Sultán, the lofty grey summits of which tower above the veritable sea of peaks which lie around it on all sides. As we gazed on it, the whole valley was lit up by the sun's rays. As if on the palm of the hand, stretched in front of us, rose up the towns of Kitáb and of Shaar, and to the east of them again Yakka-Bágh, all three surrounded by a wide belt of shady gardens. Several hundred paces to the side of the crest of the pass there is a point from which can be seen

* The absolute height of the Takhta-Kara-Cha pass is 5,180 feet, according to Schwarts. Colonel Matvaiyeff gives almost the same figures for the height of this pass, viz., 5,200.—*Author*.

at the same moment the beautiful valleys of Zarafshán and of Shahr-i-Sabz. One can, therefore, imagine the size and grandiose landscape presented to the view !

On descending from the pass, we rode through a deep gorge at the bottom of which rushes a bright stream, which is here and there arrested in its course by dams and dykes formed by the *débris* of fallen rocks.

All at once on one of the heights, which at this point have very soft outlines, there appeared a mounted figure which rode several paces forward to meet us ; then stopped to gaze, and looked about as though it was inhaling the air around with up-turned nose ; then it turned the horse sharply round, and like an arrow shot back whence it came. The flowing folds of the horseman's *khalat* quickly disappeared behind the projection of the nearest mound.

I could not understand what this apparition meant ; but, as soon as I perceived on the road in front of us a group of motley-clad Bukhárans, the matter was explained.

On catching sight of me, the group put their horses into a gallop, and rapidly rode up to me. They then jumped off their horses, and evidently the leading personage amongst them ran towards my horse, and, giving utterance to salutations, raised his hand to clasp mine. He turned out to be the son of the Beg of Kitáb, and he had been sent by order of the Amir of Bukhára expressly to meet and welcome the "Doctor-Tura."

He immediately informed me of his mission, adding that a place for our lodging had already been prepared near the village of Koinár.

The next day I rode the 15 *verst*s (10 miles) which separate the village of Koinár from the town of Shaar. On the way we had to ford the fairly copious stream of Ak-Daria, one of the affluents of the Káshka-Daria. On the north bank of the Ak-Daria stands a fairly large settlement, which bears the very strange name of *Urus-Kishlák*, or "the Russian village." As at the present time this village does not contain a single Russian inhabitant, it is to be supposed that, in former days, there were Russian prisoners in it. This idea is, to a certain degree, supported by the testimony of Yefremoff,* who fell into captivity amongst the Kirghiz towards the end of the last century, and by the fact that slavery was rife in Bukhára for a period extending over many years. However this may be, at the clay walls of the *Urus-Kishlák* was the *élite* of the Bukháran population awaiting the arrival of the "Urus-Doctor," or "Hakím-Tura," as it is expressed in the jargon of Central Asia. I had scarcely reached this group of decked-out horse men seated on their impetuous steeds, when there was a chorus of salutations, and several pairs of hands were stretched out to shake mine. As a token of special respect and esteem, natives of Central Asia seize not one hand, but two. Sometimes too, after taking hold of the hand, they will press it to the heart ; and when a person of the ruling family has to be saluted, his hand is carried to the forehead.

I rode on, having on the one side Shaadi-Beg *Udaichi*, and on the other Abdul-Khalil-Bii. At the present time, the first-named presents in his person in the Khánate of Bukhára the same position that in Russia

* Phillip Yefremoff.—*Journey to the Kirghiz steppe, Bukhára, Khiva, Persia, Tibet, and India, 3rd Edition* : Kazán, 1811.—*Author*.

is known as "the eyes and ears of the State." Behind us followed Dur-Bin-Bii, Yakhshi-Beg, and others, the whole retinue being composed of near adherents of the Amir.

The garrison of Kitáb* was under arms, and was drawn up at the citadel with flags unfurled. As I rode up to the gateway, the standards were lowered, the drums rolled out, and the band struck up a march. In response to the honour shown me by the Bukhárán authorities, I dismounted and passed through the gateway on foot. Here I was met by the Beg of Kitáb himself, Abdul-Gafár-Inák. He is a lean old man of something under 60 years of age. His body is infirm, but his eyes are bright and full of fire. After the usual words of welcome, he led me to his audience hall. Inside the fort (which, however, vainly bears such a threatening title, for its walls are crumbling and in ruins, and on the sound portions of the ramparts there is not a single gun) in the centre of a smoothly-swept courtyard, beside a large reservoir, rises a building of large size. This contains but one room, and in this there is but one carpet which covers the entire length and breadth of its floor. There is no furniture, and the walls are bare; but the ceiling, which is adorned by two miniature cupolas, is painted in Central-Asian taste.

At the *Dastar-Khán*, the loquacious Beg chattered with me on various subjects for upwards of an hour. Amongst other things he said that the Amir of Bukhára had been staying at Shaar for a long time, and that he would probably not leave it for Bukhára very soon.

This statement rather surprised me, for, as a rule, the Amir spends the winter at Bukhára, and goes to Shahr-i-Sabz (Shaar) only for the summer months. What, then, had induced the Amir to make such a radical change in his arrangements? It may, of course, be supposed that the intimate private relations between the Russian authorities and the Afghán Government had induced the Amir to make such a long stay in the "Green City," where he would be *au courant* with events, and receive time-notice of political news of interest. To this must be added a statement of the respected old man, that, when the letter from the authorities at Sámarkand regarding my journey through their country reached the Bukhárán officials, the Amir was at his native town, Chirakchi; but when he received this letter, he went back to Shaar, and immediately arranged for the stately reception which I had experienced, and which took me altogether by surprise. On setting out from Sámarkand, I had purposed to go as rapidly and as quietly as possible through Bukhárán territory; but now it was evident that I must abandon all ideas of a modest and plain progress, for it was imperative that I should pay a visit to the ruler of Bukhára.

The infirm Beg of Kitáb heartily besought me to pass the night under his hospitable roof; but as Shaar was distant only 8 *versts* ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles), I, after a short rest, renewed my onward journey.

The road between Kitáb and Shaar runs through dense gardens, which are interrupted only to give place to fields with tobacco and with cotton. But the condition of these gardens was not such as I had seen in August of the same year on my return with General Stolaitoff from Kábul.

* According to Schwarts, the height of Kitáb above the sea is 1,800 feet.—*Author*.

My route took the form of a triumphal procession. At the tail of my cavalcade was a mass of horsemen rivalling each other in the beauty of their steeds and the varied colours of their dress. Here and there along the road stood crowds of natives rejoicing in the free spectacle. The small band of Cossacks, with their Berdians slung across the shoulder, especially interested them. Here they saw the *Urus-Kazáks*, who had so recently been their brave, but at the same time their magnanimous, foes.

During this march we had again to ford several times the various channels of the *Káshka-Daria*.

There then came in sight the fortress of Shaar,* the birthplace of Tamerlane, the conqueror of the world.

I now entered the gates and passed through several precincts: to the right stands a mosque which was probably at one time celebrated for its grandeur, but which now recalls its former greatness only by its broken tiles and by its dilapidated and large and lofty cupola. Over the lintels of the doors, and also on the cornice of the cupola, fragments of an Arabic inscription are still preserved.

After passing through a roofed-in bazaar, I found myself in the quarters provided for me. They were those which General Stolaitoff and I occupied in August. There was the same verandah, the same irrigation canal, the same out-houses. And yet everything was not the same. On the occasion of our former visit, the country round was bright with flowers; now there were none at all. The Bukhárans are bad florists, and they only cultivate annuals which, at the particular season of the year of which I am speaking, have died down.

At 10 A.M., on the 30th November (12th December), the *Udaichi*, with the officers of the Amir's household, awaited me at the door of my quarters to say that we ought now to go to an audience with the ruler of Bukhára. The procession through the city to the citadel, in which the Amir was living, was attended with the usual ceremonies. The *Udaichi* led the way, but in front rode three horsemen with gilt sticks in their hands. On the *Rigistán* (an open space in front of the gates of the citadel) was drawn up a large guard-of-honour who saluted as I approached. As I passed through the gates of the citadel, the first object which caught my eye was the ruined *Ak-Serai*, the once famous palace of Taimur. Of its once majestic beauty one can to a certain degree even now judge by two half-broken towers which, though partially in ruins, still rear themselves aloft.

The bright-tiled face of these towers has in many places become broken, and the graceful columns which form the sides are much dilapidated, whilst the elegant ornamentation in strictly Arabic style is now in a very pitiable condition. Of the gigantic cupola which once crowned the portico nothing has remained,† and there is not even the sign of a lintel between the two towers.

* The height of Shaar above sea-level is 1,800 feet. Astronomical observations by Schwarts place its position as follows:—

North latitude ...	...	...	39° 3' 9"	
East latitude ...	...	...	36° 29' 19"	—Author.

† Babar Mirza in his Memoirs thus speaks of this cupola: "It is said that in the whole world there is not a cupola of this height, and it is supposed that it exceeds in height even the cupola of the mosque of Khozru to the south of Bághlád."—*Babar*, 1 cit., Vol. I, page 106 —Author.

Now an ordinary wall of mud connects the two majestic ruins, and in this wall have been inserted two ill-constructed gateways.

The whole of my following, and also my Cossack escort, remained outside the gates. Towards the gate of the palace I was only accompanied by the Jigit-interpreter and the *Udaichi*. Before us lay a vast court-yard flagged with smoothly-worn burnt-bricks, and apparently cleanly kept. This was shut in by a large building of a perfectly plain style of architecture, and into this building we directed our steps.

The *Udaichi* went on in front, looking from side to side in a half-suspicious and timid manner, as though he were afraid of some hidden ambuscade. The nearer he got to the steps of the building, the more timid he grew, bending low at every step, whilst at the door he positively trembled. Here he made a sign to me to stop; then, having peeped for a moment inside the door, he threw his whole body backwards, and in a whisper invited me to advance once more. With the interpreter I entered the room, but the *Udaichi* remained at the doorway.

On an ordinary chair in the centre of a large room sat the Amir of Bukhára. As I drew near, he got up, but never advanced a single step to meet me. Having given me his hand, he made a sign to me to take my place on an ordinary stool placed close to his own chair. My interpreter dropped silently down upon the carpet.

A lively conversation then ensued between the Amir and myself for nearly half an hour, and during this the Amir astonished me with his talkativeness. To my questions as to the state of the roads through Bukháran territory, he gave me complete answers, and he added that both in Afghánistán and across the mountains of the Hindu-Kush the roads were very good and still free from snow. This and other information he had just received from a trading caravan that had lately arrived from Afghánistán. On my expressing some misgivings as to the further continuance of such splendid weather as we had been enjoying for the previous two months, the Amir quieted my fears by saying that, according to the opinion of his older subjects, the weather promised to remain good for a longer period yet.

At the close of the audience, the Amir spoke to me about his ailment, and invited my professional advice and assistance. And I, of course, very readily tendered my services to him. The Amir's indisposition seemed to be of the nature of gastric fever, so that in the course of a short time after the audience I sent him the needful remedies.

After the audience with the Amir was over, I paid a visit to Alam-Beg *Parvanáchi*,* the Beg of Shaar. He is a strongly-built and active man of middle age. What surprised me at his house was the character of the *dastar-khán*. Now, of course, I am in no way surprised

* *Parvanáchi* is the third degree of rank at the Court of the Amir of Bukhára: the first is the *Kush-Begi* or Treasurer, the second is the *Diván-Begi*; the fourth is the *Inák*, &c. None of these degrees of rank are inferior to those which obtain in Russia. The various offices at the Bukháran Court are held irrespective of a particular rank.—*Author*.

Some of their appellations are *Divan-Begi*, the highest, and *Don-báshi*, the lowest (*báshi* means head or chief), *Toksaba*, *Isha-bashi*, *Bii*, *Dátkha*, *Yuz-bashi*, *Mirza-bashi*, *Churagassi*, *Jai-batchi*, *Karaul-Begi*, *Mirakhor*, *Bakaul* or Cook and *Khazinátchi* (*Khazánchi*) or treasurer. The *Sharvadar* is the officer who stands nearest the *Bek*, and presents his food: the *Darban*, one who always stands at the door to receive orders, which he passes on to the *Shagaul*, whose duty it is to see them carried out; and, lastly, the *Ullaitchi*, the Master of the Ceremonies, who introduces dignitaries and visitors.—[*Russian Central Asia* by Dr. Henry Lansdell, vol. II, page 186, footnote.]

either with the number or the variety of the dishes, &c., for I have since had an extensive acquaintance with Bukhárán hospitality, which seems to amount almost to national ambition.

The repast put before me on this occasion was served in a Russian style. On a table covered with a Russian table-cloth was arranged a table-service, almost every article of which was of Russian manufacture. The knives and forks were not perhaps of *Pavlovski** make, but the crockery and China were of Russian manufacture. But what surprised me more than anything else was the fact that the Bukhárán dignitaries, who were present at the repast, were so skilled in the use of the fork and spoon. It was an interesting sight to see these well-bred Uzbaks busy with their spoons and forks, notwithstanding that a year before they had no idea of any other way of eating than by using all five fingers. If I do not make a mistake in the religious *domestic* economy of the Mussulmán world—the *Shariát*,—the faithful are not counselled to eat otherwise than by using the five fingers of the hand.

When I left the quarters of the *Parvanáchi*, at the foot of the steps stood a beautiful horse, black as a raven's wing. Round his neck was a bridle mounted with turquoises, and on his back a brocaded *jhool*. This animal was a gift from the Amir to the doctor or *Hakím-Turá*.

In the evening several natives came to me afflicted with various diseases. Since my camp dispensary was of considerably larger proportions than on the occasion of my first visit, I could fully satisfy the wants of those who sought my professional advice. The natives began to know me so well that they even applied to me when suffering from venereal disorders.

The next day, *i.e.*, on the 1st (13th) December, I continued my onward journey notwithstanding the requests of the *Bey* of Shaar to stay with him for some days. It was necessary, however, that I should hasten on and take advantage of the beautiful weather. It was so warm as to make it quite difficult to believe that it was now December. At 1 P.M. the temperature stood at 80° F. in the shade, whilst at 7 A.M. it never went below 40.

Our route lay *viá* Yár-Tapa, Káltar-Minár, Kara-Khova, and “the Iron Gates,” and so on to the Shir-ábád road. But before I bring the reader to a road which is now well known, I will say a few words about the valley of the “Green City,” *i.e.*, of Shahr-i-Sabz.

Shahr-i-Sabz, the ancient Kesh, gives its name not only to a town, but to the whole of a valley along the upper course of the Káshka-Daria. To the north this valley is bounded by the not very high, but very loftily situated and majestic, Sámarkand range. On the south-east of the Shahr-i-Sabz valley run down the most easterly spurs of the massive Hissár range, with the peak called Hazrat-Sultán capped with eternal snow. Towards the west, and partly towards the south-west, the territory of which I am speaking is shut in by no mountain range, so that it eventually runs into the Aral-Caspian depression. But in an administrative sense the Shahr-i-Sabz district is bounded in the directions above-named by the Chirakchi *begship* on the west, and by that of Guzár on the south-west.

Thus the area of the Shahr-i-Sabz valley is approximately 1,400 square *versets* (930 square miles). Almost in the centre of this extent

* The name of a firm or factory of repute in Russia.—*Translator*.

of country flows the fairly copious Káshka-Daria river, the chief feeders of which issue from the Hazrat-Sultán group. Within the Shahr-i-Sabz valley lie the towns of Kitáb, Shaar, and of Yakka-Bágh; and in addition to these are scattered here and there numerous villages. The population of the Shahr-i-Sabz valley may be computed at from 30 to 35,000 families. Thus it is evident that the locality has a fairly dense population.

Uzbaks of the Kenneges tribe comprise the bulk of the population of the Shahr-i-Sabz valley. It is known that formerly, and not so very long ago, this tribe was a sub-section of the Mángit clan, whence springs the ruling dynasty of Bukhára.

Political circumstances at the close of the past and the first half of the present century so shaped themselves, that the Kenneges tribe became altogether detached from the Mángit, and is now at open enmity with it. The Kenneges tribe is divided into five branches—Kairasali, Tarakli, Achamili, Chekhut, and Abakhli. All five branches are mixed up in the several towns and villages of the *begship* of Shahr-i-Sabz, and some of the members of each lead a nomad kind of life. Still it may be stated that the southern portion of the *begship* is peopled chiefly by Abakhlis, the western by Chekhuts, and the northern by Taraklis. The chief occupation of all, even including the nomads, is agriculture. The number of nomads does not exceed 3,000 families, who till small plots of ground, but they have no system of irrigation. This kind of cultivation is, to a certain extent, developed in the southern parts of the Shahr-i-Sabz *begship*.

The crops raised comprise wheat, which is of a very high quality; rice, which is renowned throughout Turkistán; barley, millet, *jugára* (*sorghum*), *kunjut* (*sesamum*), hemp, tobacco, cotton, and lucerne, which is cut 5 or 6 times in the course of the same year. The cotton of the country is not so good as that which is raised in Bukhára, but the tobacco is reckoned to be the best in Turkistán. If, however, any other sort can be said to rival it, it is the kind grown only about Kárshi.

The Uzbaks readily take to horticulture and market-gardening. Thus they raise large quantities of melons, water-melons, pumpkins, carrots, onions, &c., &c. The local melons are of very good flavour, but the same thing cannot be said of the water-melons. In the gardens are raised both fruit and timber-giving trees. Of the former kinds there are the following:—Peach, apricot, pear, pomegranate, almond, walnut, vines, cherry, plum, and many others. The vine of the country is of an exceptionally good kind, and there are no less than 15 sorts of grape in the *begship* of Shahr-i-Sabz. Amongst them I noticed one of remarkably large size. The timber trees are the following:—*Karagáleh* (dwarf elm), poplar, willow, *jida* (a sort of oleander). In the neighbouring mountains there are the *archa* (a sort of cypress) and the pistachio-nut tree.

The crops, both of grain and of fruit, are very large in the *begship* of Shahr-i-Sabz. Thus wheat yields 15-fold, rice from 25 to 30, *sorghum* (*jugára*) from 50 to 100, millet 200-fold. As already stated, large quantities of grapes are raised; but they are grown for consumption alone, and not, of course, for wine-pressing. Fresh grapes can be had throughout the year in the *begship* of Shahr-i-Sabz. Sericulture is carried on, but within very confined limits. Indeed, this *begship* may best be described as a purely agricultural country.

There are other nationalities besides Uzbaks in the *begship* of Shahr-i-Sabz. Before all other, it is, of course, necessary to make mention of the original inhabitants of the country, the Tájiks, of whom there are a considerably less number than there are of Uzbaks. The Tájiks are chiefly collected in the towns and larger villages. Agriculture is as strange an occupation to them as trade is to the Uzbaks. A Tájik is always a buyer or a seller, and, generally speaking, a broker. Even cattle-breeding he holds in aversion.

There are very few Jews in the *begship* of Shahr-i-Sabz, but those that there are compete with the Tájiks, both as traders and as artisans. There are, too, a small number of Persians, the sad survivors of that system of slavery which, until so recently, existed in this country in all its force. These Persians are either agriculturists or artisans. The carts (*arabas*), which are but very occasionally met with, are the sole reminders of that vast Mussulmán horde which marched into Turkistán in the 8th century of our era. In the bazaars of the town of Shaar (Shahr-i-Sabz) are occasionally met with Indians with a typical cast of countenance and a red dab of paint on the forehead. Such persons are invariably money-changers. Last of all, it is necessary to make mention of the Kirghiz, the miserable remains of the once great *Urta-Yuz*, or "Central Horde." These people nomadise in the southern parts of the *begship*.

Thus the trade of Shahr-i-Sabz is, as I have already observed, chiefly in the hands of Tájiks and of Jews; but, as might be expected, that trade is not largely developed. The principal articles of export from the *begship* are various kinds of grain, rice, and fruit. Cattle too are also exported. The imports are tea, sugar, cloth, Bukháran and Russian manufactured goods, silk, dyes, copper, and sulphur. Trade is carried on with Bukhára and with Sámarkand; but the trade relations with the valley of the Amu-Daria are not extensive.

The precious metals are also imported from the Khánate of Bukhára, though the issue of coin in the *begship* of Shahr-i-Sabz is of very recent date. Khokand and Shaar *tillas* are in general use in the course of trade; but there is no local coin of this standard.

The animal world is represented by the same sort of beasts as are to be met with throughout Turkistán. Thus in the mountains there are bears, wolves, foxes, martens, wild boars, and tigers.

The climate of the valley of Shahr-i-Sabz is very mild. Notwithstanding the fact that this valley is separated from that of the Zarafshán by the distance of a few hours only, the difference in the climate of both these valleys is very considerable. Without doubt this circumstance arises from the fact that on the north the Shahr-i-Sabz valley is sheltered by the Sámarkand range, and consequently the north cold winds do not reach it at all. Besides which, its elevation is somewhat lower than that of the Zarafshán valley. Let us compare certain points. Sámarkand lies at a height of 2,150 feet above the sea, whilst the height of Shaar is only 1,800 feet. Again, the height of Kátta-Kurgán is 1,370 feet, whilst that of Kárshi is 820 feet. Of course, the difference in the relative altitudes which I have noted is not great; but, taken in connection with the defensive mountain barrier, it plays not a small part in the general character of the climate. Winter at Shahr-i-Sabz can scarcely be said to exist. The period of the rainy

season lasts through January and February, and in the latter month the fruit trees begin to throw out buds. At this time of the year the gardens are shaded with such magnificent foliage, and the roofs of the houses are surrounded with such a variety of colours, that the circumstance has led to the town of Shaar being styled *Shahr-i-Sabz*, or the "green and flourishing town."

[The next five pages of this chapter are devoted to a review of the history of the *Shahr-i-Sabz begship*, in the course of which Dr. Yavórski quotes the following references:—*Babar's Memoirs*, Vol. I, page 106; Mirkhond *History of the Early Kings of Persia*, translated by Shea, page 333; *Mémoires sur les contrées occidentales*, Vol. I, page 22; Vambéry's *Trans-Oxania*, Vol. I, page 47, Russian edition, 1873; Aminoff *Short Historical Details concerning Shahr-i-Sabz* in Issue No. 2 of the *Turkistán Annual*; Mir-Abdul-Karím *Histoire de l'Asie Centrale*, pages 246-48.]

(Text resumed.)

After the occupation of Sámarkand by the Russian troops in 1868, the inhabitants of *Shahr-i-Sabz* tried, by means of a sudden attack, to regain possession of that city; but a handful of Russian troops, who were occupying the citadel, beat off every attack of the warlike mountaineers.

In the autumn of the same year, Abdul-Malik-Khán, known as Kátta-Turá, eldest son of the Bukháran Amir, succeeded in raising the standard of revolt at *Shahr-i-Sabz*, and war once more raged between Bukhára and the *begship* of *Shahr-i-Sabz*. This war proved to be a very unfortunate one for the Amir of Bukhára. Indeed, he found himself in such a critical position that he resolved to invoke the aid of his recent enemy—Russia. Now Russia has never failed in the quality of magnanimity, and so she shed the blood of her soldiers for the interests of Bukhára—interests that were quite immaterial to herself.

Under Kátta-Turá's leadership, the people of *Shahr-i-Sabz* obtained possession of Yakka-Bágh, Chirakchi, Jám, and even of Kárshi; but when the Russian troops advanced, they had to retire on their own inaccessible city.

Shahr-i-Sabz subsequently passed through the last days of her rebellious freedom. She owed a debt* to Russia for the part she played in attacking Sámarkand in 1868, and it was essential, therefore, that Russia should requite that debt, and free the southern frontier of her *Turkistán* province from the constant inroads that were planned at *Shahr-i-Sabz*. Accordingly, in 1870, a detachment was sent under General Abramoff to occupy the "Green City." The strength of this detachment scarcely amounted to 2,000 men; a portion of it was sent to Jám to turn the Sámarkand range, and the rest crossed the Kára-Tapa pass. The troops left Sámarkand on the 7th (19th) August, and by the 14th (26th) idem the *Shahr-i-Sabz oasis* was in their hands. Kitáb fell to a night attack delivered on the 13th-14th (25th-26th) August. The affair was a very hot one, as the figures of the Russian losses show, *viz.*, killed 34, wounded 116. The losses sustained by the Russians at the capture of the fort of Ura-Tapa alone exceed the above figures. On the latter occasion the number of our killed and wounded amounted to 227.† But we lost more soldiers in killed during the storming of Kitáb than in any of our fights in Central Asia.

* The above very disinterested interference is thus explained.—*Translator*.

† Kostenko's *Turkistán*, Vol. III, page 299: St. Petersburg, 1880.—*Author*.

On the 15th (27th) August, Takhta Mish-Bii came from Chirákehi with 1,500 Bukháran cavalry to receive from the hands of the Russian troops the captured town of Shahr-i-Sabz.

Thus was the "Green City," which had been washed by the blood of the magnanimous "Urus," restored to its lawful ruler, the Amir of Bukhára.

On the 1st (13th) December, after breakfasting at the hamlet of Chim-Kurgán, 16 *versts* (10 $\frac{2}{3}$ miles) from Shaar, I passed the night at Yár-Tapa.

The road from the town of Shaar (Shahr-i-Sabz) to the settlement of Chim-Kurgán runs through a succession of fields, which, of course, at this time of the year were perfectly bare. In the season large quantities of rice are raised about this neighbourhood. The system of irrigation is such that the entire country round can be thoroughly inundated with water and made impassable. Consequently, from this side, Shaar is quite unapproachable by either artillery or cavalry. In every direction, amidst the dark bare fields, are villages and small farm-houses, all of which have a very well-to-do appearance.

On the roofs are stacked sheaves of barley and of lucerne.

Beyond the settlement of Chim-Kurgán, the country becomes more open, and is slightly undulating. It is, however, crossed by ravines throughout the march. Groups of *yurtas* and of *yulameikas* (felt tents of different patterns) were now met with, and the nomad element of the population began to show itself more and more.

A *Karant-Begi* and the inevitable *Mirza-Báshi* (native writer), directed to accompany me by the Beg of Shaar, rode by my side.

It must have been that my companions were strangers to this part of the country, for they did not bring me along the road which I ought to have taken, and so we soon lost our way. A smooth level steppe, here only covered with thistles, was crossed in various directions by occasional footpaths. After a long search for the proper road, we at length chanced to catch sight of a Kirghiz, who good-naturedly called out to show us where it was, and he then conducted us to the nearest village.

Meanwhile the Cossacks, to while away the time, sang out one of those stirring songs, composed by our Turkistán heroes on the occasion of various victories or campaigns. Under the influence of the impressions of the last few days, or, it may be, that the locality recalled to their minds days of martial glory, the Cossacks sang about General Abramoff's campaign against Shahr-i-Sabz. The song was so characteristic that I consider it appropriate to give here a literal rescript of its text.

(The song, which covers over two pages, is now copied out for the benefit of Dr. Yavórski's Russian readers.)

It was by this time getting dark, and the steppe was becoming enshrouded with the usual evening fog, when we reached the hamlet of Yár-Tapa. Here everything had been already prepared for the reception of the dear guests, the "Urus." A *plan* was giving forth a savoury vapour from amongst an innumerable quantity of vessels containing eatables of every kind. Our good-natured hosts were zealous in looking after the wants of their present guests and recent enemies. *Sic tempora mutantur!*

Yár-Tapa* is a large village with a mixed population. It was at one time the southernmost defensive post held by the Amir of Bukhára against Shahr-i-Sabz. The *tapa* or fortified mound is now in a state of semi-ruin. The high walls, which have in many places tumbled down, cover an area of from 900 to 1,100 square yards. The deep ditch which runs round these walls is now dry, and furnishes a refuge for various reptiles and stinging insects—*phatanga*, scorpions, &c., &c. At one time a *beg* lived here, but since the subjugation of Shahr-i-Sabz the *begship* has been abolished. The settlement itself, and likewise the fields in its neighbourhood, are supplied with water from a mountain stream called Langar-Bulák.

The next morning, the 2nd (14th) December, I continued my march. At a point between 6 and 8 *verst*s (4 to 5½ miles) distant from Yár-Tapa, the road enters a wide gorge, at the sides of which are ploughed fields. At the entrance to this gorge a pathway branches off to the north-east, and leads to the town of Yakka-Bágh. Our onward route lay now through rocky defiles, now over the crests of low mountain ranges, until we reached the village of Kálta-Minár.* This village stands in a shallow and fairly wide valley coursed by a stream called Kátta-Uru-Daria. Here I halted to give a short rest to the riding and to the pack-horses. We passed the night in the village of Kara-Khoval,* so that our day's march amounted to 60 *verst*s (40 miles).

I had scarcely succeeded in sitting down before a small fire, which had been lit in the room in which I was going to sleep, and my chilled limbs had only just begun to feel the agreeable nearness of the cheerful flames, when I was obliged to get up and fetch my camp writing materials, for the *Ak-Sakál*, or village elder, came to communicate to me some important news. He had seen on the previous morning several Russians riding along the Guzár road. They were to halt that night at Chashma-i-Iláfizán, a small village 15 *verst*s (10 miles) to the south-west of Kara-Khoval. Thence they were to go on to Kush-Lush, and to pass the night at Guzár. The *Ak-Sakál* went on to say that, according to rumour, the party had amongst its number the Russian *Elchi*, or Envoy from Kábul.

It may be imagined that this news very greatly interested me. Who could these Russians be? And who was this *Elchi*? The *Ak-Sakál* further informed me that the party was composed of four *Turás* (*i. e.*, gentlemen), two interpreters, ten Cossacks, and a large native following. First of all the thought occurred to me that this must be our Mission returning from Kábul. "But," said I to myself, "the Mission has five *Turás* attached to it, and, moreover, it has not yet received permission to quit Kábul." Evidently then this was not the Russian Mission to Kábul. The use of the word *Elchi* greatly confused me, for, if it had not been employed, I might believe with the greatest assurance that this could be no other than Colonel Matvaiyeff, who was returning from his scientific expedition to Kuláb and Badákhshán. But here again the question recurred to me who were the four *Turás*? seeing that Colonel Matvaiyeff had only three gentlemen with his party—the Colonel himself, the astronomer Schwarts, and Ensign Trotski. Of course, the number might be accounted for by supposing that Colonel Grodekoff had joined Matvaiyeff's expedition at Mazár-i-Sharif; but I could not suppose

* According to Schwarts, the height of the places abovementioned is respectively—Yár-Tapa 1,510 feet, Kálta-Minár 2,230 feet, Kara-Khoval 3,080 feet.—*Author.*

even this to be the case, since on the 25th October (6th November) Grodekoff was at Maimana, and, as I knew from his last letter, he must by this time have already reached Táshkand. Finally, according to my calculations, it was still too early for Colonel Matvaiyeff to be returning to Táshkand, because when he set out from that place on the 21st September (3rd October), he had firmly resolved to penetrate, at whatever cost, to Káfiristán, and thence cross the Hindú-Kush to Kábul, there to unite with our Mission. For the carrying out of so large a programme, a much longer time would be required than had elapsed since the departure of his party from Táshkand.

It was evident then that where I was I could not reconcile such contradictory reflections and calculations. I therefore sent for some *jigits* from the village of Kara-Khoval, and said that I wished one of them to take a letter for me to Guzár, and there await the arrival of the Russian party, and to bring me an answer. One of the *jigits*, a Kirghiz, undertook to bring me an answer by 11 o'clock on the following day. It was by this time 8 P.M., and the distance between Kara-Khoval and Guzár and back again is probably not less than 60 *versts* (40 miles).*

The next morning just as I was awoke the *Ak-Sakál* entered my cold quarters,† carrying in his hand a paper of some kind, which turned out to be a letter from the village Elder at Chashma-i-Háfizán to the bearer. It was, moreover, an answer to a question asked by the *Ak-Sakál* before me, which he had sent by express messenger the evening before, without acquainting me of his intention of doing so. In this action one cannot but recognise the habitual and friendly attention and services on the part of the Bukháran authorities in respect of Russian travellers.

In the above letter were mentioned the names of all the Russians who had stopped at Chashma-i-Háfizán the previous night, and about whose identity I had enquired. It turned out then that Colonel Matvaiyeff's party was really returning. Astronomer Schwartz was spoken of in the letter as "the doctor." The transport-train comprised 32 horses.

It was already past noon when I, without waiting for the *jigits* to return, left Kára-Khoval on my onward journey. After we had crossed the small stream called Kchi-Uru-Daria, the banks of which were crusted with a wide belt of ice, the temperature in the shade standing at 15° Fah., we ascended to a narrow and steep track to the low mountain range called Azis. The water of the stream above-mentioned contains such large quantities of chlorate that I could not manage to mix any nitrate of silver. The silver only dissolved to the extent of becoming like very opaque water, and even then there were traces of chlorate.

Meanwhile I was greatly in need of the solution, for two of the Cossacks were suffering from strong spasms, and I required to use solution of nitrate of silver as a liniment. By 6 P.M. we reached the halting-place at Shor-Ab. The road which we had traversed lies through a very barren country, in which occasional flocks of sheep and droves of camels are seen.

* The natives reckon it as 4 *tásh* and one *tásh* = about 8 *versts* (5½ miles).—*Author*.

† Native houses are warmed not by means of a stove, but by lighting wood and placing it in the centre of the room or in a recess in the wall; or, perhaps, a pan with hot embers (*mangal*) is placed inside the room. It is evident that when this heat dies away at night, the temperature of the room must fall considerably, so that by the morning it is very little above that of the open.—*Author*.

Early the following morning my messenger reached Shor-Ab, bringing with him the answer which I had so wished to receive. Colonel Matvaiyeff was so obliging as to write me quite a long account. He mentioned that he had not been to Kábul at all, and had only passed through Afghán-Turkistán very hurriedly.

Therefore, regarding my enquiries as to the state of the roads across the Hindu-Kush, and also with respect to the latest political events in Afghánistán, he could not tell me anything definite. He, however, informed me that the Afghán Government had not changed its friendly relations towards the Russians, although the customary escort of three horsemen was told off to guard every Russian to secure his safety, and in fact to isolate him from the native population, whose hatred towards the Afghán régime was as patent to every one as to the Afghán authorities themselves. The Colonel then went on to give me certain particulars respecting the road through Bukhárán territory; but this road was sufficiently well known to me from my having already traversed it during my first journey to Afghánistán. The Colonel laid particular stress on the difficult track through the Shor-Ab gorge, but he did not appear to be aware that this gorge can be turned by crossing a low pass to the north. The knowledge regarding the existence of this alternative track is especially important in winter time when the bed of the stream which flows through the Shor-Ab gorge is slippery with ice, making the progress of pack animals a labour of extraordinary difficulty. In conclusion, Colonel Matvaiyeff wished me a prosperous journey.

I rewarded the *jigit* for his services by bestowing on him a *khalat*, a gift which is especially prized by a native of Central Asia. I also gave him a sufficient number of Bukhárán *tangas*. On this date the frost registered 14° Fah.

I reached Shirábád on the 5th (17th) December. Colonel Matvaiyeff had advised me, in the above letter, to send from this place a letter addressed to the Luináb* of Afghán-Turkistán in order to warn him of my coming, so that I should not be kept waiting, on the left bank of the Amu-Daria, for an Afghán escort. I followed this wise counsel; but if the reader knew how much trouble it cost me to get this letter written! I have already stated above that, with the meagre sum assigned to me for the purpose, I could not obtain the services of a competent interpreter, for, of course, the *jigit*, who was with me in the capacity of interpreter, did not know how to write. In order, therefore, to get a letter written, I had to resort to the following method. First of all, I had to tell the interpreter what I wished said, and he had to translate this to the *Mirza*, who had accompanied me from Shaar. This man had, therefore, to compose the letter according as he had gathered its purport from the interpreter. But from the very commencement of all this procedure it became clear to me that I should scarcely manage to get the letter written at all. Thus in the transcribing of the phrase "They wrote from Sámakand about me to the Luináb," the "Secretary" puzzled his brains for nearly half an hour. The interpreter would begin and then the *Mirza* would interrupt, whereupon a fierce war of

* Khush-Dil-Khán, the same person who, if I mistake not, was sent by Yakúb-Khán in July 1879 to the Shutar-Gardan, or rather to Karatiga, to meet Sir Louis Cavagnari and the other members of the English Mission and escort them to Kábul.—*Translator*.

words would ensue, after which the phrase would be repeated, and not a step further would be made.

I do not know how the letter was eventually written, but it went off to its destination on the evening of the day upon which it was begun, for Nassir-Khán, my *caravan-báshi*, was the bearer.

At Shir-ábád one could scarcely believe that the winter had begun, for, at 1 P.M., the temperature stood at 68° Fah. in the shade, and at 5 P.M. it registered 39° Fah. The leaves on the trees had turned yellow, but they had not begun to fall. I paid the *beg* of the town a return visit. He was not my former patient, Abdul-Rahmán, but a recently appointed person named Abdul-Jalil-Bii. In the course of my visit he did not fail to boast about his knowledge of Russian customs.

I appointed as our halting-place for the next day the small village of Angor. From here to the banks of the Amu at the ford, called Patti-Kissár or Pátta-Guzár,* the distance is the same as from Angor to Shir-ábád, *viz.*, 25 *versts* (16 $\frac{2}{3}$ miles). The road, as far as the Amu, runs over a flat and sandy locality. The actual sands commence at a distance of 15 *versts* (10 miles) from the river, but they are not at first deep. The hillocks, too, of sand are very low, and are dotted over in places with a kind of *saksaul* growth. At a point between 5 and 6 *versts* (3 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles) before the ferry of Pátta-Guzár is reached, there are some extensive ruins, and a vast area of country is strewn over with pieces of burnt brick. In one place there is a well-preserved tower, from 35 to 50 feet in height, which is also of burnt brick. Round the several stories of the tower there is an inscription in Cufic characters so large, that each letter covers one or more bricks. The top of this tower has fallen in.

A little distance away from this tower are the ruins of very large buildings constructed of beaten clay. Many of the broken-off pieces of brick-work have a facing of tiles. The site of the ruins bears the name of Khaibar. It should here be stated that not far from the village of Angor there are also ruins with several half broken-down, but still lofty towers.

After reaching the village of Pátta-Kissár, I knew that we should not have to wait a single day for the Afghán escort, for it was awaiting our arrival on the Afghán bank of the river.

Early on the morning of the 8th (20th) December, my party were taken over in two ferry-boats to the opposite bank. Notwithstanding that the river banks were covered with ice, and that the temperature registered 17° Fah., the boatmen waded up to their knees in the water without any covering at all on their legs. An Afghán officer received me on the left bank of the Amu, and he had with him a small escort of cavalry. He had been awaiting our arrival for five days, and his was the escort which had accompanied Colonel Matvaiyeff in his journey through Balákhshán and in the province of Afghán-Turkistán.

On the 9th (21st) December I once more found myself at Mazár-i-Sharif, a name which, by interpretation, signifies "the sacred tomb of Ali."

* It may be that the second name is equally correct. The first signifies the hewn *patta*, a kind of poplar which grows along the Amu. The second means the "crossing by permission" (written authority).—*Author*.

CHAPTER III.

AT MAZÁR-I-SHARIF.

Arrival at Mazár-i-Sharif—First news from the Anglo-Afghán theatre of war—Signs of the Afgháns losing their heads—Rumours regarding the intention of the Amir Shir-Ali-Khán to withdraw from Kábul to Afghán-Turkistán—My visit to the Luináb—Arrival of the Amir's family at Mazár-i-Sharif—Correspondence with Táshkand—Meteorological observations—Letter from the Amir—His arrival at Tásh-Kurgán—I go to meet our Mission.

AT a distance of about one *verst* ($\frac{2}{3}$ rd mile) from the town, I was met by yet another small escort of Afghán horsemen. Sári-Ján, the officer who had accompanied me thus far, conversed for a few minutes in the—if I may so express myself—rough and coarse Pushtu tongue with the commander of the fresh escort, and then turned off to a side-road. I immediately asked my guide what was the reason for making this change in our direction.

“*In já ráh khab ast,*” he quietly replied to my question.

I then observed to my hook-nosed conductor that I was very well acquainted with the roads in these parts, and that if we proceeded straight on, we should save both time and distance.

“In such a case you ought to know,” Sári-Ján remarked, “that the direct road to the quarters prepared for you only leads through the bazaar. In this circumstance lies a great disadvantage as regards the more direct line of road.”

On my showing signs of surprise at this explanation of the disadvantages of the particular route, he continued to unfold his thoughts still further.

“You do not know how many bad people there are in Afghánistán, and in the bazaar one is constantly running against individuals of every kind. There you will more readily meet with bad persons, who will not hesitate to insult you in some way or another.”

“But they must know I am a Russian,” I returned; “and do not all Afgháns know that the Russians are their friends, yet you speak of some kind of insult that threatens me.”

“Listen, *Doctor-Sáhib*, I shall have to answer to the Amir-Sáhib for your safety, and I regard the preservation of my own head. If any evil should befall you during the time that I am escorting you, I am a lost man. You do not know Afghánistán! Believe me, you have only to show yourself in the populous parts of the town, when some stupid persons, who may perhaps have never seen and know nothing about you, will at once shout out, ‘Here is a Káfir!’ Whilst others, recognising that you are a Russian, will shout out, ‘An Urus-Káfir! an Urus-Káfir!’ The people are stupid;—who can then tell what will happen? I shall certainly risk my head.”

It was evident that my companion was very careful about his own head, and could not be counted amongst the number of brave individuals; I therefore resolved not to alarm him further. Nevertheless,

I remarked to him that I had already ridden several times through the bazaar of the town of Mazár-i-Sharif, and that I had neither heard anything hostile to us Russians, nor noticed any threatening looks. Still I had to make the proposed circuit.

After a ride of half an hour across bare fields, we came out at the western end of the town, and so came to the Báلكh road, with which I was already acquainted. Soon on both sides there stretched the same unbroken row of walled-enclosures, marking the line of street which was quite deserted at the particular time. Indeed I did not see a single soul moving. Even the half-ruined mud-built *Mazár* (or tomb) of some unimportant Mussulmán saint was deserted by the ever-present specimen of the *dervish* class. A pole with dirty rags tied to the end fluttered out reminders to the "faithful" that they must not forget in passing by the spot to offer up the customary prayer. The city seemed as though dead; and yet the Afghán officer called out the command "Draw swords," whereupon each member of the escort, carrying a naked blade, took up his position around me. In about the centre of the town, and not far from the residence of the Luináb, there met us 2 or 3 Uzbaks modestly sitting on the narrow backs of particularly long-eared asses. Immediately these stupified persons caught sight of the threatening appearance of the surroundings, they lost no time in betaking themselves to the recesses of a dismal by-street.

After approaching from the west the house of the Luináb and the Herát cavalry barracks adjoining it, we rode up to the quarters of the Russian Mission, so familiar to me from my summer visit. We entered, and I found everything as of yore. There were the same mud-built wings along both sides of the inner court-yard; the same low pavilion in the centre of it, whereat had collected all the members of the Russian Mission; the same huge *chinárs* with their overhanging branches; the same high stone walls rising up in every direction. It even seemed to me that there were the same two magpies which chattered so unconcernedly from the top of a tree of gigantic size, old friends, and our summer guests.

The familiar surroundings took me back in thought to those past days, and awoke former, but still recent, reflections. This was the spot which had been frequented by a numerous and sometimes merry community, in spite of a self-imposed detention within four walls. The walls around had at times sung to the echoes of Russian songs. Now, however, the house and surroundings seemed quite deserted. The surly silence of my companion, the bareness of the *chinárs*, the lank branches of which descended to the very windows of the room, the harsh whistle of the wind amidst their pendant and apparently helpless twigs, and, lastly, the ever thickening evening shadows produced in me a very melancholy frame of mind. The whole surroundings seemed so sad and sombre as though a heavy cloud rested upon all.

Yes, indeed, at this very time, a threatening cloud *was* hanging over Afghánistán. I had not, it is true, exact information about the latest political circumstances connected with this country, but I could, to a certain extent, form ideas about them. The war between England and Afghánistán was unavoidable, but it was not difficult to foretell on which side would lie the victory, and that because the Afgháns had neither

sufficient troops nor a proper supply of arms. It is true that the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán, had counted upon aid from Russia; for had not General Stolaitoff, in leaving Kábul, promised to come back with 30,000 men? And Shir-Ali, I suppose, had no reason for disbelieving the word of General Stolaitoff, as the plenipotentiary of a great European power, a man of whom General Kaufmann, in his letter of introduction to Shir-Ali, had spoken as being as worthy of the Amír's credence as he, General Kaufmann, was himself. How, then, could General Stolaitoff fail to instil confidence? The Amír then *did* believe him, and, acting on his advice, sent a sharply-worded reply to the letter of the English envoy. Had not our Mission been at Kábul at the time, and had not these promises and advice been tendered, it is very likely that the Amír would not have raised a doubt as to his friendly relations with the Anglo-Indian Empire, or have closed them so abruptly.

As I was engaged with such sad reflections, Nassir-Khán, my *caravan-báshi*, entered the room. He told me that he had reached Mazár-i-Sharif two days before me; that he had taken my illustrious letter sent from Shirábád to the Luináb; that he had stayed with the *Sarhang*, Muhammad-Khán, in anticipation of my arrival; that he had visited his acquaintances and had sauntered through the bazaar, where he had picked up the following news:—

“Life at Kábul had become very bad, for there had been a fight between the English and the Afgháns close to Jalálábád, in which the latter had lost more than 700 men. The Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán, was sending off his wives and children from Kábul to Mazár-i-Sharif.”

This news then was an unexpected confirmation of my prognostications. It meant that the Anglo-Afghán quarrel had led to bloodshed; it meant that General Kaufmann was right in saying at my farewell audience with him: “when you reach Kábul, the war between the English and the Afgháns will, in all probability, be in full progress.” But I was still far from Kábul, and blood had been shed on both the hostile sides.

One could not but think now about the position of the Russian Mission. In the event of the decided refusal on the part of Russia to give military aid to the Amír, Shir-Ali, and in case, as was more than likely, of the final overthrow of the Afghán army, our Mission would play the part of “an evening sacrifice” to the errors of General Stolaitoff. These errors were the more inexcusable, in that he could have had no sort of grounds for giving the Amír any positive promise of military assistance from Russia. On the contrary, the news of the termination of the Congress at Berlin and the corresponding instructions sent by General Kaufmann were received by the Mission very opportunely, *i.e.*, on the day before the Mission reached Kábul. It is true that General Stolaitoff himself was no longer at Kábul, but the responsibility for his statements and his promises would fall upon those members of the Mission whom he had left behind. Thus the responsibility for those extraordinary errors would make the position of our Mission a risky one.

The news which I had received was quite sufficient to begin with, but I wished to have it corroborated as far as possible, and so at supper I led the conversation with Sári-Ján up to the subject. This attempt on my part was not, however, crowned with success. Muhammad-Khán

too affected a complete ignorance as to the latest political events. It was evident then that he did not wish to speak about those defeats which his brethren had suffered on the field of honour. He, however, gave me full particulars about Colonel Matvaiyeff's journey, and as to how, with the snow up to one's knee, his party had travelled over the Faizábád mountains in its efforts to reach the country of the Káfirs, and as to how, after its failure to effect this, it had to go back; how then the learned Colonel had of necessity to satisfy his scientific curiosity by conferring with Káfir prisoners who had, a few weeks previously, fled from their snowy mountains to Faizábád.

I hoped to receive more detailed information regarding any political news from the Luináb, Khush-Dil-Khán, whom I resolved to visit on the following day, *viz.*, the 10th (22nd) December. The next day, however, I did not succeed in seeing the Luináb, as he had to go off during the night to Tásh-Kurgán. The officer on duty at my quarters, Muhammad-Sháh, explained the Luináb's sudden departure by the circumstance that some local disturbances had broken out in the Khulm district, and that robber bands had made their appearance and had begun to threaten to interrupt communication between Afghán-Turkistán and Kábul. I was then told that the Luináb would remain at Tásh-Kurgán for several days.

The receipt of this intelligence saddened me very much. I moreover valued every moment of precious time, and I wished to hasten to take advantage of the splendid weather; but, on the contrary, I must now lose several days in a perfectly useless manner by remaining the whole time on the same spot. I could not think of leaving Mazár-i-Sharif for Kábul before the Luináb's return. Yes, indeed, I might think of doing so; but to put my thoughts into practice would be quite another matter.

The Luináb, before setting out, had given orders that I was not to be permitted to leave Mazár-i-Sharif until his return. This senseless order made me quite furious; but when I told Muhammad-Sháh that I intended to leave the place without the Luináb's permission, he positively informed me that he would not allow me to go a single step beyond the quarters which I was occupying. Having made this declaration, he excused himself by saying that conduct of this kind towards me was not polite, but that it was called for by the exigencies of his service. To this, of course, I could say nothing, the reason which he assigned being a thoroughly sound one. Indeed there can be no doubt but that every Russian official would in his place have acted in the same way. Nevertheless this "honourable arrest" was not at all to my liking. The same day my old acquaintance Mosin-Khán came to visit me. He wished very much to know whether General Stolaitoff was soon going to return to Kábul, and he asked also how all the members of the Afghán Mission at Táshkand were. He concluded his remarks by an expression of his opinion that "the Doctor-Sáhib had become a great man."

"When you were for the first time with General Stolaitoff, you had in your suite only one man, an orderly, but now you have 10 Cossacks, an Assistant-Surgeon, and many native followers. You have probably obtained high rank, or you have received an exalted order."

When I answered Mosin-Khán in the negative, and could not refrain from laughing at such a naïve observation, he regarded me with evident

doubt, and even with some incredulity. As he was leaving my quarters, he let fall the remark, in passing out, that the Luináb had gone to Tásh-Kurgán to meet the family of the Amir, Shir-Ali-Khán.

My *Nán-dár* or caterer, Yár-Muhammad, a good specimen of a healthy and vigorous Afghán, who had been attached by the Luináb to my following, displayed great sympathy towards me. He told me, moreover, as a great secret that Afghán affairs were bad; that the English had severely defeated the Afgháns in the last engagement; that Shir-Ali was about to quit Kábul for Mazár-i-Sharif; that Kohistán had risen, and that the road across the Bámián was not safe.

He added—"All this, however, you will learn in much greater detail from the Luináb himself."

That I awaited the Luináb's return with impatience will be clear to the reader. Meanwhile, the news from the theatre of war, which the *nán-dár* had accurately communicated to me, and which the omniscient Nassir-Khán both corroborated and amplified, became worse and worse and more threatening with each succeeding statement. Thus it became evident that the English had captured the fortress of Ali-Masjid, had forced the Khaibar pass, had occupied Dákka and Lálpura, and were probably by this time at Jalálábád. On the other hand, the Southern Column of the English Army had advanced within a short distance of Kandahar. Indeed there were rumours that they had already entered that city.

All this news was of such a kind as to make me think deeply of the ultimate fate of that handful of Russians now in unfortunate Kábul. I imagined that a revolution had already broken out there, and this afterwards turned out to be the case. Such an occurrence could but render the situation of the Russian Mission worse still. It seemed to me, therefore, ridiculous that I should now be going to Kábul to join a Russian Mission, when that city was either in the hands of the English, or else was immediately threatened by them, and when the very existence of the Afghán sovereignty seemed to be at stake. I indeed seemed to be playing the part of a knight-errant assisting at an inquisition over the members of the Russian Mission. And here what surprised me above everything else was the part which a bazaar plays in the political life of Central Asia.*

In the bazaar they receive all the latest intelligence. Thus they there discuss with surprising (for Central Asia) freedom all the news, and also all the political measures adopted by the authorities. From here, as from a strength-giving centre, all the reports are disseminated to the nearest villages and towns with a rapidity which is incomprehensible to a European. A Central Asian bazaar takes in fact the place of the Daily Press of Europe, and what is more astonishing still is, that news thus disseminated far and wide is in the majority of cases very correct. In intelligence thus gained not only are there but few perversions, but only very occasional exaggerations.

I have had several opportunities of testing bazaar rumours, and I have always been convinced of their general accuracy. On the present occasion the exactitude and rapidity displayed in connection with the reporting of the latest political occurrences were still more astonishing, since

* Aye, and of India too.—*Translator.*

the Afghán authorities used every endeavour to conceal the condition of affairs from the local and subject Uzbek-Tájik population.

It was not until the 12th (24th) December that the Luináb returned to Mazár-i-Sharif. I expected that he would invite me to go and pay him a visit on the day of his return ; but in this I was mistaken. And even the next day went by as well without the looked-for invitation. I was informed that the Luináb could not receive me because he was not well.

Meanwhile his officials communicated to me that I would have to stay at Mazár-i-Sharif for several days longer. They said : "The fact is the Luináb-Sáhib has sent a report of your arrival to Kábul, and until he gets the reply to this report, in other words the Amir's permission for you to continue your journey, you cannot leave this place."

Of course I did not delay lodging a protest against such a reason for detaining me at Mazár-i-Sharif, and I dwelt on the ridiculous aspect of the procedure adopted. But to all my representations the officials answered that they could not discuss the matter with me, in that the Luináb-Sáhib could alone answer all my enquiries. It was evident, therefore, that nothing remained to me but to await an explanation from the Luináb himself. But the 12th (24th) and the 13th (25th) December both passed away, and the Luináb neither came to me himself, nor invited me to go and see him. I then sent an intimation through the officer on duty at my quarters that I considered it necessary to inform the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán that I was being detained at Mazár-i-Sharif. I at the same time refused to receive the food, &c., &c., provided for me and my following by the Luináb.

This was, of course, a very extreme step to take on my part, for to refuse the hospitality of a Central Asian Mussulmán, signifies a complete rupture of all friendly relations. And, therefore, as was to be expected, the Luináb immediately felt the full weight of the measure which I had adopted. Accordingly, on the 14th (26th) December, he invited me to go and see him.

The audience passed off in the usual very imposing manner ; the reader is already acquainted with the scene. The Luináb, surrounded by his various officials, received me on arrival. He himself was dressed in a brocaded fur-coat cut like a *khalat* ; the material was of an azure blue colour, and it was embroidered over with flowers worked in gold. On his head was the national *kulákh* or cone-shaped lambskin hat. He sat in an arm-chair covered with velvet, and behind him stood two or three of his officials. On the terrace facing the spot on which the audience was held was drawn up half a company of Afghán soldiers. My 10 Cossacks, in their lambskin busbies (*papákh*) and blue uniform coats, were posted at right angles to the Luináb's soldiers, and they formed a very striking contrast to their Afghán brethren-in-arms.

My conversation with the Luináb was of course opened with purely official phrases and enquiries as to the state of health of the Amir and of the Luináb himself, and as to the welfare of their country, &c., &c. But over these I did not waste much time, and rapidly passed to the object of my visit. I expressed to the Luináb my great desire to start for Kábul as soon as possible.

"I perfectly agree with you, Doctor-Sáhib," answered the Luináb. "You really ought to hasten to get to Kábul, for at this time of year communication will soon be interrupted by heavy falls of snow. Now, however, there is hardly any all along the road. You will only have to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif for some few days longer, because it is necessary that I should await the Amir-Sáhib's answer to my report concerning you. Should that answer be in the affirmative, I will not detain you a moment longer."

These words seemed to me to be the old song, and I therefore energetically protested against my detention.

"You are probably not unaware, Luináb-Sáhib," I returned, "that I am proceeding to Kábul at the Amir-Sáhib's personal invitation. He summoned me, and for this reason I am going there. It is clear, therefore, that no other sort of permission for me to proceed to Kábul is necessary, and it is also evident that the invitation which the Amir lately sent to me to Táshkand includes also permission for me to travel through Afghán territory. Finally, you are acquainted with the fact that I am a member of the Russian Mission which is now at Kábul. All this is sufficient to show that I may go on to Kábul without interruption." I now handed to the Luináb my road pass.

After attentively perusing the document, he slowly returned it to me, and with a thoughtful expression on his face he again began to persuade me to defer my departure.

"You are right," he continued, "but be pleased to listen to what I say to you. Regarding every foreigner who enters the portion of Afghánistán entrusted to my charge, I first of all make a report to the Amir, and then I wait for his orders concerning the particular stranger. I have no personal authority to allow any foreigner to travel through the country. Let us allow that you are a member of the Russian Mission, that you are proceeding with the Amir-Sáhib's permission, and that, last of all, you are personally known to me; still, in spite of all this, I cannot allow you, without the Amir-Sáhib's permission being communicated to myself, to go on to Kábul. If I did, I should run the risk of losing my head." Here he paused, thought for a little, and then deliberately continued.

"Yes, and the times are not as they were when the Amir-Sáhib wrote to you. The road is now not without danger, and robbers have made their appearance along it, and various disorders have broken out in Afghán-Turkistán. No; you must wait a little. I therefore ask you to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif for some five or six days longer."

When the Luináb spoke of robbers, I proudly pointed to my Cosacks, and drew his attention to their fine physique, observing that, with 10 such men, I might hope to account for any band of madmen.

"That's not it," I continued; "and I am also aware that the disorders which have broken out are a long way off my road, since they are principally confined to the side of the Hindu-Kush, which lies beyond Kábul. Here everything is quite quiet."

"I am not a liar!" warmly, but with dignity, exclaimed the Luináb; "you can, therefore, implicitly believe what I say." "I, of course, believe you," I said; "but do you not yourself see that I cannot remain here five or six days longer? Finally, I warn you that I shall be

obliged to report the fact of my detention at Mazár-i-Sharif to the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán."

"Do not write this I beg you," exclaimed the Luináb; "do not write this to Táshkand until I get the Amir-Sáhib's answer. Who knows he may so write as to compel you to altogether give up the idea of journeying to Kábul? I have known you well for a long time, and the advice I give you is only good. Do not be angry with me. I should be very glad to do all that you wish, but unfortunately I cannot allow you to go to Kábul."

"I cannot but be angry," I replied, "and I should but deceive you were I to wear an air of satisfaction. Russians, too, are not liars." I now got up with the intention of taking leave of the Luináb and returning to my quarters.

The Luináb also arose and, stretching out his hand, smiled so pleasantly that I could not but repress a frown, more especially as it was only at that moment that I remembered to convey to the Luináb the *salaams* which the members of the Afghán Mission had asked me to deliver to him.

"What an example for you!" said the Luináb. "You do not wish to remain here five or six days; and yet our Mission has been at Táshkand for several months."

"But, Luináb-Sáhib, you forget that our Mission has also been at Kábul for several months," I returned. "It was indeed necessary that your Mission should be with us at Táshkand, and ours with you at Kábul. My case, however, is quite different."

"And yet both General Stolaitoff and Colonel Grodekoff waited for the Amir's permission," persisted the Luináb. "You know that theirs were special cases, and have no connection with mine," I returned. "General Stolaitoff was going to Kábul for the first time, and the Amir's permission for him to travel through Afghánistán was necessary. As regards Colonel Grodekoff, in my opinion he waited here longer than he need have done."

The Luináb wished to make some return answer, but I considered it useless to prolong such a fruitless discussion, and so I coldly and stiffly took my leave.

The next day I again began to receive the Luináb's offers of food, &c., and the Afghán followers were greatly rejoiced thereat.

"If only I were ordered to accompany the Doctor-Sáhib to Kábul!" exclaimed Sári-Ján; "and if I were to try and effect the Doctor-Sáhib's wishes in this matter, would he confer upon me the fur-coat which he is now wearing?....." I must here remark that this Afghán became, day by day, more disagreeable to me. He was indeed the first Afghán whom I had met with a very repulsive expression. With an obsequious manner and coarse flattery he coupled avarice and importunity; and I soon discovered that he systematically robbed my horses by appropriating to his own use the Luináb's allowance of forage. He bored me terribly with his everlasting talk about "*naukar-i-man shuma ast; Alam-i-man shuma*," "I am your servant; your most humble servant." His nose, hooked like the beak of a bird of prey, was in very unpleasant union with his eyes of greenish hue. The expression of his face indicated treachery. He several times thumbed

my Persian books and praised their contents, though he evidently understood but a little of what was in them. He would sit for hours at the threshold of my door wearying me sorely until I would, without any ceremony, tell him to go away. At dinner, supper, or during morning or evening tea-time he would invariably make his appearance, and, sitting outside my door, he would wait for anything I might give him. Sometimes in his efforts to show that he considered himself a useful man, he would light my stove or else bring me horses, asking if I did not wish to buy them, or send a man with carpets, &c., &c. At the same time he would never let slip an opportunity of declaring, with an air of importance, that he had under his command 400 horsemen.

During the first days of my stay at Mazár-i-Sharif I had never cause to feel weary, for I had my books, and I engaged myself in writing. I opened also a surgery for the sick of the place, carried out meteorological observations usually on the very terrace whereon the summer assemblies of the Mission used to be held. And I read many scores of times two inscriptions in Russian cut at the foot of two *chinár* trees. One of these thus runs: "N. Grodekoff from the 7th to the 19th October 1878." On the moss-green velvet-covered root of another young *chinár* tree in close proximity is the very brief inscription "P.M. 18 $\frac{2^3}{XI}$ 78." This one, probably, refers to Colonel Matvaiyeff. Both inscriptions are slightly rubbed over with mud. I was very nearly tempted to follow the example of my predecessors and cut my name beside theirs, but I felt pity for the soft roots of these splendid trees. And, moreover, I said to myself what is the use of doing so? It seemed to me to be an infantile diversion.

On the 18th (30th) December, I experienced quite a distraction, for on this date the family of the Amír, Shir-Ali, reached Mazár-i-Sharif. Behind them followed a huge transport-train of not less than 3,000 pack-animals and 10 elephants. The whole train was escorted by a large body of troops; and it was in the sole charge of Shir-Ali's chamberlain, Sirdár-Abdullah-Khán, the same Sirdár, who met the Russian Mission at Koti-Ashru in the previous month of July.

A strange fate had befallen the career of this excellent man; for forty years before he had fled with the father of the present Amir to the wild mountains of Kohistán, to hide from the pursuit of the innumerable English detachments that were at that time overrunning the whole of Kábulistán, until, at length, Dost-Muhammad was obliged to forsake the rocky fastnesses of Kohistán and fly with Abdullah-Khán to the valley of the Amu. Now the same valley was befriending this very Sirdár and the family of Dost-Muhammad's son by affording them a refuge against the fire and sword of the old enemies of their country—these very English. In thinking of the fate of this man, I could not but bear in mind another coincidence; in former days this Sirdár went to meet Lieutenant Vitkevitch, and now, or rather a few months before, he had met General Stolaitoff.

The Amir's family entered the city with some display. From the dilapidated walls of a mud fort, which defends the city on the north-east, a salute of 71 guns was fired. The elephants and a considerable proportion of the baggage animals were tethered in the meadow which separated my quarters from the Luináb's house.

That day I received fresh political news, *viz.*, that the Amir had left Kábul and was now *en route* to Mazár-i-Sharif. He had left as the ruler of Kábul his son, Yakúb-Khán, whom but a short time before he had released from imprisonment. The English had gained possession of the whole of the Khaibar Pass, and were now close to Jalálábád.

I had no reason for doubting the correctness of this information. For me it, of course, signified that I should now have to give up the winter march across the Hindu-Kush; for if the Amir was coming to Mazár-i-Sharif, I of course should not go to Kábul. The Luináb was right, therefore, in saying that, on the receipt of the Amir's answer, the Doctor-Sáhib will, perhaps, give up his journey to Kábul. It was evident that the answer to the Luináb's report would be the arrival of the Amir himself at Mazár-i-Sharif.

I was surprised and not a little annoyed at the circumstance of our Mission at Kábul not having sent me up to date a single line of any kind. According to my calculations, I might have received an answer to my letter by means of a special messenger. But I had miscalculated the matter by two days; for on the 20th December 1878 (1st January 1879) I received altogether several letters from the members of the Russian Mission at Kábul.

General Razgónoff mentioned in his that my letter had been received by him on the 16th (28th) December at Camp Rui. His to me was dated Camp Sayad, where the Amir was at the time.

In writing about the military operations in the Anglo-Afghán theatre of war in the first portion of his letter, General Razgónoff told me that the Russian Mission had left Kábul, with the Amir, on the (1st) 13th December; that the Amir had appointed his son, Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán, ruler of Afghánistán; that Shir-Ali himself was proceeding to Afghán-Turkistán; and that he purposed going on to Táshkand, and even to St. Petersburg.

Some hours after the receipt of the above letters, the Luináb's *Mírza*, or "Secretary," came to give me a letter written in Persian. This letter contained the Amir's answer to the Luináb's report concerning my arrival at Mazár-i-Sharif. Its contents were as follows:

"Station, Duáb. Month, 1st Muharram, of the year 1293 H.

"At this present time the English, having begun hostile operations, have compelled me to quit Kábul. Now I am on my way to Táshkand, whence, after having received a sufficient number of troops, I purpose returning to Kábul and driving my enemies, the English, out of Afghánistán. As my road lies through Mazár-i-Sharif, I beg that the Doctor-Sáhib will await my arrival in that city."

It was clear that, from the time of my receiving this letter, I could no longer count on a speedy departure from Mazár-i-Sharif. In fact, there was now no need for it.

The next day I was occupied with letter-writing and with correspondence of various kinds. It was now that I perceived, for the first time how greatly both the phraseology and tone of a letter conform to the circumstances of the person addressed.

Whilst walking up and down the upper terrace of my quarters, I repeatedly glanced at the performances of a local *virtuoso* and listened

to Afghán songs. I should here observe that all round my quarters had been posted several picquets of Afghán soldiers.

The Luináb's *Mirza*, who brought me Shir-Ali's letter, was rewarded by me with a *khalat*. This excited the cupidity of Sári-Ján, who entered my room ostensibly to convey to me the Luináb's *salaam*. He, however, without making use of any superfluous words, went straight to what was in his mind by begging that I would give him my fox-skin coat. Without taking any notice of this request, I invited him to sit down. But to this invitation on my part my "most humble servant" replied by saying that he would not sit down until I had given him the coat.

"The Luináb-Sáhib asked me," continued my guardian, "whether the Doctor-Sáhib had given me a *khalat*? I said 'No'; whereupon he remarked, that 'his *Mirza* had received one from you,' so be pleased to confer one on me also."

This sort of impertinence made me very angry. I therefore sternly remarked to Sári-Ján that he might sit down or not as he pleased, but that he had adopted an altogether unusual form of obtaining a reward from me, and that I would never give that man a present who asked me for one himself.

The "commander of 400 horse" hereupon quickly changed his tone, took a seat on the carpet near the doorway, and said that he was only joking, and that he did not want anything from me, being at all times ready to perform any service for me without any reward. Once again I had to listen to the phrase "*naukar-i-man shuma ast*," &c., &c. Meanwhile the weather was in the fullest sense of the word glorious. At 5 A.M. the temperature never fell below 28° Fah., and at 1 P.M. it never rose above 64° Fah. in the shade. During the whole period of my stay at Mazár-i-Sharif there were not more than two or three cloudy days. The slightest cloudiness of sky caused the temperature to fall rapidly; thus, on the 20th December 1878 (1st January 1879), the morning was very cloudy, and the thermometer registered 44° Fah. On one occasion only did a very cold north-west wind blow, driving before it heavy leaden-grey clouds; and on this day the thermometer registered at 1 P.M. 46° Fah. But this weather lasted for one day only. There was, as a rule, but very little wind, and its appearance and direction I noticed varied according to the time of day. Thus the wind would usually get up about 10 o'clock and continue till 3 or 4 P.M., when it would die away altogether. On one occasion a warm westerly wind blew, which raised the temperature to 64° Fah. The same kind of warm wind sometimes blows, too, from the south-east. But currents of wind from that direction are only observed with a pressure of atmosphere, and when this pressure is released the wind blows from the opposite quarter. Feathery clouds moved in a direction from west to east. Up to this time there had fallen neither one flake of snow nor a single drop of rain; but there had been fogs.

On the 24th December 1878 (5th January 1879) I again received several letters from the members of our Mission, and General Razgónoff intimated to me that the Amir had decided upon staying for several days at Tásh-Kurgán. He, therefore, invited me to proceed there also. I made rapid preparations accordingly, and left Mazár-i-Sharif for Tásh-Kurgán that very day. Muhammad-Sháh-Khán, the Luináb's brother,

accompanied me. He is a very good looking man of about 25 years of age, with a type of face more like that of a Tájik than of an Afghán. He had been sent by the Amir from Tásh-Kurgán for the express purpose of accompanying me to that place.

When we came to Guri-Már, my companion proposed that we should halt there for the night. Evening was now setting in, and Naibábád, the nearest village, was still distant 25 *versts* (16½ miles). But I was filled with so strong a desire to join my companions of the Mission as soon as possible, that I energetically dissented from my companion's proposition. Meanwhile the flame of the wood pile was brightly burning at the entrance to the quarters at Guri-Már, and the odour, which passed over the steppe, indicated the preparation of the usual *kabáb*.

My companion gently pleaded for a rest, and no less gently suggested that we should pass the night at this spot.

Ráh-i-kotal, daráz, he assured me. Moreover, he went on to say: "At night attacks from robbers are to be apprehended. What will the Amir-Sáhib say when he learns that I subjected the Doctor-Sáhib to such dangers on the road? He will not praise me for this."

Still I resolutely held out against all his arguments in favour of a night's halt at Guri-Már, and decided upon continuing our road.

Hearing that I had made up my mind on the subject, Muhammad-Sháh spread his prayer-carpet on the ground, turned his face to catch the last departing rays of the sun, knelt down and uttered his *namáz-i-digar*.

By 10 P.M. we had reached Naibábád, and the last words which I wrote in my diary, before retiring to rest, were "TO-MORROW WILL BE CHRISTMAS DAY."

CHAPTER IV.

WITH THE AFGHÁN AMIR.

My meeting with the Russian Mission at Tásh-Kurgán—Stories of the members of the Mission regarding their life at Kábul—Details regarding the Anglo-Afghán struggle—Russo-Afghán diplomatic correspondence—Causes of the Afghán defeats—The revolution at Kábul; causes which led to it—Critical position of the Russian Mission—The Amir leaves Kábul—Winter march of the Russian Mission across the Hindu-Kush—My audience with the Amir Shir-Ali-Khán—Description of his camp and its surroundings—I become the Amir's Personal Physician.

THE green wheat-fields through which I now rode were in sharp contrast to the bare steppe recently moistened by the rain, which, consequently, presented the appearance of a surface blackened as though it had been scorched by a widely-stretching fire. To the left the road was flanked by bright-looking fields; to the right, in the direction of the mountains, stretched a perfectly lifeless steppe. This steppe extends right up to the very foot of the overhanging mountain, giants which are, so to speak, the advanced posts of the Paropamisus range. The summits of these rocky giants were, at this particular time, covered with a glistening mantle of snow; and far away in the distance, on a level with the banks of heavy clouds which obscured a good half of the heavens, nothing could be seen but one unbroken stretch of ice and snow. Here below, on the surface of the smooth steppe, were falling a few drops of rain,—rain at the very end of December!

Whilst still some *vershs* distant from Tásh-Kurgán, we could see a whitish line, of semi-circular shape, marking the outskirts of the city, and lying in a direction south and west. As we got nearer to this belt of white, out of it became gradually distinguishable the outlines of the Amir's camp, and soon we could make out each separate tent. Almost in the centre of a whole city of canvas one tent stood out very prominently, its high cone-shaped roof towering above the surrounding country. This was the temporary abode of the Afghán Amir.

Our cavalcade rode up to the western limit of the camp, then turned southwards, and passed through the gates of what was left of a wall which, in former days, encircled the entire city. We then passed for a short distance over the tortuous and narrow streets of the suburbs, crossed a rickety bridge thrown over a deep and fairly wide water-course, and then I found myself amongst the members of our Mission. But, Merciful God! were these persons clad in coarse Afghán sheepskin-coats and felt boots, that stood around me, the members of the Russian Mission? Will these people give me a brotherly embrace; will they accord me a Russian welcome?—Yes; they are, indeed, the members of our ill-fated Mission to Afghánistán.

After the first salutations were at an end, a very shower of cross-questions rained upon me; each one striving to be the first to learn from me news about his relatives and friends who were at Táshkand; each asking for every sort of news. But I too plied them with questions

as to their own manner of life at Kábul; about the latest political news; about the state of health of the Amir; and, lastly, as to why they were all clad in Afghán sheepskin-coats?

“Well, you see,” they all shouted in chorus, “it’s so cold at Kábul that we could not pride ourselves much on linen or on our summer clothes.”

“And when, you must know,” they continued, “we started from Táshkand in the month of May, we were told by General Stolaitoff that our journey would not last more than two months. Why, then, encumber ourselves with a supply of winter clothing? And how, indeed, could we buy any when the money at our disposal was so cut down? We had to live at Kábul for four whole months, and cold and snow are not one’s brothers. Why not wrap up then in a *poshteen*; it’s not a bad sort of garment. And certainly the *poshteens* which my brethren of the Mission were wearing were very good ones, and would have passed muster with any European critic. The reader is already acquainted with a *poshteen* from the description given in Chapter IX of my first volume. Every Cossack, too, attached to the Mission had served out to him a Kábul *poshteen* of an inferior kind. Malevinski was clad throughout in Afghán costume.

“But why are we all standing outside? let us go into our tent,” proposed General Rázgónoff.

The tent was a large canvas one, of the pattern known as a double-pole and double-fly;* and on the bare ground were spread felts and carpets. Close to the walls were ranged two or three camp-beds. Benderski and Malevinski slept on the ground. Soon my traps had been unloaded, and my camp-bed was placed alongside the others.

Besides my Táshkand news, which however had become somewhat stale after my two weeks’ detention at Mazir-i-Sharif, I brought for the members of our Mission, various articles, such as small parcels, warm clothing, books, tea, sugar, tobacco, &c., &c. I must here observe that everything sent from Táshkand to the members of the Mission by their relations or friends I took at my own expense. In spite of my representations, the Táshkand authorities refused to assign means to enable me to hire even one pack animal belonging to the State for the transport of articles for the members of our Kábul Mission.

This is what my fellow-countrymen and comrades told me about their life at Kábul, and about the military and political events which had taken place during their stay there.

“Well, you must know,” began General Rázgónoff, “that General Stolaitoff explained his sudden departure from Kábul by the imperative necessity for his having a personal interview with General Kaufmann, in order to make his report on the events which had recently occurred on the Anglo-Afghán frontier. He travelled alone, and not with the Mission, because he said he wished to save time. He then told us all that the rest of the Mission would not be hindered by his departure from Kábul.

“The Amir-Sáhib,” said General Stolaitoff, “wishes to send a large Mission to Táshkand, with a member of the ruling house at its head.

* Of course, this is not the exact phraseology used in the Russian text; but that is what the author means to convey. Moreover, I have adopted words that are familiar to those who know India and Indian camp life well.—*W. E. G.*

And since such a large Mission cannot be equipped and started off with great rapidity, the remaining members of the Russian Mission must remain at Kábul until sufficient time has elapsed to admit of the necessary preparations, perhaps two or three weeks, not more."

"I had no reason to disbelieve this statement," continued General Razgónoff; "but as General Stolaitoff took you, doctor, with him, I declared to him that it would not be right that the Mission should remain for an indefinite time without a doctor, because we had already some sick Cossacks. To this General Stolaitoff replied that he would probably come out to meet our Mission, or that he would 'in any case send you back to the Mission.' Accordingly, we remained at Kábul with such assurances. The two or three weeks spoken of passed away; but about the departure of an Afghán Mission to Táshkand the Amír never mentioned a word; indeed, of any preparations in regard to one there was no news. Dovcha-Khán, the war minister who had accompanied General Stolaitoff from Kábul, never once came near us, and the Wazir visited us but very seldom. Seeing that no sort of preparations were being made, I decided upon asking the Amír when the proposed Afghán Mission would start from Kábul for Táshkand. The answer to this question was quite unexpected by me. "Of what Mission is the Colonel-Sáhib speaking?" enquired the Amír.

I expressed my astonishment at this sort of interrogative answer, and I said: "The Amír-Sáhib knows about this Mission as well as and even better than I do." But now came the Amír's turn. Surprise was expressed on his countenance, and he remained absolutely silent. I then related to him what General Stolaitoff had told me regarding the proposal to send a large Afghán Mission to Táshkand. The Amír remarked with astonishment that he had never thought of despatching any such Mission, except the usual persons whom he had sent with General Stolaitoff to Táshkand, and that these persons were merely sent out of a mark of respect* to the head of the Russian Mission now in his capital. From this statement it became evident that the Russian Mission at Kábul would remain there for an indefinite period; but why? An answer to this question I never could obtain, for General Stolaitoff in setting out from Kábul, besides making up the story about the despatch of an Afghán Mission, left with me no instructions at all.

Our friendly conversation was long carried on. It would be very difficult for me to repeat what each individual member of the Mission said.

I will therefore endeavour to narrate the whole purport of their story in my own words. That portion of our Kábul Mission which General Stolaitoff left behind received no news of any kind either from Táshkand or European Russia up to the end of September (O.S.). I do not know how it happened that my letters, written at Sámarkand

* On this subject the Amír Shir-Ali-Khan wrote to General Kaufmann on the 9th (21st) August 1878 as follows: "With our permission, the General (Stolaitoff) has set out from our capital, and will soon be with you, our dear friend, and he will communicate to you the condition of all our affairs. As a mark of our respect, we have appointed and do send with the General to Táshkand persons of high rank belonging to our household, viz., Kámnáb Mirza-Muhammad-Hus-sain and Alija-Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, and with them two officers." From this the reader will see there is not a single word about any proposal to send the large Afghán Mission of which General Stolaitoff had made statements.—*Author.*

immediately after my return from Afghánistán, which I made over to General Stolaitoff for despatch to Kábul with other letters, were not received by the Mission. I can only suppose, of course, that they were not forwarded to their address, for General Stolaitoff himself at this time did not write a single line to the Mission. It was only at the end of September (O.S.) that the General wrote the Mission a short letter which contained the information that, "by Imperial order, the Mission would remain at Kábul until special instructions were sent,"* and General Kaufmann communicated the same intimation in his letter of the 21st September (3rd October). It was in this letter that the Governor-General wrote that the Mission, in its relations with the Amír, should be extremely cautious, because the Imperial Government had not decided on affording him any military assistance, and that, if the question should be settled in the affirmative, Russian troops could not be in Kábul before the month of February. In conveying the Emperor's order for the Russian Mission to remain at Kábul, General Kaufmann, however, recognised that it must quit Kábul in the event of the English beginning military operations against Afghánistán. Further on in the same letter he explained the plan of future military operations which he thought the English would follow in Afghánistán, and he here expressed the opinion that the Kuram valley and the Bolán pass would be the chief lines they would adopt, since they would probably consider that the Khaibar route was impracticable. General Kaufmann then advised General Razgónoff to instruct the Afgháns to carry on war principally against the rear and the lines of their enemy's communications. General Kaufmann went on to say that he had not yet received any tidings of General Stolaitoff, who had started from Táshkand for Livádia on the 10th (22nd) September.

While, therefore, the Russian Mission remained at Kábul in complete ignorance as to why it did so, and as to whether Russia was doing, or rather was going to do, anything in the Afghán question, the English were actively preparing for war with the Amír. The Russian newspapers were full of assurances that England could not begin war with Afghánistán before the spring of 1879. Meanwhile three corps of the Anglo-Indian army were ready by the end of September to make an immediate advance along three lines. This may be concluded too from the tone, evincing strength and assurance of success, which was sounded in the correspondence between the Anglo-Indian Government and the Amír of Afghánistán. Shir-Ali himself at no time made any error as to the intentions of his enemy and as to their preparedness for an immediate

* Before his departure from Táshkand, General Stolaitoff wrote to Sháh-Muhammad-Khán, the Amír's Wazír at Kábul, as follows: "Thanks be to God I have reached Táshkand safely, and at the auspicious moment presented myself to the *Yárim-Pádisháh*. Day and night I am endeavouring to further our affairs, and hope that I shall succeed in so doing. To-day I am leaving Táshkand in order to have an interview with the Emperor, and to verbally represent to His Majesty the state of our affairs. If God should think fit, all that is needful will be done and approved. I hope that those who desire to enter Kábul from the east will perceive that the door is shut. Then, pray God, they will be defeated. I hope that you will convey my respects to His Highness the Amír. May God grant him a long life, and improve the state of his health. Remain well yourself, and be assured that, with the blessing of God, our affairs will be arranged. *Extract from Correspondence respecting affairs in Central Asia, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, No. 1 of 1881.—Author.*

advance.* This knowledge on his part can be traced in the letter which he addressed on the 25th September (7th October) 1878 to the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán.

“After sincere expression of the feelings of friendship, be it known to Your Excellency,” wrote the Amír, “that the condition of the affairs of this country since the departure from the capital of Afghánistán for Táshkand of the Envoy of the Russian Government, General Stolaitoff, have taken such a turn that the troops of the shameless English have begun open hostility with the sovereignty conferred upon me from above, and have firmly bound on themselves the girdle of enmity. All this, however, is probably known to you from the Colonel’s letters.†

“They have at this present time arrived at the Khaibar border of my-God-granted sovereignty, and have prepared to begin war. The matter has only now begun. In a word, decency and good relations have passed away, and have left behind them the beginning of war (they are now probably beginning war). The troops of my God-granted sovereignty must, in proportion to their strength, defend the frontier themselves and their property; this they will do as far as may be possible.

“The flame of this meanness (quarrel), of this enmity (malice), will never be quenched, and you will often receive news of collisions between the British and Afghán sovereignties.

“I pray you, for friendship’s sake, not to abandon your consideration, attention, and arrangements.”

It is natural that, from his demands for assistance, the Amír should have turned, in the first instance, to the Russian Mission at Kábul; and herein was expressed the thorough insupportableness and, if you will, the comical side of the position of the Russian Mission. The Mission could make no answer to the questions of the Amír and of his ministers. That it could not say one single word, because it was so ordered by superior authority, would have been in the natural order of things. But it was obliged to remain silent because it was perfectly ignorant of what to say. General Stolaitoff had never communicated to the members of the Mission one word regarding his confidential conferences with the Amír. The Mission, therefore, did not know what he had and what he had not promised to Shir-Ali. Meanwhile the Amír declared that General Stolaitoff had assured him he would return to Kábul at the head of 30,000 men.

The Amír was constantly asking, “How soon will General Stolaitoff return to Kábul with the Russian troops? Will military aid be sent to me soon?”

How, then, could General Razgónoff reply to the questions, when General Stolaitoff had told him nothing whilst he was at Kábul, and when the first intimation on the subject was only received from General Kaufmann in the beginning of October? Truly the Russian Mission at

* There is nothing surprising in the fact that the English were quite ready for a war with Afghánistán, seeing that they had begun to prepare for it in the spring of 1877, when the conferences at Pesháwar between the English and Afghán diplomatic agents showed that the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán was weary of the state of vassalship which he was under in respect of the Anglo-Indian Empire.—*Author*.

† *i.e.*, General N. O. Razgónoff.—*Author*.

Kábul had to live through a hard time, but still greater misfortunes awaited it.

At the end of September (O. S.) General Razgónoff advised—of course, nothing else was left to him but to offer advice—the Amír to write a letter to the Russian Emperor. The following is a rescript of what he said* :—

“ Since, according to the demands of friendship and good-breeding, it is imperative that I should acquaint your Imperial Majesty regarding the course of certain circumstances and occurrences, I beg that you will permit me to write to you to say that, from the time the door of friendly relations was opened between the powerful Government of your Majesty and this God-protected Government, and from the date of the opening of friendly communications between the two, the hearts of the officers of the British Government have felt insulted. They have for a long time wearied and disquieted the servants of this God-granted Government, and have displayed much unfriendly conduct, which is not in accord with the conditions of neighbourhood. The fire of their evil-mindedness and of their cunning had not yet gone out when the Mission of your Majesty came to my capital at Kábul, and began to string the pearls of friendly feelings on the threads of this sovereignty. This event increased their (the English) opposition and enmity. On the arrival of your Majesty’s Mission, they displayed their hostile behaviour in public, and on many occasions conducted themselves dishonourably, showing their enmity in many and various ways. First of all they came to Jamrúd, a place within my territory, with a multitude of persons, whom they called their guides, who were evidently entrusted with the task of causing evil to this God-granted Government, and they wished to pass on, without permission, to my capital to carry out their own desires, *viz.*, to insult the Mission of your Majesty. But when the officials at my frontier posts and the officers of this God-granted Government struck the hearts of their wishes by the arm of refusal, saying that to cement friendly relations by force and to send a Mission with such a crowd and uproar was contrary to the customs of every nation, they returned to Pesháwar, and are now occupied with organising a campaign against Afghánistán, sending their proclamations of war to every corner and crooked lane, and making use of every endeavour so that they may destroy the foundations of the Afghán monarchy. Notwithstanding all this, the officers of our God-granted Government have as yet done nothing unkind or hostile to them, and they will look upon their first act of hostility as on an incautious and foolish deed. But the more we pursue this course, the more hostile will be their action. The British Government stands, at this time, in the same position as regards the Afghán Government that it occupied 40 years ago, when the Envoy of the famous Russian Government and the Agent of the British Government both came to Afghánistán. The late Amír, guided by sound sense, preferred the friendship of your Imperial Majesty’s predecessor to the friendship of the British Government, in consequence of which Afghánistán suffered that which it suffered. In short, the English have again decided upon war, and the subjects of this God-granted Government will once more defend their frontier, lives, and property as far as their strength will allow of

* Taken from *Central Asian Correspondence*, enclosure No. 36.—*Author.*

their doing. Let us see how Providence will end this war, and may He grant that it may be averted.

“The above is a brief exposition of the state of affairs from the beginning to the end, and so I write it for your Imperial Majesty’s information, and I hope that your Majesty will be so kind as to send me friendly aid, corresponding to the greatness of your Imperial Majesty, for the maintenance of peace in Afghánistán.”

At the same time, not having heard from General Stolaitoff for a long time, the Amír decided to write to him also, informing him too of the state of affairs in Afghánistán. The following is a text of this letter:—

“During the time you were at the capital (Kábul) and carried on friendly conferences with me, you informed me of the evil intentions of the English with regard to the Afgháns. From the date of your departure for Táshkand their hostile relations have become from day to day worse and worse, and have lately been displayed both clearly and openly. You have already been made acquainted with the position of affairs by the letters of the Colonel (Razgónoff). A sufficiently long time has passed away since I have received any news of you. Circumstances no longer permit me to hope for a peaceful solution of the matter. War is, indeed, unavoidable, and they are the aggressors. If it had been in the power of the officials of this God-granted Government, they would have averted a rupture by making concessions; but now it remains only to observe what shall appear from behind the curtain (of destiny).

“I have lost no time in communicating the circumstances above set forth to His Imperial Majesty the Tsár, and likewise to General Kaufmann. Now I inform you also so that you may show me such friendly assistance as may seem fitting to you, and as shall become the greatness of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor.”*

But before this epistle reached General Stolaitoff, he sent a letter to Afghánistán, in which he communicated the news of his arrival at Livádia, and an account of his efforts on behalf of Afghánistán, &c., &c. This letter was written in Persian, but since a portion of its orthography was bad, and one word was often used in place of another, the reading of this letter was a task of very great difficulty, for it took a whole week for the Amír and the Mission to discover its meaning. The following phrase was especially unintelligible to Afgháns:—“Our Government is as guileless as a dove and as wise as a serpent.” I here give a translation of this extraordinary letter:—

“From General Stolaitoff to the Wazir Sháh-Muhammad-Khán.

“First of all, I hope that you will be so kind as to convey my respects to the Amír. May God grant him a long life, and may He improve his health! I shall always remember his kingly hospitality. I am engaged day and night in his affairs, and, thank God, my endeavours have not been without success. His Majesty the great Emperor and the sincere friend of the Amír and of Afghánistán will do everything that he considers is necessary. Doubtless you have not forgotten what I said to you, *viz.*, that the affairs of a sovereignty are like a country

which is covered with innumerable mountains, valleys, and rivers, so that he, who is sitting on a high hill, can observe everything below him. Through the decree and power of God, there is no other Empire like that of our great Emperor. May God prolong his days. Therefore, everything that our Government advises you ought to do. I tell you truly that our Government is wise like a serpent and guileless like a dove. There are many things which you cannot understand, but which our Government comprehends perfectly. It often happens that which does not at first please us proves a blessing to us afterwards. Now, my good friend, you must know that the enemy of your glorious religion wishes to conclude a peace with you through the medium of the Turkish Sultán. Therefore you must be guided by your brethren who dwell on the other side of the river (Amu-Daria). If God strengthens them, and places in their hands the sword of war, then advance, invoking the Divine hand. In other words, you should be like a serpent, outwardly show a desire for peace, but secretly prepare for war, and when God shall give the sign, declare yourselves! It would have been well if, when the envoy of your enemy had wished to enter your country, you, in your turn, had sent to the country of your enemy a special envoy possessed of a serpent's tongue, full of cunning, so that, with soft speech, he might have misled your enemy's understanding, and have induced him to refrain from fighting with you. My dear friend, I confide you to the Providence of God. May God protect the sovereignty of the Amír, and may the limbs of your enemies shake. AMEN."

It is intelligible then that when the Amír received this letter, he asked the Russian Mission to explain its contents, and also what were the general intentions of the Russian Government.

"Why does not General Stolaitoff write regarding the military assistance which he promised me?" asked the Amír of General Razgónoff.

But what could the General answer to this question? He could only say "I do not know." The same answer had, however, to be given so often that with each "I do not know" the Amír got perfectly furious.

"Who then is to know?" returned he. "Are you not the envoy from Russia? You then certainly ought to know."

Russia's envoy had then to resort to the answer that fresh instructions were "expected" from General Kaufmann. But General Kaufmann very seldom wrote to General Razgónoff, and when he did so his letters contained little of a comforting nature. Thus, in his letter of the 22nd October (3rd November), supposing that the Anglo-Afghán war had already begun, or would soon begin, he recommended General Razgónoff to counsel the Amír to conclude a peace with England, or, as he expressed himself, "to hold out to the English the olive-branch of peace. In the same letter General Kaufmann spoke positively to the effect that he could not assist the Amír with troops, "as I have not received the Sovereign Emperor's permission to do so." Further on he begged that his advice might be communicated to the Amír to release his son Yakúb-Khán from confinement, and to reconcile himself to his adherents. General Kaufmann had intended to send the Afgháns 10,000 or 15,000

needle-rifles, or 6,000 muzzle-loading rifles; but he could not do this, since he had not received permission to do so from the Central Government.

As regards General Stolaitoff, General Kaufmann told the members of the Russian Mission that he had only received one telegram from him, announcing his arrival at Livádia, and nothing more.

At this time General Kaufmann wrote the following letter to Shir-Ali:—

“After sincere wishes for your health and prosperity,” he wrote, “be it known to you as follows—”

“Your friendly letter, dated 12th Shawál, I received at Táshkand on the 16th (28th) October, and have understood its contents.

“I sent by telegram a brief summary of your letter addressed to His Majesty the Great Sovereign Emperor. The letter itself, and also the one addressed to General Stolaitoff, I have despatched by courier to Livádia, where my Sovereign is now residing.

“I think it necessary to inform Your Highness that the English, as I very well know, are disposed to make a fresh effort to come to terms with you. On my own part, and as your friend, in thinking over what I should advise you, I counsel Your Highness, if the English, as I am sure they will do, take a step towards making peace with you, to hold out to them also the olive-branch of peace. And may the Most High God preserve you for the good of your subjects.”

Both these letters were only received at Kábul on the 7th (19th) November, *i.e.*, one day before the expiration of the period allowed to the Amír in the English *ultimatum*. Notwithstanding this, and also the fact that the military preparations of the Amír were fully completed, he, with General Razgónoff's advice, sent off to the English the “olive-branch of peace.”

Immediately he received General Kaufmann's letter, dated 21st October (2nd November), Shir-Ali sent off his answer. This letter, which was written on the 8th (20th) November, and which was despatched to Táshkand the same day, ran as follows:—

“After a declaration of friendly sentiments, be it known to your friendly and well-disposed mind that your friendly letter of the 22nd October (3rd November), 8th Zul-Kaada of the year 1295 H., we have received and have understood its contents.

“Previous to the arrival of your letter, we received from the British Government a hostile letter, couched in haughty and severe language.* This we read, and then gave the text (in English) to the Envoy of the sovereignty of world-wide fame, General Razgónoff, and he, having translated it into the Russian language, despatched it to Your Excellency.”

“At the time that we were prepared to write an answer acceding to their (the English) demands, we received your letter. You have written to us to say that we should hold out to them the olive-branch of peace. Although we know the English, and that they will in no case cross the hands and refrain from entertaining towards this God-granted Government enmity and haughtiness, that this business now only awaits the first

* This remark refers to the *ultimatum* which the English sent at this time to Shir-Ali-Khán.—*Author*.

shot, and that they have no thought of casting aside enmity and establishing friendship, yet, agreeably to your advice and the directions of His Majesty the Emperor, we have held out to them the olive-branch of peace by sending to them a friendly letter with affable words. We send with this a copy of the letter which we have despatched to them. You, our well-disposed friend, will perceive and know the essence of the affair and of the views of Britain towards Afghánistán.

“I wish, dear friend, that you may always be prosperous and happy.”

But the Amír's "olive-branch" did not reach Ali-Masjid till the 10th (22nd) November, by which date the war was in full progress, so that the Afghán who took it immediately went back without entering into any negotiations. Nevertheless, General Razgónoff once more counselled the Amír to offer peace to the English, and the Amír again took his advice; but for the second time the Amír's letter to the English commanders was too late, since it only reached the frontier on the 17th (29th) November, by which time the English had defeated the Afgháns on the Kuram line, and had occupied both the Paiwár-Kotal and the Shutar-gardan passes.

In consequence of this, circumstances became so complicated, that the bloody struggle between the English and the Afgháns had, of necessity, to run its course.

During the whole period between the 11th (23rd) August, the date of the arrival of the Russian Mission at Kábul, and that on which the fight before Ali-Masjid took place, the Russian Mission remained within the four walls of the Bála-His-sár, without once putting foot outside. The negotiations which were carried on between our Mission and the Amír were conducted chiefly between General Razgónoff and certain Afghán officials, the interpreter being Nazíroff. The other members of the Mission were scarcely ever deemed worthy of the honour of being invited to be present at the meetings between General Razgónoff and the officials of the Afghán Government. The secrecy with which General Rozgónoff conducted these negotiations was carried to such an extent, that if into the hall that was used by all the members of the Mission conjointly the Wazir came and opened a political conversation, General Razgónoff, without the slightest ceremony, would invite all the members of the Mission to withdraw, except the interpreter Nazíroff. Strange arrangement; because General Razgónoff had really nothing of a secret nature to hide; indeed, he himself subsequently related to the other members of the Mission the whole purport of his conferences and of his relations. Why, then, play the farce in secret? The adoption of this course did but the more intensify the already uncomfortable impression held by the members of the Mission, who had to spend their whole existence within the limit of four walls.

This kind of sojourn could not have been a cheerful one on whomsoever imposed, but it became positively unendurable when, during it, the thought arose that, perhaps, the presence of the Russian Mission at Kábul had been the cause, even though indirect, of the war between England and Afghánistán.

To this it is necessary to add that the Russian Mission was very far from enjoying the same respect that it did during the first days

of its arrival. From the Sirdárs down to the common people, every Afghán held the Russian Mission to be the sole cause of the political complications that had arisen, and of the now inevitable war with England. The Amír and his ministers constantly reproached the Mission in that now, as 40 years before, it had drawn a dark cloud over Afghánistán. Of course, these reproaches were not altogether unfounded, even though they might be softened down; but the position of the Russian Mission was certainly not improved thereby. To complete the whole picture, sickness of a bad type had broken out both amongst the members of the Mission and their Cossack escort. One Cossack had only just escaped dying of typhus fever, and the head of the Mission, General Razgónoff, was suffering from inflammation of the throat, which, on account of local climatic conditions, obstinately continued for three weeks. Snow fell at Kábul in October, and it had begun to get very cold. Meanwhile, the chilly members of the Russian Mission had no place in which they could warm themselves, for no single room had either a stove or a fire-place within its walls, so that only a certain amount of warmth could be obtained by means of *mangals*; and even to this altogether primitive method of raising the temperature of the surrounding atmosphere resort could not at all times be had, for frequently neither a stick of wood nor a piece of charcoal was to be obtained. Sometimes, however, cheerful days fell to the lot of the members of our Mission. Such days, through a strange caprice of fate, arrived when they were least expected.

We know to what unlikely proportions the press of Western Europe had expanded the so-called Afghán Question. It is natural then that even those persons should have turned their attention to Afghánistán, who perhaps had previously not the slightest idea about the country. It is natural also that certain of these should have been possessed of the desire to assist the Afghán Amír with their advice, or even materially. Thus it was that there poured in, both upon the Amír and on our Mission, advice from Europe as to the best way of acting under certain circumstances. Various plans were proposed for the conduct of a war with England. Even messages in cypher were sent, although, of course, no one at Kábul possessed the key thereto. One such despatch, symbolled by the names of trees, wild-beasts, lakes, rivers, mountains, and seas, took up the time of the entire Afghán-Russian staff for two whole weeks, and even then its meaning was not revealed. Abdul-Kádir, a Kázi of Pesháwar, who at that time enjoyed the fullest confidence of the Amír, wishing "to unravel the meaning of this despatch," it seems forgot to drink overnight his customary number of bottles of wine, to which he was very much addicted, so that he, too, could make nothing of the mysterious despatch. One Garibaldian captain who had retired tendered to the Amír the most trustworthy advice as to how he could beat back the English from all the positions they had seized, and he claimed the post of the Amír's Commander-in-Chief; but he, first of all, required that the "modest" sum of 1,500 francs (£60) should be sent to him for his travelling expenses to Kábul.

"The Postal Union of Hamburg" made offers regarding the organisation of a Postal Department throughout Afghánistán, and it requested that Afghán postage stamps might be sent as a pattern for their dies.

The wishes of the respected "Union" were completely satisfied by the despatch to Hamburg of postage stamps valued at $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, and 1 *tanga** each respectively.

Still, in spite of these occasional diversions, the life of the Russian Mission at Kábul was an extraordinarily weary one. Let the reader picture to himself persons shut up within the four walls of a building, prohibited from taking one single step outside—persons not only deprived of those conveniences to which they have been always accustomed, but who saw only the extremely repulsive countenances of the Wazir, of the Kázi, and of two or three other Afghán persons; finally, without any knowledge of what was going on in God's world at the time, because Russian papers were not received at Kábul, and English journals were no longer sent to the Amír from India,—and he can then understand the thorough unbearableness of the position in which the members of the Russian Mission were placed during their four months' detention in the capital of Afghánistán.

Mr. Malevinski† alone did not grow dispirited under such circumstances, for he could find occupation to his taste. Aided by a *Jigit*, he bought up all the old coins he could get from the Kábul bazaar, and for days together he would clean up and boil begrimed and tarnished pieces of money of all kinds, and certain'y the result was that he got together a very complete collection of ancient coins.‡

Meanwhile, on the 10th (22nd) November, the English obtained possession of Ali-Masjid, though the Afgháns declared that the garrison of this fortress defended it very bravely, and that both sides suffered severe loss. Afghán statement further tells us that this position was held by 6 battalions, whereas the English attacked it with 20. The engagement began on the 9th (21st) November, and at first went very favourably for the Afgháns; but since, on the following day, news reached the Afghán camp that the English had turned the position and threatened the garrison from the rear, and that the turning had been effected with the aid of the treacherous Momands, the garrison decided upon an evacuation of the place, as it could no longer hold the position. The retirement was carried out in face of a concentrated attack on the part of the English, but the whole of the Afghán artillery was abandoned and fell into the hands of the captors. Two Afghán battalions were completely destroyed, two went off towards the Shutar-gardan, and the other two retired on Jalálábád.

On the 15th (27th) November, the Amír declared a *jihád* (holy war) against the English, and from this political step he expected to obtain great benefit to his cause.

And, certainly, some results of this proclamation soon shewed themselves, although very far from the extent anticipated by the Amír. Thus from the date of the issue of the invitation to his co-religionists, the mountain tribes in the neighbourhood fell upon the rear and lines of communication of the English forces. Even the Momands, who had just proved themselves friends of the English, did not delay plundering an English transport-train loaded with war *matériel*.

* A *tanga* is of variable value throughout Central Asia.—*W. E. G.*

† It has not been stated by the author what official position Mr. Malevinski held in the Russian Mission to Afghánistán.—*W. E. G.*

‡ This collection is now in the possession of Count Strogouoff.—*Author.*

Nevertheless, on the 18th (30th) November, the Paiwár-Kotal Pass was occupied by the English after a fight, in which, however, they suffered heavy loss; and on the 19th November (1st December) the Shutar-gardan also fell into their hands. Here the Afgháns at first shewed strong opposition, but the English repeated the same manœuvre here that they had performed at the taking of the fort of Ali-Masjid. The Afgháns, perceiving that their left flank and rear were threatened, retired, leaving behind them the whole of their artillery (18 guns).

Thus Kábul seemed completely open to the English, for the Kuram column could in 2 or 3 days' time be before the very walls of the Amír's capital. Indeed, worse circumstances still might even take place.

The Kuram column might circumvent Kábul from the south, and, after passing through Kushi and the Logar valley, come out on to the Ghazni road and surround Kábul from the west also. Had the English carried out this manœuvre, Kábul would have been cut off from Afghán-Turkistán, which now remained the sole bulwark of the Amír. The fact is that at this particular season of the year the Bámián pass alone to Turkistán is free from snow, the road over Kushán pass being quite impracticable. If this manœuvre had been carried out, the Amír would have been caught like a mouse in a trap, and the war would, of course, have been immediately at an end. But the Amír perceived the danger that was threatening him, and so he decided upon forestalling his enemies by leaving Kábul for Turkistán.

He, first of all, sent off his family, household, and movable property. This he did on the 19th November (1st December). Afterwards he hesitated for some time as to whether he would go to Mazár-i-Sharif, or, collecting all the available forces at Kábul—14 infantry battalions in all—offer his enemy a general engagement before the walls of his capital. General Razgónoff, however, persuaded him not to take this step or to needlessly risk his military forces, which were to him of no little importance. He assured the Amír that it would be better to withdraw with his forces to Turkistán, whence he could seriously threaten the English advance towards and occupation of Kábul, seeing that he still had to add to these 14 battalions 10 others that were in the *Chahar-Wiláyat*. He could thus still dispose of a very fair-sized body of troops, with which he could, at any given time, operate against the English.

Meanwhile the further stay of the Amír at Kábul was undesirable for other reasons. There had at this time arisen, both amongst the troops and the inhabitants of Kábul strong dissatisfaction, which had been called forth under the following circumstances.

The inhabitants of those localities, wherein military operations were being carried on, had removed to Kábul in considerable numbers, in order to seek deliverance from the fire and sword of the "red-coated" soldiers; but they here found a death even more terrible than that which remained to them in their own homes. This influx to the normal population of Kábul immediately caused all the necessaries of life to rise in price, so that by the end of November (O. S.) the dearness of provisions was very extreme; sometimes, indeed, the necessaries of life were not to be purchased even for money. Famine consequently ensued, and with it, of

course, came all its concomitants—epidemic diseases of all kinds. Typhus raged throughout Kábul, so that in its streets and bazaars corpses were heaped up, which remained unburied for weeks together.

The bazaars of Kábul were full of prisoners* and slaves, who, on account of the severity of the famine, were sold at fabulously cheap rates. Thus a Káfir boy would fetch but a few score of rupees, and a girl of the same race from 5 to 10 rupees only. This, indeed, was the only sort of traffic offered in the Kábul market, for operations in all other wares had come to an end. And with the cessation of trade stopped also the Amír's receipts. Meanwhile, his expenses for the maintenance of his army had very largely increased. In order, therefore, to find the money wherewith to pay his troops, Shir-Ali was obliged to have recourse to a system of enforced loans. Those merchants who would not agree to advance the Amír money were punished by the confiscation of the whole of their property to the State. Thus a numerous class of Kábul merchants were incensed against the Amír, and everywhere resounded loud complaints about the unfortunate circumstances which had arisen and which had overtaken, not only the city of Kábul, but the whole of Afghánistán. Many, too, were the secret curses that were showered on the Amír's head—curses secretly showered, because to openly express dissatisfaction at the actions of the Amír was still a matter involving danger. Indeed those convicted of thus insulting His Highness were subjected to punishments of various kinds. Amongst such punishments was one of a very original kind, calling to mind the old days in Russia before the reign of Peter the Great, or even the middle ages of Europe generally. The accused person was seized and fastened between two posts let into the ground by nails driven through his ears. The person thus dealt with, though suffering intense pain, was not allowed to flinch; but if he remained motionless for several hours, he was released and allowed to go.

Yakúb-Khán's party took advantage of the dark events that had set in to loudly assert itself, and for all the misfortunes which had overtaken their country, it accused the Amír and the Russian Mission. Many, therefore, who had hitherto been amongst the number of Shir-Ali's adherents now passed over to the following of his son. A revolution was therefore set on foot, and might at any moment burst into existence. It might, too, the more easily occur, seeing that Shir-Ali had, in the outburst of his rage, been so incautious as to abuse the Afghán General who was in command of his troops at the English attack on Ali-Masjid. This man, who enjoyed great influence amongst the mountaineers of Kohistán, immediately separated himself from the Amír and went over to Yakúb-Khán, and with him too went over a large number of his men. Upon this Shir-Ali clearly perceived that he could not any longer remain at Kábul, both because of these very circumstances, and because he could not withstand the English forces that were advancing. And so he had recourse to the measure which General Kaufmann had recommended him to adopt. Yakúb-Khán was released from arrest, made to take the

* I think that our Mission needlessly let slip a favourable opportunity of obtaining some individual knowledge of this hitherto mysterious race. If by the act of purchasing some of these Káfirs our Mission had rendered them free, we should have attained a certain moral influence. Such Káfirs would not have been bought as slaves, but would have been actually redeemed from slavery.—*Author.*

oath of allegiance to his father, and was then appointed to be the ruler of Kábul. After this Shir-Ali was free, and could with an easy conscience take his departure from his capital.

The last days which the Russian Mission passed at Kábul involved a very anxious time. Indeed, it passed through this period almost entirely by itself, for the Amír very seldom communicated with it, and even the Wazir did not often come near our Mission, for days and even weeks would pass between his occasional visits.

The members of the Russian Mission were now, more than ever, literally prisoners, and dared not move one single step without the double gates. During the last days of their stay at Kábul even the Cossacks never left the court-yard of the house, and had to give up the personal charge of their own horses. I should here state that their horses were tethered in an open space that was only separated from the house occupied by the members of the Mission by a narrow lane. When the Cossacks went out to look after their horses and passed down this lane, they were exposed to abuse on the part of every Afghán they chanced to meet. Even the *Jigits* and native followers of the Mission could not now show themselves in the streets and bazaars of the city, because they had on several occasions had to suffer personal assault and rough treatment of every kind on the part of the Afgháns. The Afghán horsemen in charge of the Mission stables did as they pleased with the allowance of forage served out for the horses of the Mission from the Amír's stores; and they either snatched it away from the servants and sold it for their own use, or gave it to their own horses. But this was not all. They began to unceasingly beat the servants attached to the Mission, because of the thorough fidelity which they displayed. Further, they designed to divide amongst themselves all the horses belonging to the Russian Mission; and they only sought a favourable opportunity of finally appropriating the animals to themselves.

Although the members of the Russian Mission were safe from insult within the limits of their own court-yard, yet they felt the want of provisions as keenly as did their own servants and riding-horses. And there was neither the market nor the money at and with which to buy what they wanted. For whom were they to send to the bazaar to buy what they wanted? And what was now to be had in the bazaar? Or where were the vendors to be seen? All the shops in the city were closed, and along the streets wandered crowds of starving people, whose one topic of conversation was that of politics. The members of the Mission had now to content themselves with those scanty allowances of food which the Amír ordered to be sent to them. Of course it is not to be supposed that the Amír's allowances were on a less liberal scale than formerly, but that the various "Treasurers" *Chai-Kháns* and *Khán-Samáns* were far from giving to the members of the Mission all that they were ordered to give. Hence it was that the latter, with fever and typhus patients on their hands, suffered from actual hunger.

The sole amusement left to the members of the Mission was now walking on the terrace and the flat roof of the southern tower. But soon they had to desist even from doing this; for on one occasion when

the topographer Benderski was taking his usual walking exercise on the roof, he was nearly struck by a bullet fired at him by one of the Afghán sentries who was supposed to be guarding the quarters occupied by the members of the Mission.

Regarding the departure of the Amír from Kábul, there began to be rumours in the city long before the famous 1st (13th) December, but no one knew for certain when he had decided to go. In the absence then of certainty, the rumour alluded to obtained currency throughout Kábul. Neither did the members of the Russian Mission know aught of the Amír's proposed departure. Indeed, they were the last to hear from their *Jigits* even the rumour that was current on all sides.

The Wazir was as silent as the tomb. Meanwhile, the English had defeated the Afgháns in the Khaibar Pass. At last General Razgónoff decided to send word to the Amír that it was the wish of the members of his Mission to leave Kábul for Táshkand. Having made extracts from General Kaufmann's letters of the 21st September (3rd October) and 22nd October (3rd November), General Razgónoff secretly entrusted these to the Wazir for delivery to the Amír. To this end General Razgónoff's conferences with the Wazir, relative to the departure of the Russian Mission from Kábul, were conducted very secretly. Indeed, of so confidential a nature were they, that no one, except General Razgónoff himself, the Wazir, and the Interpreter Naziroff, knew anything about them. The extracts in question were put together in the form of a letter from General Kaufmann to General Razgónoff.

The following was the text of this made-up letter: "The Amír knows very well that I cannot render him any military assistance, since the war has begun at an unfavourable season of the year. If the English, in spite of the efforts of the Amír to avoid war, begin it, you must, after asking the Amír's permission, quit Kábul and return to Táshkand, because your presence in Afghánistán during the winter would be useless. Besides which, in the event of such an extremity as the commencement of war operations in Afghánistán, you must come here in order to inform me all about the circumstances, so that I may be able to report them to the Emperor. This will be very useful both for Afghánistán and for Russia herself. The presentation of this note took place on the 18th (30th) November. General Razgónoff begged the Wazir to keep the matter secret, because only four persons should know anything about it, *viz.*, the Wazir, the Amír, General Razgónoff, and the Interpreter Naziroff."

I, as an altogether unprejudiced person, have related only what was communicated to me by others. I must, however, express my surprise as to there having been any necessity to adopt such secrecy in the matter of communicating the very out-of-date letters and instructions from General Kaufmann. This mysterious method of procedure only led to the fact that the Wazir expressed doubts as to the authenticity of the draft which General Razgónoff had made over to him as coming from General Kaufmann, and he demanded that the letter itself should be handed to him for delivery to the Amír. But it is evident that this demand could not in any way be complied with, because how could the purport of two letters written a long time previously be presented in the form of one

lately received communication. And if they had once been presented, they would, of course, have had to be read from beginning to end, whereas I know the whole contents of these letters were not such as could be shown to the Amír at any time. What answer can be given to the following leading question :—

Why did you, General Razgónoff, not communicate General Kaufmann's instructions at the very time you received them? How such a question would square with the language both of the Amír and of the Wazír I do not know, and General Razgónoff has never told me anything on the subject.

The extracts sent by General Razgónoff to the Amír, in the form of a letter from General Kaufmann, had the following result :—

The next day the various members of the Amír's suite, the Wazir, the Kázi Abdul-Kádir-Khán, the Amír's cousin, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, and others came to the quarters occupied by the Russian Mission, and one after the other began to assure General Razgónoff that its members were in no danger, and there was nothing to be afraid of so long as the Amír was alive; that the General, therefore, need have no misgivings, &c., &c. Now, since the other members of the Mission knew nothing as to the previous history of the said extracts, they, of course, did not understand what was going on in front of them, and for a whole hour they puzzled their heads as to what might be the meaning of the passing scene. It was only afterwards that they received the following explanation.

The Amír subsequently sent to General Kaufmann the following letter.

“After expressions of friendship and goodwill, I communicate to You, Most Gracious Being, the following :—

“The enmity of the English Government and the relations of that sovereignty towards this God-granted monarchy have, at all times, been made known to you, both by my own letters and by those of the Russian Envoy now at Kábul,—the envoy of a sovereignty known throughout the world.

“The enmity and obstinacy of the English Government have reached extreme limits. Although, in accordance with your friendly counsel, given to me by the order of the Great Hazrat, His Imperial Majesty, and sent to me in the last letter,* I held out to them the olive-branch, yet, in spite of this, about 20 English *fanj*† have had a severe engagement with 5 of my *fanj*† which were defending Ali-Masjid, and many have been wounded or killed on both sides.

“In the course of some days after the Ali-Masjid affair, the English arrived also in the Kuram valley, and fought with my troops that were defending Chakhau.‡ The fight lasted two days, and at first they§ were beaten by my troops, but the next day they overcame my soldiers. During this fight the number of killed and wounded on both sides exceeded those that fell at Ali-Masjid.

“I, Your friend, am now in such a position that, with the advice of the respected Elders of Afghánistán, I have sent off the families

* General Kaufmann's letter to the Amír, dated 21st October (2nd November).—*Author.*

† By this expression must here be understood battalions.—*Author.*

‡ The Pniwár Kotál. (?)—*W. E. G.*

§ The English.—*Author.*

of the leading personages to Turkistán, and have ordered the other Afgháns to send their families also to the mountains, and to prepare themselves for the fight.

“Without paying any attention to my letter, which is in the hands of the officials of the English Government, they are now resorting to open enmity, and are sending their troops, one after the other, with the object of depriving me of my authority over Afghánistán. They contemplate, too, the speedy taking into their own hands the affairs of Afghánistán and the occupation of the capital of my sovereignty.

“Therefore, openly and candidly, I intimate to You, most gracious friend, the following :—

“On the basis of the long-established friendship which has existed between the famous sovereignty of the High Hazrat, His Imperial Majesty, and in consequence of the recently written letter handed to me by General Razgónoff, the Envoy of the High Hazrat, His Imperial Majesty, and of Your Excellency, accord with my sovereignty has been literally and heartily fulfilled.

“Pray God that no misfortune may befall my sovereignty; but if it should, may He direct that the dust of such misfortune may not fall on the skirt of the sovereignty of His Imperial Majesty.

“As the result of reciprocal feelings, I, Your friend, adjure you that, on account of my necessity, You give me the aid of Your troops, and that You despatch from Táshkand from amongst the troops at Your disposal as many as You may have ready, and that You be pleased to furnish me with those in my province of Turkistán.

“To write more than the expressions of friendship and goodwill I am not able.

“I add to this that the Envoy of the renowned sovereignty, General Razgónoff, has informed me of the receipts of orders that, in the event of the war between the English and the Afgháns becoming fierce, he is, after seeking permission of the Amír-Sáhib, to start for Táshkand. He has accordingly asked for my permission to return.

“I, Your friend, considering the advantages of both sovereignties, and influenced by certain clear circumstances, have not thought it possible to give him the asked-for permission.”

This letter was received at Táshkand on the 16th (28th) December. One cannot but notice the fact that, though the Amír speaks of sending the families of the upper Afghán classes from Kábul to Turkistán, he never mentions a word about sending away his own, and even of the existence of any intention on his part to do so there does not appear the slightest trace in his letter.

At the same time that he wrote the above letter, he sent one also to his diplomatic agent at Táshkand, Mirza-Muhammad-Hassan-Khán. In the beginning of this second letter, he repeated all that was said in his letter to General Kaufmann regarding the military operations on the Anglo-Afghán frontier; but he afterwards went on to express himself in the following terms :—

“Now when the time has arrived for His Imperial Majesty to show me friendly aid, I have sent a letter to my dear friend, the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán, begging him to no longer defer sending me the aid of his troops at such a time of necessity, in

accordance with the demands of the friendship which exists between both governments, and not to put off sending me assistance to another time, but to despatch to Afghán-Turkistán the 30,000 troops from Táshkand which, as General Stolaitoff said in Your presence, are ready to be sent whenever I might ask for them. I permit You by day and night to remind the Russian Government of Turkistán of its promised assistance, and do not You defer doing so."

General Razgónoff continued his preparations for departure, but these preparations were kept secret from the Afgháns. Thus, for example, in order to effect the shoeing of the horses attached to the Russian Mission, they were first of all brought into the Mission quarters and shod during the night, the utmost caution being observed in the operation.

At length, during the last days of November (O. S.), the Wazir informed General Razgónoff that the Amír intended leaving Kábul on the 1st (13th) December, and that, therefore, the members of the Mission ought to prepare to start too. The time for the departure was arranged during the night.

The members of the Russian Mission had no sleep on the night of the 1st (13th) December, because they hourly expected the arrival of the Wazir with instructions regarding their withdrawal from Kábul. It was not till 3 o'clock in the morning of the 2nd (14th) December that he made his appearance, and hurriedly conveyed the Amír's orders regarding the passage through the city. The Amír himself had by this time quitted the Bála-Hissár.

The members of the Mission groped in the dark for a long time through the empty streets of the city, their route following circuitous by-ways, and so they joined the Amír's cortege outside the walls of Kábul. A halt of some hours to rest was made at Kala-i-Kázi, the journey being continued the next day.

The withdrawal of the Russian Mission from Kábul had all the appearance of a real flight, and involuntarily recalled to the minds of those who took part in it the triumphal entry into Kábul of the same Mission in July of that very year. *Sic transit gloria mundi*, or, to speak more correctly, *Sic tempora mutantur!*

The members of the Mission had now to travel far less comfortably than during the summer, and the Wazir was not nearly so solicitous and obliging as the *Kám-náb*. During the summer, the daily marches were more like pleasant excursions, for the very moment the dear guests came to each particular halting-ground, everything was in readiness for them. Now the members of the Russian Mission sometimes felt cold and hungry for whole hours together in the open whilst waiting for their tent to be pitched. And during the march, too, there would be the same short commons, for not only would dinner be conspicuous by its absence, but hot water for tea was often not to be had. It would seem too that the Amír, equally with the members of the Russian Mission, suffered from the insufficiencies and privations of the winter journey. It was in any case, however, an extremely fortunate circumstance that the weather remained favourable for the fugitives. The winter of 1878 was altogether more mild than any previously known winter in Afghánistán, for even such passes

as the Kalui, Unnai, and Ak-Rabát had scarcely any snow upon them. Nevertheless the mountain streams and rivulets were all frozen over, and this made the route very slippery, so that wherever it passed over ice-bound river-beds, &c., or rose to, or descended from, passes, the track had to be sprinkled over with sand.

Regarding his departure from Kábul, the Amír Shir-Ali sent notice to the English generals commanding the forces operating against Afghánistán in the following letter:—

“To the hearts of the far-seeing officials of the British Government be it known that I never desired, and I never intended, that the bonds of friendship and good-breeding which had for several years existed between the two adjoining sovereignties should have been broken. But since war has come from you, and invasion of Afghán territory has been carried out by you, I now, therefore, with the advice of all my dignitaries* and exalted personages and of the Afghán soldiery, am leaving my army and sovereignty, and with a few dignitaries am starting for St. Petersburg, the capital of the Russian Emperor, in order that the exact state of our relations may be made known to all the other Governments at a Congress which I shall there convene.

“If you, relative to the affairs of Afghánistán, have any words (pretensions) with me, the servant of God, then you can send them to St. Petersburg; and, moreover, lay bare all your intentions, so that your words (pretensions or demands) may be made known and clear to all the representatives of the whole of the Powers.

“If, besides this, your intentions shall consist in having enmity with the inhabitants of Afghánistán, then the defender and true preserver of this people will be the Lord God.

“This is my intention and unalterable decision. Friday, 18th Zúl-Hidji 1295 H., that is, the 1st (13th) December 1878.”

The Amír, at the same time, begged General Razgónoff to also communicate to General Kaufmann his intention to proceed to St. Petersburg.

From Bámián the Amír sent General Kaufmann yet another letter, in which he told him of his intention to proceed to Russia, in order to make a personal request to the Emperor for assistance against the English. This letter bore date corresponding to the 10th (22nd) December, and ran as follows:—

“After the expression of the words of friendship and goodwill, be it known to Your open and friendly heart as follows:—

“Prior to this date, I have informed You, gracious friend, regarding the advance of the English into Afghán territory, and respecting the fights that have taken place between the two countries, and also how that I, agreeably to Your friendly advice, given to me by direction of the High Hazrat, His Imperial Majesty, have held out to them (the English) the olive-branch, and, finally, how that they have paid no attention to this act. All this is probably intelligible to You.

* This translation from Persian into Russian is evidently a very ungrammatical one. I only allude to the subject, however, to say that it was made by Sub-Lieutenant Naziroff, the Interpreter to the Russian Mission.—*Author.*

“After the despatch to Your Excellency (my friend) of the letter,* in the presence of this servant of the Most High God, were assembled all the Afghán notables, all the Sirdárs, and military chiefs. They declared that the English Government could have no other thought, no other wish except that we should have no friendly accord or alliance with the Russian sovereignty, known throughout the world, and that we should not allow to remain in Afghán territory the Envoy of the Russian sovereignty. They told me that such a wish was unbecoming, because the sovereignty, known throughout the world, had stretched out to us the friendly hand, and that we should, therefore, renew the old friendship, and stand strongly and firmly on the highroad of friendship with it. That formerly when we were in friendship with Russia, forty years ago, we had to endure misfortunes, and if now we were all to be overthrown, then no kind of harm would be done to the edifice of friendship. They then went on to say that, in their opinion and idea, I should myself proceed to St. Petersburg, the capital of the Exalted Hazrat, His Imperial Majesty, and lay before a Congress in the renowned sovereignty, and repeat in the presence of His Imperial Majesty, all that I had to say relating to the English Government, declaring, at the same time, on what sort of pretext the English Government had invaded Afghán territory, what the affair signified, and how undeserving the Afghán Government was of such treatment. They added that my going over to the side of the renowned sovereignty would, God willing, bring much advantage, because, of course, the right side must lie in the centre (capital) of so mighty a Power.

“On the basis of such an opinion on the part of my well-wishers, I, the servant of the Most High God, have decided upon starting for St. Petersburg, leaving my fortunate son, Sirdár Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán, as commander of my forces, and the other great personages at their respective posts. To my son I have entrusted authority, and have directed him to administer the State and army. I myself and several rulers have gone over to that side which we have resolved to follow.

“About all this I intimate to You, as to a sympathetic friend and as to the organiser of good government. To say more would be superfluous.”

This letter did not reach Táshkand until the 23rd December 1878 (4th January 1879). It may here be observed that the great distance which separates Kábul from Táshkand, about 1,300 *versts*† (866 $\frac{2}{3}$ miles), was very inconvenient as regards the transmission of correspondence between the Afghán Government and the Russian authorities in Turkistán. Thus, when the Amír arrived at Doáb on the 15th (27th) December, he only received General Kaufmann's letter dated 14th (26th) November! The text of this letter was as follows:—

YOUR HIGHNESS,—“After wishes for Your complete success in all Your undertakings, my words are the following:—

“General Razgónoff, who is now with his suite within the limits of Your God-granted Government, has communicated to me Your desire

* His letter sent from Kábul on the 26th November (8th December).—*Author*.

† This is the distance given in the Russian text, but the figures appear to be wrong.—*W. E. G.*

to be cured of a cough that troubles you. As it is difficult to effect a cure without the aid of a doctor, I, for the sake of friendship, am sending to Kábul Doctor Yavórski, with orders to join the Russian Mission which is there. I esteem it an agreeable duty to acquaint Your Highness that Your envoy, Kámnáb Muhammad-Hassan, with his suite, is living at Táshkand, and that all the members of your Mission are in good health.

“Your Highness’s friendly letter, dated 8th* Zul-Kaada, I have received, and I offer You my sincere thanks for it.”

Only that! Not a single word about the burning question of the Anglo-Afghán struggle, not a hint about any aid!

A little while afterwards General Razgónoff received a letter from General Kaufmann, containing a censure for his voluntary decision to quit Kábul, without having received permission to do so from the Central Government. He, at the same time, expressed his disapproval of the extracts which General Razgónoff had made from his letters, and which he had communicated to the Amír. “Diplomatic notes should never be framed from confidential communications,” explained General Kaufmann.† To this letter he also attached a telegram, dated 4th (16th) December, which informed General Kaufmann that the English Ministry had given to the Russian Ambassador in London positive assurances that the independence of Afghánistán would be preserved. In this letter, too, General Kaufmann communicated the orders of the Central Government relative to the recall of the Russian Mission to Táshkand. In conclusion, and as a postscript to his letter, General Kaufmann added the telegram recently received by him from the *Gólos*, in which mention was made of the Amír having left Kábul for Afghán-Turkistán, and of Yakúb-Khán, who had only recently been proclaimed ruler of Kábul, having left for Jalálábád in order to enter upon negotiations with the English. Expressing a doubt as to the correctness of the last part of the information, General Kaufmann wrote: The Amír-Sáhíb’s idea to retire with his troops into Afghán-Turkistán is a very good one; but, God forbid, that he should betake himself to Russia. This circumstance would very greatly complicate the affairs of Afghánistán.” General Kaufmann, therefore, counselled the Amír to await at Mazár-i-Sharif a better state of things, and, if he could do so, conclude a peace with the English.

At Rui, General Razgónoff received my letter sent off from Mazár-i-Sharif, and he then learnt for the first time that my appointment to join the Russian Mission was actually being carried out.

On the 20th December 1878 (1st January 1879) the Amír and the Russian Mission arrived at Tásh-Kurgán. Here Shir-Ali decided to remain for several days, in consequence of which determination, as the reader already knows, I got my orders to go on to Tásh-Kurgán.

“You see, Doctor, that the position of our Mission at Kábul was not a very nice one,” said General Razgónoff, as he concluded his story.

* 22nd October (3rd November) 1878.—*Author*.

† The Russians do not publish books corresponding to the “Blue,” “Yellow,” and “White” of England, France, and Germany. As an example, however, of what use they make of ours, see Soboleff on the *Correspondence relating to Kandahar*.—*W. E. G.*

“The worst of it all was that I positively had no information as to what sort of relations I ought to maintain with the Amír. General Stolaitoff kept all his conferences with the Amír a most complete secret from me. And what he said to the Amír God alone knows. You are fortunate—a hundred times fortunate—that you were not with us in that 4 months’ imprisonment into which the stay of the Russian Mission at Kábul really resolved itself.

“You have not, therefore, experienced that perpetual anxiety and that deadly suspense which all of us had to go through.”

But in this I did not agree with General Razgónoff, because I felt sorry, as well as annoyed, that I had not experienced those strong sensations which the members of the Russian Mission at Kábul felt, especially during the last days of their stay in that city.

During the evening of the day of my arrival at Tásh-Kurgán, *i.e.*, on the 25th December 1878 (6th January 1879), the Wazir and the Kázi came to the tent occupied by the members of the Russian Mission. They had been sent by the Amír to welcome me, and also to ascertain whether I had got over the journey to Tásh-Kurgán prosperously. They asked too whether I had been well received by the Luináb Khush-Dil-Khán. The next day, the 26th December 1878 (7th January 1879), I had an audience of the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán, and at this audience were present all the other members of the Russian Mission.

After the first interchange of salutations and of the well-seasoned metaphors, customary to the East, comparisons, compliments, &c., &c., the Amír spoke very fully about his own position at this time, about his struggle with the English, and about his proposed journey to Russia, “in order to beseech the great Russian Tsár to defend him against the English.

“Before the war the English used every endeavour to gain me over,” said the Amír, “and to draw me to their side. They gave me money and arms and promised to enlarge my territory, but I refused all their offers, preferring the friendship of Russia to all their promises. I know what English promises and English gifts signify, for the history of their dealings with Indian rulers is too instructive and too manifest to be hid from the eyes. Now let them know that I will place the key of the gates of India in the hands of Russia, who is friendly to me.

The Amír then spoke of the latest political events in Europe, and asked me whether Russia had not begun a fresh war with Turkey, &c., &c.

He talked much, too, about prominent historical personages, as, for example, about Peter the Great, whose memory he positively appeared to reverence; about Alexander I, Nicholas I, Napoleon I, and about modern politicians, such as Prince Bismarck, Prince Gortchakoff, &c., &c. One could not but perceive how strongly the Amír desired to give the members of the Russian Mission the idea that neither history nor the political condition of modern Europe was unknown to him. And it must indeed be acknowledged that he displayed, during the conversation on these topics, very sound and positively rare, for an Asiatic sovereign, ideas regarding the present political-economic state, not only of Europe, but also of the world, in general.

At the close of the audience which lasted for 3½ hours, I medically examined the Amír, and I diagnosed his complaint to be chronic catarrh of the throat and larynx. After discussing with him as to the curative system to be adopted, I returned to my own tent.

On the 27th December (8th January), I subjected the Amír for the first time to the action of a steam inhaler. This method of treatment interested him very much, and he had evidently seen nothing of the kind before. He questioned me for a long time about the construction of the inhaler, and it would seem that he could not at all comprehend why the water ascended into the vertical cylinder. He completed his enquiries with a compliment, saying: "Although the Doctor-Sáhib is only 25 years old, he has the knowledge of a man of 60." I will not say that this compliment was very pleasing to me, even though it was well meant.

On this date a post arrived from Kábul. Yakúb-Khán reported to his father that the English had occupied Jalálábád. Now, as some days previously, the Amír had received from General Kaufmann the assurance that the independence of Afghánistán would be maintained by the English, he sent the Wazir to General Razgónoff to inquire what this contradiction in speech signified.

On the 28th December (9th January), I again went to the Amír for the purpose of causing him to inhale the steam jet. On this occasion he had with him a great gathering of Sirdárs, and amongst them were many whom I did not recognise, but others I had seen before on the occasion of my first visit to Kábul. Thus amongst them were the following: Habibulla-Khán, the Amír's nephew, who was sent by him to meet the Russian Mission on its journey to Kábul in the month of July; Lál-Muhammad-Khán, the governor of Bámián, the Akhund-Sáhib or Court Physician, whom I had met at the dying-bed of the Prince Abdullah-Ján. Of course, it must be added that the Kázi and the Wazir were also there, as the ordinary attendants who occupied respectively the right and left side of the Amír.

When I took out the inhaler from its case and began to bring it into operation, the Amír, with evident satisfaction, began to explain to those before him the way the apparatus was used, and he proceeded with gusto to describe to them my method of treatment, saying, in conclusion, that it was not surprising that benefit should be derived from such a delicate method of cure, because foreign doctors were, as a rule, better than Afghán, seeing that they knew so much more; for Afghán doctors in ailments of all kinds cram their patients with only one sort of mixture.

The Kázi, as became a wily diplomat, immediately asked me for some medicine, complaining of ill-health, although he was at the time perfectly well. The Wazir too had, on the previous evening, very much wished to try the effect of a steam jet from my inhaler. And he, therefore, also began to complain of feeling pain in his throat, saying that he had nearly choked. I examined his gullet, and not perceiving any sort of derangement of the mucous membrane, I advised him, in order to ease his mind, to take small gulps of cold water. On receipt of this advice, the Wazir displayed, upon his dissatisfied countenance, a black expression, glancing askew through the cylinder of the inhaler, and not saying another word. The next day, in answer to my question as to how his throat was, he replied: "It is nothing; all pain has left me."

During the evening of the same day, the Wazir and the Kázi came to our tent, and, after the usual salutation, which the former punctually delivered every morning and evening on behalf of the Amír, they proceeded to business. The Wazir held in his hand two letters. One of these was from the *Kám-náb*, the Afghán Envoy at Táshkand, addressed to the Wazir, not to the Amír. It ran approximately as follows:—

“On the 12th (24th) December, the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán, General Aide-de-Camp Von-Kaufmann, sent for us, and said that he would now no longer require us to remain at Táshkand, and that we might return to Afghánistán. He handed to us various presents for the Amír-Sáhib (may God prolong his life!) saying that he was himself soon going to St. Petersburg. We then returned to our own abode. Soon afterwards General Kaufmann again sent for us, and shewed us a telegram from St. Petersburg in which it was stated that the Amír-Sáhib (may his reign be prolonged!) had left Kábul for Afghán-Turkistán, and that Yakúb-Khán had started for Jalálábád. In bidding us farewell, the Governor-General expressed the opinion that the Afghán difficulties would, if God willed, be removed in a peaceful manner. After this we left Táshkand for Sámarkand. Here we received a letter from the Amír-Sáhib.* The Amír's letter to the Russian Governor-General was also there, and I communicated its contents by telegraph to Táshkand. I then wrote a letter to General Kaufmann asking him for a more detailed and definite answer to the question relating to armed assistance to Afghánistán. I shall remain at Sámarkand until I receive the Governor-General's answer.

In the meantime General Kaufmann addressed the Amír another letter, dated 12th (24th) December, to the following effect:—

“AMIR-SÁHIB,—May our friendship flourish.

“After expression of my wishes that You may have health and success in all Your undertakings, my words are as follow:—

“Your friendly letter, dated 24th Zul-Kanda,† I have received with joy, and, on hearing of Your health, I was very greatly pleased. I have also received the copy of the letter sent to You by the Governor-General of India. I thank You for it.

“The English Ministers have given our Ambassador in London positive assurance that the independence of Afghánistán will be preserved by them. Therefore the Sovereign Emperor has, firstly, been pleased to order me to communicate this fact to You; and, secondly, to express to Your Highness His Majesty's sincere wish to preserve friendly relations with Your Highness in the future.

“As I propose to soon proceed to the capital of the Russian Empire on the affairs of the territory entrusted to my charge, and as I do not desire to detain Your confidential servants here any longer, since they are at the present time so necessary to Yourself, I have permitted the worthy *Kám-náb*, Mirza-Muhammad-Hassan-Khán, and Alija-Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, and the two officers with them to leave Táshkand.

* Probably the one sent off from Kábul on the 26th November (8th December).—*Author*.

† That is, 8th (20th) November, in answer to General Kaufmann's letter, dated 21st October (2nd November), in which he advised the Amír to offer the English “the olive-branch of peace.”—*Author*.

“I beg Your Highness to communicate to me, as to Your sincere well-wisher and good friend, news of all Your affairs. Letters from You, received after my departure for St. Petersburg, I will direct to be sent on to me by special messenger* until the time arrives for me to return to Táshkand.

“I shall be glad of Your prosperity, and I shall be afflicted if it pleases God to send You fresh trials. I beg You to accept as reminiscences of me the humble gifts which I have sent to You through the *Kámnáb*, Mirza-Muhammad-Hassan-Khán.

“May the Most High preserve You in good health for many years to the prosperity and joy of Your subjects.”

After this letter had been read out, the Wazir communicated to the members of the Russian Mission the contents of a proclamation distributed by the English throughout Afghánistán. This proclamation was written in Persian, and the following was its text :

(Here Dr. Yavórski gives a Russian translation of the proclamation in question.)

At the same time, the Kázi and the Wazir corroborated the intelligence as to the occupation of the town of Jalálábád by the Pesháwar column of the English army, which was gradually advancing upon Kábul from the one side, and upon Kandahár from the other. Adducing these facts, the Wazir and the Kázi asked what it all meant ?

“General Kaufmann speaks to us of the assurances of England to respect the integrity of Afghánistán,” said they. “Meanwhile an English army is occupying town after town, one place after another. There seems to be something false about this. One of two things must be the case—either England is deceiving Russia, and with her Afghánistán, or Russia is giving over Afghánistán to the mercy of England, concealing, under the mark of friendship, the false assurances of the English Ministers.”

Hereupon General Razgónoff tried to release himself from an inconvenient dilemma, but they held to what they said.

“About this matter we can the more readily form an opinion,” they continued, “since General Kaufmann, in allowing the members of our Mission to return, gave them nothing, nor did he even make over to them a definite answer of any kind. All the world knows that the Amír-Sáhib has received the Russian Mission with becoming honour, whilst he refused to receive that Mission which the English offered him. It would be dishonourable and, in the highest degree, foolish on the part of Russia to refuse to give her aid to Afghánistán at this present time, or to decline to receive the Amír-Sáhib. We have hitherto supposed that Russia is a mighty Power, and that she does not deceive her friends. But now, by refusing her aid to Afghánistán, she will completely ruin her affairs in India, and also in Turkistán ; for the inhabitants of both countries will come to regard her with eyes very different to those which they have hitherto used. Therefore, the Amír-Sáhib has directed us to tell you, General, that if the Russian Government will not receive him at St. Petersburg, and will not intercede for him with

England, then he will be sorry if events, not altogether agreeable to Russia, do not come about."

This unintelligible allusion to some kind of future events have remained unexplained. How could events of this description be brought about? What had the Amír in his mind? But General Razgónoff either did not hear the last expression, or he pretended not to hear it; for he remained perfectly silent, gazing, during the whole of this conversation, at his grey-coloured felt boots. The Wazir and the Kázi remained silent for some time. They then exchanged two or three hurried phrases, and finally asked that a decided answer should be given them to the question. Will the Amír-Sáhib be received by the Russian Government at St. Petersburg or not?"

"I cannot give you a definite answer to this question," replied General Razgónoff, "since the matter does not rest with me."

"But what is your personal opinion?" persisted the Wazir.

To this General Razgónoff answered that, in his personal opinion, Russia would act badly if she did not receive the Amír.

Then the Wazir and Kázi, having requested that General Razgónoff would write the purport of all that they had said to him to General Kaufmann, bowed and took their leave.

At this time we were informed that messengers from the Beg of Shirábád had arrived. They had come to Tásh-Kurgán, under orders from the Beg, to know why the Russian Mission was remaining so long there, whilst General Razgónoff, in a letter written a long time previously, had told the Beg that the Russian Mission to Kábul would soon pass through Bukhárán territory.

"We have prepared everything on our bank of the Amu in order to receive, as is befitting, the exalted Mission," said the messengers. "We have long been waiting for you on our bank, and have at length decided to ascertain the cause of such delay."

Amongst other items of intelligence, they told us that the Amír of Bukhára had left Shahr-i-Sabz for Kárshi, and that he was there awaiting the arrival of the Russian Mission. The messengers were, of course, rewarded and furnished by the Russian Mission with letters to the Beg of Shirábád, and were then allowed to return. It is to be noticed that these men did not come to Tásh-Kurgán by the usual road *viá* Pátta-Guzár and Mazár-i-Sharif, but by the more direct route across the sandy steppe.

"We did this," they said, "through fear of meeting with the Afgháns."

That same day news was received at Tásh-Kurgán to say that the Momands had gone over to Shir-Ali's side from the date of the release of Yakúb-Khán, and that they were continuing to make themselves felt by the English. Thus a short time before the receipt of the report in question, they had plundered an English transport-train, and had driven off several hundreds of camels.

On the 29th December (10th January) I started off to pay my usual morning visit to the Amír. On this occasion the Wazir, who had always been sent by the Amír to request me to come, invited Mr. Malevinski to go with me; but none of the other members of the Mission were asked to go too. As soon, therefore, as General Razgónoff learnt

that Mr. Malevinski was going with me to the Amír, he announced that he and all the other members of the Mission would accompany me. Accordingly they all set off.

When we entered the Amír's tent, one could not but notice how surprised he was to see all the members of the Mission coming before him without any invitation on his part. On this occasion he did not converse with freedom, and indeed scarcely spoke at all to us, so that we soon took our leave. As we were returning to our tent, Mr. Malevinski confided to me, as a great secret, that General Razgónoff had received a letter from General Kaufmann, and that in this letter orders were given to him to withdraw his mission from Afghánistán, or rather the recall was reiterated which he had already received. But in this communication there was something quite new, at least as regards myself. Thus General Kaufmann communicated in this letter orders about my remaining at Mazár-i-Sharif after the Russian Mission should have left the limits of Afghánistán, if the Amír desired to have my services.

General Kaufmann wrote: "In the event of the Amír-Sáhib not requiring Doctor Yavórski, he should return to the Amír Muzaffar-Khán of Bukhára in order to render him medical aid. He will be accompanied by *Yesaul* (Captain of Cossacks) Bulátsel and by Aulic-Councillor Chanusheff, who are now attached to the Afghán Mission."

Later on, in the same letter, the dread was expressed lest the Amír should go to Russia, "which God forbid," although the idea of Shir-Ali leaving Kábul for Mazár-i-Sharif with his troops met with General Kaufmann's approval.

The revelation of these "secrets" struck me as being strange. And yet I was very dissatisfied with General Razgónoff for his misplaced secrecy, and it seemed funny that he should wish in the case of matters that were obviously of not the slightest moment to be so close. This particular letter had been received several days before, and yet I had been told nothing about General Kaufmann's arrangements concerning me personally—a matter of very great importance to myself.

"It is evident," I thought to myself, "that they will refuse to allow the Amír to go to Russia," and I pictured to myself what would happen after such refusal had been communicated to him, and my own position, with a rejected Amír, cast upon the mercy of fate. How, then, could I not imagine myself to be the sole "evening sacrifice for the sins of one and all?"

But my gloomy thoughts soon gave place to brighter and even lively imaginations when I reflected that I might play the part of Physician-in-Ordinary to nearly all the Central Asian potentates, by taking advantage of a suitable opportunity, to use a more or less high-flown expression. The bad impression produced upon me by Malevinski's communications altogether vanished after I had taken a walk through the city and its suburbs. The fact was that, from the first day of my arrival at Tásh-Kurgán, I demanded of the Amír complete freedom of action, and on this particular day I was not slow to take advantage of the permission then given me. I can say, not without pride, that I was the only member of the Russian Mission to Kábul who dared to break through the perpetual imprisonment within

the four walls of a house or of a tent, and who regularly every day took his rides or walks through the suburbs of the town of Tásh-Kurgán.

The town of Tásh-Kurgán had, at the particular time of which I am speaking, completely changed its normal appearance. The usually poor quiet-looking place, with its dirty and gloomy bazaars, now seemed to have been restored, and to have entered upon the noisy life of a temporary capital. A very city of tents stretched along it from west to south, and these tents were so pitched as to form in every direction through their lines rows of streets and of side alleys. In this huge city of canvas were the various troops who had come with the Amír, and above the various tents floated standards of battalions and of squadrons. Almost in the very centre of the camp, but more towards its western edge, rose up a white cone-shaped tent which struck the eye on account of its gigantic size. This was the temporary abode of the Amír. Like the one which was occupied by the members of the Russian Mission, it had two flies, *i.e.*, it had double walls of canvas with a space of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet between them. The cone-shaped roof was also double. In all the four walls there were openings for windows and for doors, and each of these had a roll of canvas to let down in front of it when required. The tent measured 63' \times 56', and it was 21 feet high. It was supported by one pole placed in the centre of the cone. The roof of the tent was further secured by means of cords tightly stretched and fastened down by iron pegs let into the ground, whilst at each corner of the side-walls were inserted slender but strong wooden uprights. This description of tent, notwithstanding its vast dimensions, can be made very portable; and, as a rule, it can be carried on the pack-saddles of two or three sturdy mules. The interior of the tent was fitted up very modestly; on the floor were spread Turkumán and Khurássán carpets. The spot whereon sat the Amír was raised slightly above the ground, and was covered with a Káshgár carpet of silken web, and over it was thrown a tiger's skin. Round pillows were placed beside each arm of the Amír, who sat in the Asiatic way, *i.e.*, with his legs bent under his body. A complete absence of furniture was noticeable throughout the tent.

Such was the tent occupied by the Amír when he gave audiences to the members of our Mission, or held a Darbár for his Sirdárs, or when he was engaged in his State affairs.

The procedure adopted throughout Afghánistán in matters relating to the law very forcibly recalls to mind the patriarchal times. Almost every judicial case comes to the eyes or ears of the Amír, and every sentence passes from his lips. Once, when I advised Shir-Ali for purely therapeutic reasons to speak as little as possible, both out of doors as well as in his tent, he indignantly exclaimed: "You do not know what kind of people my subjects are. They are ready to come to me for every trifling thing, and therefore every judicial case, however insignificant it be, comes before myself, so that constantly in my ears resounds the cry "Amír-Sáhib!" "Amír-Sáhib!" The pretensions of all, therefore, I must satisfy; with each

one I must speak of that of which he has need, even though the matter be of no moment whatsoever. Were I to refuse but one of them his request, it would immediately be said that I wished to know of no one, nor of his affairs; that I did not desire to be bothered with work, and that I was a tyrant, and the like. Even now I know that many speak ill of me, and were I to behave, as you would have me do, with the simple folk, what need to speak about Sirdárs! No, Doctor-Sáhib, you do not know the sort of subjects I have got."

The Amír generally used for his sleeping tent, or for the serving up of his meals, an ordinary Kirghiz *yurta* or felt-tent with scarcely any fittings in it at all. Alongside of this were pitched several other *yurtas* which contained his harem and the like, and when I attended the Amír to administer the steam inhaler, I was generally ushered into the *yurta* where he slept.

On all sides of the Amír's tents were posted pickets and guards, whilst four men, of huge proportions, in blue uniforms and shaggy head-dresses of striped wool, slowly marched up and down, carrying their muskets at "the present."

"A thoroughly military life was now led both in the city and in the camp. At 7 A.M. the troops were roused by the morning-gun, which shook the dilapidated walls of the neighbouring citadel, whilst bandsmen made their appearance on the glacis of the fort and struck up a Persian march; and they played, it must be confessed, very fairly well. The discharge of the gun and the playing of the march were repeated at noon, and again at 6 P.M.

And the same were often heard at all sorts of odd hours, such, for instance, as when the Amír went out for an airing, or, accompanied by his falcons or his greyhounds, he proceeded on some hunting expedition.

"DESCRIPTION OF TÁSH-KURGÁN (KHULM).

"Tásh-Kurgán is a fairly large town, and covers an area of from $4\frac{2}{3}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ square miles. It is partially encircled by a mountain spur, at the end of which stands the citadel. The houses of Tásh-Kurgán are very crowded together, so that it is only along the edges of the town that a green belt of gardens appears at certain seasons of the year. The greater portion of the houses have cupola-shaped roofs, and, with but very few exceptions, have only one story. Some of the streets are paved with stone or are laid down with gravel; but of the good quality of this surface there is not much to be said. The bazaars are situated in the centre of the city along the banks of the Khulm stream, which is fairly wide. These bazaars are of the ordinary Central Asian type. There are the same innumerable narrow passages which take the place of streets; the same infinite number of side-lanes and turnings in every direction; the same decayed reed roofs, projecting from one row of shops to those opposite; the same closely-packed and slovenly booths, in which sit with an air of importance the dabblers in politics and the vendors of various wares. Everywhere there is the same darkness, the same dirt; whilst the same suffocating atmosphere perpetually reigns under the latticed partitions; the same variously-clad and varied-tongued crowd saunters about each shop, or exchanges the same jokes at the corner of every

street and alley ; the same dainties and the same everlasting smoking *kabáb* are exposed to the view of the passers by. There is the same make-belief of buying and selling, the same appraising, the same trying giving opinion ; the same sniffing and tasting, and then, with complete nonchalance, the customary rejection of the goods. Such go on daily and hourly in every Central Asian mart. And the seller thinks nothing ill of the would-be customer, if after haggling for half an hour he leaves without buying one single thing. For the thousandth time he will show the identical species of good ; for the thousandth time he will relate to every passer by the merits of his wares and all this he will go through quietly and with a certain degree of merit, and even not without satisfaction, though such may not be traceable in his eyes or discernible from his demeanour."

The population of Tásh-Kurgán is probably not below 30,000 souls. I say only "probably" because even the Afghán authorities do not know for certain what are the exact numbers of inhabitants. In the city the newcomers live side by side with the Tájiks or aboriginal inhabitants of the country, but they form the mass of the present population. Uzbaks, of the Mingbranch, preponderate amongst the inhabitants of Tásh-Kurgán ; amongst them, however, are some Uzbaks of the Káttagán branch. Then, but in comparatively small numbers, come Afgháns, Hindus, and Jews. "Iranians," *i.e.*, Persians, Turkumáns, and also Hazáras, come to Tásh-Kurgán only occasionally—the instances of their settling down for good, and all are rare.

A considerable number of the city inhabitants are engaged in agriculture, and therefore Tásh-Kurgán on nearly every side is surrounded by a wide belt of ploughed fields. I have already said that large autumn, as well as spring, crops are raised in the neighbourhood.

Ten *versts* ($6\frac{2}{3}$ miles) to the north of Tásh-Kurgán are the ruins of an ancient, and apparently a large settlement. What these ruins are I could not ascertain, except that they bear the name *Chitr-Abaf*.

On the evening of the 30th December (11th January 1879), during my customary visit to the Amír, I had a long conversation with him and with his adherents. The theme of this conversation was, of course, the political events that were occurring in Central Asia.

"What does the Doctor-Sáhib think," enquired the Amír of me, "regarding the feelings which the English entertain respecting myself."

I answered that they could scarcely be more friendly now than they were before.

"Why?" again asked the Amír.

I answered, "I think so, because, when the Amír-Sáhib quitted Kábul for Afghán-Turkistán, he gave the English clearly to understand that he did not wish to have anything more to say to them, whilst his endeavour was to become more intimate still with Russia."

"You have spoken well," the Amír rejoined with vivacity. "The English hate me because I have made over the keys of the gates of India into the hands of Russia." They offered me money and arms, and they proposed to restore to me Pesháwar and Kohát,* if only I would enter

* I think that the Amír on this occasion purposely exaggerated the nature of the offers made to him by the English. His doing so might, however, have been simply the habit of a regular diplomat, for he could have no reason to deceive me.—*Author*.

into an alliance with them; but I preferred to refuse everything they put before me. For me "the water of life*" is dearer than all else. As my father stood by the side of Russia, so now I shall go to the Russian Emperor. Yes, honour, the essence of life, is dearer than everything. If the Russian Emperor too insults me, though he were then to give me 100 millions, I would refuse all his friendship, and could no longer live." "Poor Amir!" thought I as he was uttering these sentiments. "Thou dost not know that in General Kaufmann's letter to General Razgónoff there are several lines which would completely shatter thy hopes regarding Russia." "It is well that the Amír has left for Mazár-i-Sharif, but, God forbid, that he should come to us," wrote General Kaufmann.

The Amír, of course, did not know about this passage, for General Razgónoff had not communicated it to him. But could I tell him about what had been written concerning him? Let the reader decide this question for himself.

Up to this date, 31st December (12th January), General Razgónoff had not yet written to General Kaufmann about the conversation which had passed between himself and the Wazir and Kázi on the 28th December (9th January). The Wazir asked him if he had done so several times a day. "Will you soon write the letter to the Governor-General?" and the answer he received was, "In half-an-hour the despatch will be prepared." But this "half-an-hour" was prolonged into a day. Again came the question from the Wazir: "Is the letter ready?" and again the answer "No; it is not ready, because I have no information regarding the strength of the Afghán troops in Afghán-Turkistán." The Wazir then immediately went off to the Amír, and soon brought back the answer.

In Afghán-Turkistán there are about 20 battalions of infantry, and there are almost as many more at Herát. Then General Razgónoff did not write the letter, because the Afgháns had not given him exact details about the military operations, and about their losses in the fights with the English." And in this way he put off the despatch of his promised letter from one day to another, so that news of interest, such as the English occupation of Jalálábád, was not reported to the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán at all.

To-day, 31st December (12th January), in answer to my question "When does the Amír-Sáhib think of continuing his journey?" he replied, "To-morrow."

At length, General Razgónoff decided to read out to the Wazir extracts from General Kaufmann's letter, in which he communicated the orders for the Russian Mission to quit Afghánistán. He then proceeded to read out that portion of the letter in which the Amír was advised to conclude a peace with England. This passage ran as follows:—

"It would be well if the Amír-Sáhib had acted upon my official advice to conclude a peace with England." This passage was evidently not understood by the Wazir, for it produced on his countenance a puzzled expression. The phrase "God forbid that the Amír-Sáhib should come to Russia" was interpreted by General Razgónoff to the Wazir as a simple suggestion that the Amír should remain at Mazár-i-Sharif as long as possible, so it

* That is "honour"—a metaphor which it seems to me was both characteristic and apposite.—*Author.*

also apparently failed to convey any important meaning to the Wazir ; but when General Razgónoff read out the passage in the letter in which General Kaufmann spoke about his wish that the Amír should communicate to him "only the sacred truth," the Wazir angrily broke in with the answer, "The Amír has always done so. Before his departure from Kábul he wrote* to General Kaufmann to say that he had been defeated, and he then asked for military assistance." General Kaufmann's advice to the Amír to keep up direct relations with Yakúb-Khán and with General Kaufmann himself called from the Wazir the return answer that "from the first the Amír has maintained a daily correspondence with Yakúb-Khán, and that, as regards General Kaufmann, his relations would altogether depend on the General-Sáhib (*i. e.*, with General Razgónoff)." After this the Wazir once more asked if the letter to General Kaufmann was ready? When all the extracts from General Kaufmann's letter had been read out to him, the Wazir intimated that what General Razgónoff had read out he could not communicate to the Amír.

"I will go and say to the Amír-Sáhib that, if he thinks fit, he will himself hear what the General-Sáhib has to say ; and, in that case, he will invite you to go to him," continued the Wazir. "It is now the hour at which the Doctor-Sáhib usually visits the Amír-Sáhib. If it is necessary to communicate what has been said to the Amír-Sáhib, then let the General-Sáhib give the Doctor-Sáhib the letter which he can read out to the Amír-Sáhib."

But General Razgónoff would not give me the letter, offering his own services, and saying that he would himself go and read it out to the Amír. Upon this the Wazir said that he would go at once and inform the Amír respecting the General's wish ; and he concluded by saying, "If the Amír-Sáhib thinks fit, he will hear you, and I will come to you accordingly."

Some time afterwards the Amír sent a messenger to me, but he did not ask to see the General. Thus the Amír was never told either about the recall of the Russian Mission to Táshkand, or about General Kaufmann's refusal to accept his wishes to be allowed to go to Russia.

I cannot refrain from here expressing my surprise at the method adopted by General Razgónoff in communicating to the Wazir the above extracts from General Kaufmann's letter. The fact is that if these extracts had been read out to the Wazir, after prolonged consideration, some more reasonable idea would have suggested itself, either in the form of softening the communication and the effect it had in the eyes of the Wazir, or of avoiding the hot quarrel which went on whilst the extracts were being read between General Razgónoff and the Interpreter Nazíroff. Thus the passages were first of all read out in Russian ; then they were altered also in Russian, and in this process their meaning was changed several times over, and, finally, they were rendered into Persian for the benefit of the Wazir. I have already said that the reading out of the extracts from General Kaufmann's letter produced a very indefinite sort of impression on the mind of the Wazir, and I have grounds for the belief that he did not credit the authenticity of the extracts to which he had been listening.

* Shir-Ali-Khán's letter to General Kaufmann despatched on 26th November (8th December) 1878.—*Author.*

The same day I received a letter from the Beg of Shírábád. After a whole string of compliments, with which he began his letter (for instance, he called me a "Christian sage"), he asked me whether I had yet joined the other members of the Russian Mission, and how they all were? Did the Russian Mission soon purpose returning from Afghánistán to Táshkand, &c., &c. He then asked for timely notice to be given him regarding the journey of the Mission through Shirábád. I, of course, did not fail to answer the Beg's letter, and the same day his messenger left Tásh-Kurgán on his return to Shirábád. To him I was obliged to entrust my private correspondence, and also my reports to the Russian authorities, since General Razgónoff had not yet written his promised letter to General Kaufmann, and I could not await the departure of the ordinary courier of the Mission; for, by so doing, I should have needlessly lost time.

CHAPTER V.

WITH THE AFGHÁN AMÍR.

Journey of the Amír from Tásh-Kurgán to Mazár-i-Sharif—Afghán troops—News of the later conquests of the English in Afghánistán—Return of the Afghán Mission from Táshkand—The Amír receives an official refusal to his request to be allowed to go to St. Petersburg—Stormy debate at an audience with the Amír on the subject of this letter—A fresh messenger and another letter—The Amír is invited to go to Tashkand—His preparations for the journey—The Wazir and the Kázi—The Amír's daily life; his occupations and his amusements; his harem—My visit to the Kázi.

AT 8 A.M. to-day, 1st (13th) January 1879, we set out from Tásh-Kurgán. The whole camp was in a state of commotion, and noise was going on on all sides. Here horses and camels were being laden, there they were striking and rolling up tents. A little further on Afghán soldiers were forming up in parade order. The Amír's tent alone still continued for a long time to rear its white cone-shaped roof above all the chaos and confusion. At last it, too, was struck and packed on the backs of three stout mules. Then there rattled forth a perfect roll of dums, and there resounded the melancholy air of some Afghán march, whilst from the walls of the citadel several salvos were fired. All this signified that the Amír had started on his journey.

For his use there had been saddled a small but compact horse, with a broad chest, of the breed called *Kadagáni*. The English saddle on the animal's back was covered with velvet embroidered in gold. The saddlecloth was made out of the fur of a black bear, which the Afgháns told me had been shot in the mountains of Bádakhshán. The bridle was also of English manufacture and had golden buckles, whilst the stirrups were ornamented with silver enamel.

The costume in which the Amír rode was of the ordinary Afghán type (something like our military uniform of the new pattern, but with a deeper collar and with fuller and more pronounced skirts). Above this he wore a light fur-coat, and he had on striped pantaloons, cut for riding, and gaiters. His headdress took the shape of a *kulákh* of black lamb's-wool* (commonly called *Astrakhan*). His belt was of gold-lace, and from the left side hung an elegant sword of Kábul manufacture. The Amír carried no revolver.

When the Amír's horse was led up, a number of hands clasped him, and assisted him to mount. The pace at which he rode was a very uneven amble, sometimes rapid and at others slow. Behind him was a large suite of his adherents, and around the entire group were the members of his personal guard.

* Objectors to vivisection, which after all is only practised for man's good, might with advantage turn their attention to the way in which the best kind of so-called *Astrakhan* is obtained.—*W. E. G.*

In all probability the sword given to him by Lord Mayo at the Umballa Darbár of 1868, with which, like his rival Abdul Rahmán, he swore to "strike down the enemies of the English."—*W. E. G.*

The members of the Russian Mission rode some distance behind the Amír, and they were attended by the Wazir and a small detachment of Afghán horsemen.

During the march the Amír made several halts, as though he would wait for the members of the Russian Mission to come up. But each time that he made a pause of this kind, General Razgónoff, in his turn, also drew up and waited for the Amír to continue his journey. It was thus clear that General Razgónoff avoided meeting the Amír. But why? What was the meaning of his doing so? The members of the Mission told me that during the previous march across the Hindu-Kush range General Razgónoff also endeavoured to avoid riding with the Amír. They explained this apparently mysterious behaviour on the part of the General in various ways. As I could not reconcile their explanations, I addressed myself direct to the General with the question—“Why do we not ride with the Amír?” “Do you not see, doctor,” General Razgónoff answered me, “when we ride with the Amír, he so often turns to me with various questions of a political character. There would, of course, be nothing particular in his doing so, if he were not to put them in such a form as to compel me to give him my personal opinion;—and what have I got to say?”

Meanwhile, I personally had a great desire to ride with the Amír. I could not understand General Razgónoff's dread of the Amír's questioning, although he might be obliged to give expression to his “personal opinion.” For, after all, personal contact was the best way of knowing the Amír—and not him alone, but a little of everybody and everything about him.

On this occasion the Amír evidently intended to speak to General Razgónoff at any price, for he halted on the road for a very considerable time. Thereupon, General Razgónoff turned off the road, and, avoiding a meeting which he evidently considered undesirable, so reached the next encamping-ground. Of course, the Amír did not overtake us; but he immediately rode off at a rapid rate across-country in pursuit of game. Now, I think, I know the real reason for General Razgónoff's dread of meeting the Amír. The fact was he had not yet sent off to General Kaufmann any despatches relating to recent events in Afghánistán, and he had not sent them off because he had not even written them. At a meeting with the Amír the conversation would necessarily turn to political topics, and the Amír would, of course, hasten to ask whether General Razgónoff had reported to the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán about the English occupation of Jalálábád. And what could he answer to this question? I will answer this question in General Razgónoff's own words.

On this date, 1st (13th) January 1879, we made a very short march, not exceeding a distance of 10 *versts* ($6\frac{3}{4}$ miles). The encamping-ground was in the open country; for there is no village in the neighbourhood. The name of this particular locality is Gilja-Tui. It seemed strange to us, the members of the Russian Mission, that such a short march should have been fixed for this date, and yet it should not be forgotten that to an Amír of Central Asia great rapidity in travelling is forbidden by the rules of native etiquette; and not only in Bukhára, but also in Afghánistán, a slow rate of progress is connected with Oriental notions of dignity.

Fresh news from Kábul reached us on this date ; for Yakúb-Khán reported to his father that though the English had occupied Jalálábád, they had made no further advance in the direction of Kábul. From the Quetta direction they had continued to push on towards Kandahár, and at the time that Muhammad-Yusuf-Khán had reported to Yakúb-Khán they were not far from that city.* Yakúb-Khán then went on to say that he was not proceeding to Jalálábád,† but that, on the contrary, the English had invited him to enter into peaceful negotiations with them, addressing this communication to the “Naib of Kábul.” To this invitation, Yabúb-Khán said he had replied that he had not been empowered by his father to enter into any sort of negotiations with the English. He had, therefore, advised the English authorities to turn with this object to the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán, himself. “And since my father is at the present moment journeying to St. Petersburg,” wrote Yakúb-Khán to the English, “you can forward your proposals to that capital.”

That evening, when I was with the Amír, he opened his conversation with the usual remark about ‘the evil days,’ and after giving expression to his customary remarks about the English having offered him money and arms, and about their having always promised to increase his dominions, he added that he had refused all their proposals and promises, and that he no longer wished to have anything to say to them.

“I have concluded an alliance with Russia, and I will firmly adhere to my declaration. Let us see what Russia will do for us. I have made over to her the keys of the gates of India, and I have announced the conclusion of relations with her that are much closer than ordinary friendship. For the sake of this friendship, I have left my own sovereignty. And why?—Because, forty years ago, my father was friendly towards Russia; and I am carrying out his will.”

In saying this, the Amír constantly enquired what was my personal opinion, and I of course to all such enquiries rejoined, as far as I could, by general phrases. I could not indeed do otherwise; for I had no instructions in the matter, and neither General Kaufmann nor General Razgónoff had made me acquainted with any sort of programme. I must say that this circumstance, the non-receipt of any instructions, was very strange. My position, as the personal physician of the Amír, was such that I must, of necessity and quite apart from any wish of my own, play a political part. I was thus compelled by the force of my own position to give answers to various questions of a purely political character with which the Amír plied me. It is clear that in such answers I could not but be at variance with what General Razgónoff himself‡ might say to the Amír. It is also clear that, in order

* This letter from the Governor of Kandahár was written about 15th (27th) December 1878, or some days before the actual occupation of Kandahár by the English.—*Author.*

† The Amír’s prohibition against his going to Jalálábád was sent from Tâsh-Kurgán; but the telegram on the subject in the *Gólos*, inserted in the previous chapter, was only received at Gilja-Tui.—*Author.*

‡ Otherwise there would be repeated those confused and often disagreeable expressions of the kind called *quid pro quo* that General Razgónoff made use of when he, in ignorance of the answer and advice tendered to the Amír by General Stolaitoff, would answer in a totally different manner. Hence both I and General Razgónoff might hear from the Amír’s lips the reproachful inquiry—“Which of you two is speaking the truth?”—*Author.*

that there should be no variance between my statements and those of General Razgónoff, I should be informed, at least to some extent, of the political views of the Russian Government on the question at issue, and of its ideas with respect to Afghánistán and her Amír. This, however, was not the case; and I was consequently placed in an awkward position,—that of tacking between Scylla and Charybdis. To be called a liar, even out of the mouth of an Amír of Central Asia, would not be at all flattering; and yet I could not always be saying—"I do not know." In all probability, the Afghán Amír was not aware of my "neutral" position; for he continued the conversation in the same spirit still further.

"I have constantly heard and read," said he, "that Russia is a powerful and upright sovereignty, and that in her policy she pursues only high and honourable aims, so that once she has given her word, she adheres to the same. On account of this report of Russia's dealings, and because of the popular desire of my people, I, a small ruler, have had recourse to her high protectorate. Now I and the Russian Government, *i.e.*, Afghánistán and Russia, form one united whole. I consider myself no more than a vassal of the Great White Tsár."

A few minutes later on our conversation changed the political turn, that was very inconvenient for me, for we now proceeded to travel to the province of ethnography. We went on to discuss the question of the origin of the Afgháns. In a tone which left no sort of doubt or opening for reply, the Amír informed me that the ancestors of the Afgháns were the Jews of old.

On this subject I gave utterance to some perplexity, and I asked—"Why, then, do the Afgháns so hate and oppress the Jews, seeing that, according to the Amír-Sáhíb's own declaration, they are the brethren of the Afgháns?"

"No," answered the Amír, "the Jews of to-day are not our brothers: they are pariahs and outcasts of humanity. I am speaking of the ancient Jews, and I said that they were the ancestors of the Afgháns. You, of course, know very well from your sacred book, the Bible, what sort of people the ancient Jews were. They were celebrated for their proud, inflexible, and at the same time honourable, course of action. The Jews of the present day, on the other hand, know no God but money. *Money*—that is the Jehovah of the Israel of our time."

Then the Amír again turned to a political topic, and he turned, it seemed to me, in a very skilful manner.

"As the ancient Jews firmly adhered to their word, so I, as one of their descendants, have resolutely kept my promise to Russia. I have broken up my own sovereignty;—and what will Russia do for me?—This we shall soon see." Thus the Amír brought our long conversation to an end.

On the evening of this date there was a very high wind, and the heavens were covered with heavy-laden clouds, which were being swiftly borne from west to east, until they completely obscured with an impenetrable curtain the northern slopes of the Hindu-Kush. It was evident that in a short time we must look for a change in the weather.

Our halting-ground for the next day was to be at Naib-ábád. The whole of that day a strong westerly wind blew; but a few drops of rain only fell on the parched-up soil.

Behind me there followed from Tásh-Kurgán a whole campful of sick natives, amongst some of whom were noticeable very typical cases. Here, for example, was a consumptive patient in the last stage of disease. There a chronic case of malarial fever; the man's spleen being far beneath the level of his navel. There again a man with worms in his abdomen and with umbilical rupture. And, finally, there was a case of the worst type of venereal. On this date, again, did the Amír try to pump me; for during the period of my usual visit he spoke of the perfidy of his so-called friends.

"Strange people they are!" exclaimed the Amír. "Do they not understand that in doing their friends harm, they in reality hurt themselves? Yes; there are certain people who treat their friends very badly."

The Amír laid special stress on the words "certain people." "Who can these persons be?" thought I, and I waited for the Amír to explain himself; but he went on to speak of France, saying, "How Napoleon III. must have suffered when his 'friends' betrayed him!"

Almost in the middle of what he was saying, the Amír suddenly ordered his Court Physician, the Akhund-Sáhib, to leave his presence, to the greatest surprise of that individual—surprise that was very clearly depicted on his broad countenance and in his large cold eyes. Neither did I comprehend the cause of this action on the Amír's part, and so I asked—"Why has this man incurred the Amír's displeasure?"

"Don't bestow your attention on this fool," answered the Amír: "he is not worthy of it."

I returned from the Amír very late in the evening of that day, and almost everybody was asleep in our tent. General Razgónoff himself was sleeping the sleep of the just, although he had not written his letter to the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán.

On the 3rd (15th) January we came to Guri-Már. The weather that day was frightful. Since 2 A.M. heavy rain had been falling, and at 7 A.M. a snow-storm was raging. A strong westerly wind carried with it whole clouds of drift snow, which blinded the eyes of the traveller. It seemed to penetrate everywhere, and that there was no escape from it. Still I was clad so substantially as to call forth a smile of amusement from all who saw me.

(Here Dr. Yavórski goes into a lengthy description of his get-up on the particular occasion, and in the next paragraph he proceeds to describe the palanquin in which the Amír was carried during this march.)

(Text resumed.)

After we had reached the top of the Ab-Dug pass, we were met by an elephant, carrying a *howdah*, which had been sent for the Amír's use by the Luináb, Khush-Dil-Khán. On the crest of the pass, the Amír made a lengthened halt, going into a tower apparently to take his breakfast. The Wazir conveyed to General Razgónoff the Amír's invitation to join him and partake of some tea; but he received

a refusal, to the effect that, since the encamping-ground was so near, it was not worth while to make a halt.

As we rode into Guri-Már, we saw drawn up both infantry and artillery. Soon afterwards the Amír came in, whereupon a salute of 21 guns was fired.

On this date [3rd (15th) January] the Amír sent the Wazir to me to say that he would not take his usual inhalation, "because," said the Wazir, "the weather is very bad and the Amír's tent has been pitched far away from that of the members of the Russian Mission; and on this account the Amír-Sáhib begs that the Doctor-Sáhib will not trouble himself to visit him."

We now had a slight quarrel with the Wazir, which was brought about by his own greediness. At the time of our partaking of morning tea on this occasion it turned out that there was an insufficient supply of sugar. Mullah-Yakúb, who had charge of both the tea and sugar, thereupon went straight off to the Wazir, and the sugar that he brought back with him was so limited in amount as barely to suffice for the use of the members of the Mission, so that the Cossack escort had to go without it altogether. Conversation then ensued on the subject, and the General added that he had more than once observed that the Cossacks had not enough of anything. Upon this Mullah-Yakúb let drop from the point of his loquacious tongue the incautious phrase, that the Wazir had told him, that if the Cossacks knew what sugar was like, it was only thanks to him, the Wazir; for before their visit to Afghánistán they certainly had no idea about it." This expression, coupled with the instigation of certain members of the Mission (especially Malevinski, who had some sort of grudge against the Wazir), was quite sufficient to cause General Razgónoff, who, generally speaking, was very cool and calm, to explode with anger against the Afghán Chancellor."

"It is necessary to give this man a bit of my mind," he shouted; "for he gives me trouble beyond measure."

Zamaan-Bek immediately conveyed this sentiment to the Wazir, who, though evidently displeased with the Mission generally, could not do anything else than express his regret for what had happened.

The Wazir, whilst flatly denying that he had meant to use any expression insulting to the self-esteem of the Cossacks, explained the circumstance of his having sent an insufficient supply of sugar by the statement that the stock in camp had all run out, and that he had sent expressly for some to Mazár-i-Sharif. Thus the matter had apparently ended.

But Malevinski, in his turn, wished to give the Wazir a bit of his mind, and so the following occurred.

Malevinski at Tásh-Kurgán had made a collection of ancient coins, and he coveted eight pieces that were in the possession of a Hindu money-dealer. All were of silver, and bore the image and inscription of Antiochus, whilst some of them were as large as a silver *rouble*: their coinage, moreover, was perfect. The money-dealer began by asking Rs. 60 for these eight coins, but subsequently, for some reason or another,—perhaps it was because he saw that Malevinski very much wished

to have the coins,—he raised his price to the large sum of Rs. 600. Malevinski, of course, could not give this amount; and in his disappointment he related the story to the Wazir and to the Kázi. They promised him their aid, and they at the same time expressed a desire to tell the Amír, who, they said, might buy the coins on his own account and then present them to Malevinski. From that date Malevinski zealously enquired of the Wazir, day after day, as to whether the Amír would soon buy the coins for him? Meanwhile Malevinski had them in his possession, and so the matter went on day after day. After the morning's altercation, with the Wazir, Malevinski went to him and made over the coins to him, whereupon the Wazir came and laughingly asked, why Malevinski was so displeased?

I could not refrain from expressing my disapproval at the step which Malevinski had taken, the more so because he had selected a very inconvenient time for so acting. All this was calculated to call forth underhand dealing, more especially as the time had arrived for the Amír and his adherents to lose faith in Russia's acts! Why, then, add to the difficulty of the position with such trifles?

After this episode the following conversation took place between General Razgónoff and the Wazir, who once more recalled to the recollection of the head of the Russian Mission the dangerous situation in which Afghánistán was now placed.

"Russia," said the Wazir, "has promised Afghánistán her military aid. Before the Amír left Kábul he wrote to General Kaufmann to send this aid from Tashkand. Meanwhile we have not yet received any definite kind of answer." "Well," remarked General Razgónoff, "you must wait a little while longer."

"But you see we cannot wait much longer," objected the Wazir; "for, if the English should occupy Kábul, our affairs will be altogether in a bad state. When once the administration of the country has been destroyed, it will be a difficult matter to set it up again, if indeed it will be possible to do so."

To this General Razgónoff replied: "Under any circumstances it is necessary to wait, since it is the best thing to do at present."

"Russia will assuredly carry out her promises," continued General Razgónoff, "although as to the period of such fulfilment nothing definite can be said at present. We, who are here in the steppe, scarcely see what is going on in the political world, and, therefore, I cannot tell you anything definite. Our Government occupies a very lofty stand-point, and from this height it observes everything; and if it gives you counsel, then, of course, such is the best and most opportune for the particular period. Therefore, whatever happens, it is expedient to await a favourable time for action."

As soon as the Wazir had left the tent, General Razgónoff turned to me and said: "Since the Amír-Sáhib in the course of your visits to him so often turns to you with various questions regarding the present political circumstances of Afghánistán and of her relations towards Russia, I consider it desirable to give you, so to speak, a basis on which you must found your answers and opinions." He then proceeded to repeat almost the very words spoken to the Wazir.

That very day we heard that, in the course of two days, the Afghán Mission to Táshkand would reach Mazár-i-Sharif, accompanied by *Yesaul* (Captain of Cossacks) *Bulátsel*.

Meanwhile General Razgónoff had not sent off his promised letter to General Kaufmann, and apparently had no intention of doing so. He was now always laying stress on the necessity "of adopting decisive measures for hastening the departure of the Russian Mission for Táshkand."

On the 5th (17th) January we reached Mazár-i-Sharif. On the march the members of the Russian Mission, as a rule, rode a very long distance from the Amír: and on this occasion, after we had got about 2 or 3 *versts* ($1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles) from Guri-Már, the General remarked that we were riding too quickly, and that we should overtake the Amír. He then changed his spirited horse for some jaded animal, which could scarcely stand on its legs, and so we got some 3 *versts* (2 miles) behind the Amír.

Meanwhile, the Amír's progress was very interesting, not to say effective, as he rode along on an elephant. Around him went a mass of people, mounted and on foot, both of troops and of the inhabitants of the country. In certain places, at a given distance apart, triumphal arches were set up; and these were constructed as follows. One either side of the road, two long poles were raised aloft; and to these were fastened long and broad turbans of a green colour. Midway from the top of either pole a copy of the Korán was fastened. At every such arch sat dervishes, mullahs, and beggars of all kinds, who, in a nasal tone and with certain characteristic modulations of voice, sang Arabic verses, and repeated *Suras* and verses of the Korán. Everybody who passed underneath these arches usually gave one of the singers a piece of money of some kind.

These incantations pleased me very much; for, apart from their originality, they had to my mind another meaning—in that the melody, beginning in a high key, seemed to be a sharp protest before God, but as its modulations softened towards the end, it appeared as though complete subjection to the Divine Will was expressed by the piteous notes given forth at the close.

The Wazir, in spite of the fact that he was himself a mullah, did not seem to be particularly liberal in his almsgiving; for to certain of the singers he gave nothing at all.

And now there arose great noise caused by the discharge of frequent guns. This was the salute given to the Amír by a battery of Afghán field artillery which was drawn up to the right of the road. One hundred guns were fired altogether.

When we reached the spot, some of the troops were still drawn up in line, whilst others had already broken into column and were marching towards the city. In other places soldiers were standing in groups enjoying themselves. According to a statement made by the Wazir, there had paraded ten infantry battalions, six cavalry regiments, and four batteries of artillery, of six guns each. By the time we rode up, the cavalry had already moved off the ground, but the artillery left the parade in front of us. The guns were of brass, and apparently of a calibre equal to Russian 9-pounders. Each gun was drawn by six pairs of horses, and a driver

sat on each near horse. They packed in front of us a battery of horsed mountain-artillery. Each gun and its appurtenances were carried by eight pack-horses; and the carriage was placed on the back of one stout horse that was saddled very suitably for the purpose, both the fore and hind parts of the saddle-bow being curved so as to fit the ends of the carriage.

The troops present had three different patterns of uniform: (1) a tunic somewhat resembling ours of the old pattern, pantaloons of black cloth, and a white turban; (2) blue tunic, white trousers, and black lambskin hat; (3) red tunic, blue trousers, and red turban cap, with fur edging.

The infantry soldiers wore slippers of hard unblackened leather. Their arms were muzzle-loading rifles, with percussion lock. The bayonets attached to the rifles were of our old pattern, *viz.*, pyramidal in shape, tapering towards the point. Some of the men had also long knives or swords hanging to their waistbelts.

At the entrance to the city, and especially in front of the gates, was a great crowd. The artillery completely blocked the road, along both sides of which streamed masses of people of all classes. The mud enclosures and the roofs of the nearest houses were crowded with spectators, chiefly women shrouded in their white veils.

In the bazaar, through which the members of the Russian Mission had to ride in order to reach their quarters, were numbers of people, and especially of soldiers. Everywhere one heard the tramp of soldiers on the march, whilst from the dilapidated walls of the mud-built citadel there again resounded the salvos of an artillery salute. I counted this time 31 guns.

After a weary process of threading our way through the crowded streets, and after innumerable halts and waiting for the troops to pass, we at length reached the quarters which had been set apart for our occupation—the old familiar mud quadrangle.

During this day's march, our pack transport was nearly lost, for when the horses came alongside the artillery, which was firing a salute, they got so frightened that some of them flung their loads; and, therefore, when we came to our quarters we had to wait for our baggage. The Wazir had meanwhile made arrangements that none of the loads should be plundered by the passing troops. Although the English declare that Afgháns, both high and low, are great thieves, we never lost a single load, nor indeed any one article of the most trifling value. On the contrary, certain of our loads were brought by soldiers to our quarters, or else our drivers, who had lost their way through the labyrinth of streets, were put on the direct road to where we had gone.

Some hours after our arrival we had the satisfaction of receiving in our quarters some more of our fellow-countrymen. These were *Yesaul* Bulátsel, General Kaufmann's Aide-de-Camp, and his interpreter, Chana-sheff. With them came a Cossack escort of 10 men and several native followers. It will be understood how great was the joy that was felt by every member of the Russian Mission to Kábul at meeting with these fellow-countrymen.

Bulátsel, among other things, told us that General Kaufmann had not yet left for St. Petersburg, but that when General Razgónoff's last letter

reached him (the one sent from Rui ?), he had despatched Colonel Kolesnikoff with it to the Emperor. Bulátsel then informed me that he had brought me a letter from the Governor-General, in which I was directed to pass through the town of Bukhára on my way back from Afghánistán, in order to afford medical aid to the Amír of Bukhára. The following was the text of these instructions :—

DEAR SIR (*lit.* GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN).*

IVÁN LÁVROVITCH.†

“The Amír of Bukhára, Sayad-Muzaffar-Khán, has requested the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán, through his agent at Táshkand, Rahmat-Ullah, *Mirakhur*, to send him the same medicine with which you supplied him on the occasion of your journey through Shahr-i-Sabz.

“In consequence of this request, His Excellency the Chief Administrator of the province, in his desire to accede to His Highness’s wishes, has directed me to inform you, dear sir,† that you should pass through Bukhára on your return from Kábul, and attend to the wishes of His Highness the Amír of Bukhára, by affording him your medical advice and the necessary medicines.

“With sincere respect, &c., &c.”

The letter bore the signature of General Ibrahimoff, Diplomatic Secretary to the Governor-General.

Bulátsel likewise told me that, by order of the Governor-General, he and Chanusheff were to go with me to Bukhára.

After dinner the conversation again turned to this subject, when Bulátsel added to his previous communication the information that it was only intended by the Governor-General that I should go to Bukhára in the event of the Amír, Shir-Ali, not wishing me to remain with him, but that, if he did, I was to stay at Mazár-i-Sharif accordingly, whilst the other members of the Mission returned to Táshkand. General Razgónoff, who was evidently displeased at what Bulátsel had said, confirmed this statement; for he remarked: “Yes, so General Kaufmann also writes to me; and if I have not before this told you of the arrangement, it is only because I have not had a suitable opportunity.”

“Still I never supposed that you would be so mysterious in your relations with me, especially as regards so personal a matter,” was my return observation to General Razgónoff.

Upon this, General Razgónoff intimated that he had not told me of the arrangement also because he thought that, perhaps, General Kaufmann might change his mind in the matter.

He then gave me portions of General Kaufmann’s letter to read, and in one place I read as follows :—

“If Doctor Yavórski’s services are necessary to the Amír-Sáhib, then let him remain at Mazár-i-Sharif, attended by an interpreter and some Cossacks of your escort.

“Yavórski,” continued General Kaufmann, “is a shrewd man, and he will therefore be of great use in our affairs by remaining at Mazár-i-Sharif.

* The style of address which opens every ordinary Russian letter.—*W. E. G.*

† The patronymic of Dr. Yavórski.—*W. E. G.*

He will not have the official position of a political agent, but he will be able to send us all necessary information regarding the state of affairs in Afghánistán." Further on, I read: "If, however, Yávórski should not be required by the Amír of Afghánistán, he can start with Bulátsel and Chanusheff for Bukhára, in order to afford medical aid to the Amír, Muza-ffar-Khán. In the meantime, the rest of your mission should hasten back to Táshkand."

And so, if the Amír, Shir-Ali, should desire it, I was to constitute myself the "rear-guard" of the retiring Russian Mission. A commission indisputably honourable, but likewise unquestionably dangerous, not to say almost certainly fatal. When I observed to General Razgónoff that my position would, under such circumstances, be difficult beyond measure, and even insupportable, he expressed the opinion that in all probability I should not have to wait long at Mazár-i-Sharif, but that, in any case, my stay there would be very important for Russia and also for me personally. As regards the latter portion of the idea propounded, I was not altogether disposed to agree with the General, but I said nothing more on the subject. The conversation soon became general, and to the jokes and repartee on the part of Bulátsel there was no end. A very lively conversation was thus carried on till a late hour.

Kámnáb Muhammad-Hassan-Khán brought for the Amír from General Kaufmann a letter and several presents.

The next day, 6th (18th) January, at 9 A.M., the Wazir came to us, and after communicating the usual *salaam* on the part of the Amír, he informed us that his master wished to see the members of the Mission, and that he was awaiting our arrival. Accordingly, at 10 o'clock all the members of the Mission, in full uniform, with Bulátsel and Chanusheff, set out for the Amír's residence. Shir-Ali was at the time staying in the palace of the *Luináb* and his quarters were in the innermost precincts. We had, therefore, to pass through several corridors and to leave on either side of us a succession of inner court-yards until at length we reached the Amír's audience hall. In the corridors and in the miniature courtyards there were numerous patrols. The last courtyard, into which we came, was reached through a long dark passage, resembling a tunnel. In shape it was a parallelogram, covering several square yards. It was cleanly paved with red tiles, and through it flowed a canal, but there was no fountain nor even an ordinary reservoir. Wooden buildings of one story flanked this open space on all sides, and the windows and terraces of the rooms led out into it. In one of these rooms with windows facing the south and illumined with the sun's golden rays was seated the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán. We left our overcoats in the hall, and then entered the audience chamber, which consisted of a double room or two rooms opening into each other. The window of one led, as I have mentioned, out into a terrace, and thence into the courtyard above described; the window of the other communicated with the rest of the building.

(Dr. Yávórski here enters into a drawn-out description of the room and its temperature.)

(Text resumed.)

As the members of the Mission entered his presence, the Amír rose from his chair and received each in turn with outstretched hand and invited

us all to be seated. Half-way round the room chairs had been placed and on these we sat down.

After the usual exchange of compliments, the conversation lagged somewhat, and it was apparent that Shir-Ali was out of spirits. At last there was almost a dead pause, but to this the Amír put an end by asking General Razgónoff straight out whether he knew or not the contents of the last letter which General Kaufmann had written to him? As soon as General Razgónoff had replied in the negative, the Amír directed his secretary to bring him the letter. Whereupon the secretary silently went out of the room and in a few moments as noiselessly returned bringing the letter. I then perceived that he had on socks but not shoes, and that both the *Kázi* and the *Kamnáb*, who were present, were also shoeless.

The secretary now began to read out the following letter, which was translated into Russian by Naziroff, sentence by sentence :—

“Your letter dated 27th Zulhidshi* has reached me, and the news regarding the favourable state of your health has given me great joy. The Emperor has received from the British Government an assurance respecting the preservation of the integrity of Afghánistán. The English Ministers having promised this, I sincerely advise you not to quit your kingdom. As far as it is possible to do so, consult your own interests, but look after your independence. If possible, conclude now a peace with the British Government, and if you cannot yourself return to Kábul, then permit your son Yakúb-Khán to conclude a peace with England. It will be best that you should not at present quit Afghánistán, for, believe me, that your coming to Russia would only render matters worse.†

This letter was dated 23rd December 1878 (4th January 1879), and its contents took all the members of the Mission completely by surprise, as nobody, of course, excepting General Razgónoff, supposed that the Amír had ever entertained the wish to go to Russia, or that this desire had been vetoed by the Russian Government.

Immediately after this, another letter from General Kaufmann to the Amír was read. This was dated 20th December 1878 (1st January 1879). It was made over by General Kaufmann to the *Kamnáb* on his leaving Sámarkand, and the *Kamnáb* brought it to the Amír. Its contents were as follow :—

“After assurances of my sincere and friendly feelings for you I acquaint you that your friendly letter, dated 13th Zulhidshi‡ has, been received by me.

“In this letter Your Highness begs me to send you as many troops as I have ready.

* This letter was despatched from the Bámián on the 10th (22nd) December 1878.—*Author*.

† This letter will be found in the *Diplomatic Notes* sent by General Kaufmann to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. I have availed myself of these notes in the compilation of this work; but the letter is duly inserted in the *Correspondence respecting the affairs of Central Asia presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, 1881*. Enclosure 48 in No. 1.—*Author*.

‡ That is 26th November (8th December), sent before the Amír had left Kábul.—*Author*.

"In all probability, when you wrote me this letter, you had not received the information I had sent to you to say that the Great Hazrat, the Sovereign Emperor, wishing to assist Your Highness in the difficult circumstances in which you are placed with regard to the English, has obtained, through the medium of negotiations, a positive assurance from the English Ministers given to the Russian Ambassador in London to the effect that they will maintain the integrity of Afghánistán. Now I have learnt that Your Highness has left Kábul with a portion of your troops, having appointed your son, Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán, to be temporary ruler.

"Without the positive command of the Great Hazrat, the Sovereign Emperor, I cannot send Your Highness any of our troops.

"We will hope for better times in the future, but this matter is in God's hands.

"It only remains for me to assure Your Highness of the friendly sentiments which I shall ever entertain towards you, and to wish your good health.

"As regards General Razgónoff, and those who are with him, it is necessary that you should permit them to come away. If, however, Your Highness wishes to have with you our Doctor Yavórski, I have no objection to your detaining him, for he will be of use both to yourself as well as to your family.

"I hope that our friendly relations will be continued as heretofore."

After both these letters had been read, the Amír turned to General Razgónoff with the question as to whether he understood all that had been written? Did it mean a decided and final refusal or was it necessary to wait for anything further?

To these questions General Razgónoff answered as follows: "In my opinion these letters merely signify that just at present the Amír-Sáhib's visit to Russia would be inconvenient and that the Amír-Sáhib will receive a final answer hereafter, seeing that the contents of the last letter sent by the Amír were forwarded by General Kaufmann to St. Petersburg by the hands of a courier.

"Judging by the contents of both these letters," continued the Amír, "it must be thought that the relations of Russia with Afghánistán have come to an end, since I have not only been refused military aid but even permission to travel through Russia to St. Petersburg in order to personally report to the Russian Emperor regarding the condition of affairs in Afghánistán. And now, as though in confirmation of this idea, General Kaufmann has sent away my Mission empty-handed and has also called you back. What can all this signify but a complete refusal?"

"If General Kaufmann calls the Russian Mission back from Afghánistán, it is only because," returned General Razgónoff, "he wishes to receive from it a more circumstantial report as to the present state of affairs in Afghánistán. Although I have written to General Kaufmann, I could not, of course, write concerning everything." But the Amír who scarcely listened to the remarks that fell from the General, continued to express his thoughts as follows:—

"It is apparent that Russia cannot at this moment wage war with England, otherwise she would not permit her to have her

way entirely with Afghánistán. It may be, however, that other considerations are influencing Russia's course of action in this matter. As if it were a small thing for the Russian Government to refuse me the military aid for which I asked, it now counsels me to renew my friendly relations with England and to conclude a peace with my sanguinary foe! All this clearly reveals that Russia decidedly refuses to give me her support. And then General Kaufmann, too, advises me to make peace with England, as though if I had desired to conclude a peace with her, I would not have done so without such advice at any given time. But you remember what General Stolaitoff told me when he advised me not to receive an English envoy and when he promised me military aid if the English declared war. And he wrote in the same spirit to me from Livádia.*

“And now when the time has come for you to carry out your promises, you tell me something quite different. Where then is the truth? and whom am I to believe?”

* Here is the place to insert the text of the proclamation which the Amír addressed to the people, troops, and Sirdárs of Afghánistán after he had received the letter from General Stolaitoff above referred to. In this proclamation General Stolaitoff's letter appears in the form in which it was understood both by the Amír and by his ministers. It is interesting to compare this version with the text given in Chapter IV, Vol. II, of this work, page 86. The Amír made the following announcement: “We have received at Camp Sar-Chashma through the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán a letter from General Stolaitoff, who is with the Russian Emperor at Livádia. This letter runs as follows:—

“The Emperor looks upon you as on a brother, and you, too, who are on the other side of the river, must display the same friendship and brotherly feeling. The English Government wishes to come to terms with you through the Sultán and wishes, moreover, that you should pay attention to its counsels: the Emperor, however, does not desire that you should be on the side of the English, but that, as during the past year, you should behave towards them with cunning and with deceit until the cold season shall have passed away. Then the will of the Almighty will be declared to you, *i.e.*, my Government will pronounce the *Bismillah* and God will assist you. In short, you may be assured that affairs will end well. With the Divine permission we will convene a State Council at St. Petersburg, *i.e.*, a Congress, which means a meeting of official representatives, and we will conduct official negotiations with the English Government and either by means of words and of diplomatic actions we will completely do away with the relations between you and the English and put an end to their interference in the affairs of Afghánistán, or events will be closed by a great and very important war. With the aid of God, in the spring season, there will not remain a single sign or trace of disturbance or of dissatisfaction in Afghánistán.” (Here General Stolaitoff's letter ends, and the Amír goes on with his proclamation.)

“In consequence of this, I recommend all our well-disposed servants to carry on the affairs entrusted to them with credit and with decision. Moreover, and above all whilst reposing trust in God to believe that the happiness and affairs of our famous government will be continued on the same durable basis as formerly, so that the poverty and dissatisfaction which have evidently taken possession of the country will disappear. Be it known therefore to the exalted Talm-Shir-Bahadur and Hafizullah-Khán, the secretary Sipah-Sálár-Azam that, thanks be to God, the labours which we have brought into play during so many years in respect of the training of our victory-bearing soldiers have not been spent in vain. In fighting with the English troops, they have displayed the bravery and stoicism worthy of a civilised nation. Not one of the soldiers of our famous army has passed into heaven until he has slain three of the enemy. In short, they have so fought and behaved themselves as to call forth the praise of all men. We are confident therefore that our victory-bearing army, wherever it may fight, will vanquish its foe. The Herát army is also famous for its bravery and discipline, and will render devoted service. Communicate our Royal greeting to all our troops and subjects at Herát, whether high or low, and believe that our wishes are such as God and his Prophet may approve.”—*Author.*

General Razgónoff again replied that General Kaufmann, in his letters to the Amír, had not sent a final refusal because he had despatched a courier to St. Petersburg.

“He has refused military assistance,” he continued, “and this is easy to comprehend, because it is not now needed, in that the English Government has given Russia an assurance respecting its intention to preserve the independence of Afghánistán. The Russian Mission is being sent for, also in the interests of the Amír-Sáhib. Finally, in his letter to me, General Kaufmann says that it was much to have been desired that the Amír-Sáhib should have paid great attention to my official advice to conclude a peace with England.”

In saying this, General Razgónoff at once entered upon insecure ground, and the Amír immediately expressed his extreme surprise at such a declaration, and he asked what he was to believe and what advice he was to follow, that which General Kaufmann had himself given in his letters to him or that which was written in his letters to General Razgónoff,—letters which did not concern him (the Amír)?

“You must know,” he went on to say, “that I must communicate to the popular leaders and Sirdárs the contents of the official letter which General Kaufmann had addressed to me by name, and not what he may have said to you.”

After saying this, the Amír directed that a certain paper should be brought to him.

The secretary again noiselessly left the room and as silently re-appeared at the Amír’s chair. He read out the contents of this document, which, after being banded to the head of the Russian Mission, was passed from one member to the other. It proved to be an address from the Afghán people to the Amír, Shir-Ali, signed by several Sirdárs, tribal representatives, army leaders, &c., &c. The address also bore several seals, and amongst them that of Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán.

The purport of the address was to beg the Amír to go to Russia in order to personally beseech the Great White Tsár to protect Afghán territory against English oppression.*

“You see,” said the Amír, “that according to the wishes of my people, I have come to Mazár-i-Sharif, on my way to St. Petersburg, when all at once I have met with a refusal! I should have in no case have come thus far, nor have sent on my family here, if I had not made up my mind to go to Russia. What then must I now tell my people, who have given their consent and authority for me to undertake the journey? General Razgónoff was unable to answer this question and so there was a momentary pause, after which the Amír resumed.

When General Stolaitoff came to Kábul, I gave him my right hand and said: “Have you again brought fire into Afghánistán, as Vitkevitch did?” And he replied: “I have come to protect Afghánistán from insult on the part of England.” But what has happened? It has come to pass for the second time that Afghánistán is suffering disintegration,

* This address was copied out and sent by the Amír to General Kaufmann in a letter No. 27, dated 10th (22nd) December 1878.—*Author.*

on account of the broken promises of Russian envoys. I had a revenue of 20 millions, and the State had for its protection an army of 60,000 men, and we were living at peace, and wished for nothing more, when there came a Russian envoy, and gave me a lot of promises, and I, in my turn, gave him the keys of the gates of India and now my sovereignty is being destroyed. And you,—you yourselves refuse to retain possession of these keys!

When General Razgónoff once more repeated that Russia had not finally refused the Amír anything, and that she would not give him nor his country over to the English, but that the whole question was one of time in that there was nothing to be done now, but it would be possible later on, and that the Amír-Sáhib should not arrive at hasty conclusions, the Amír remarked that he was disgraced, and that he would be ashamed to look in the eyes either of his friends or of his people or even of his enemies, the English. “Did they not say to me,” continued the Amír, “In what can the Russians assist thee?” “And yet thou hast put faith in them; and hast laboured to draw all hearts towards them! And thou hast done all this, although we warned thee and told thee that Russia is powerless, that she can give thee no aid; but, on the contrary, will learn the full force of ours if only her troops dare to cross the Amu!” And now I am myself convinced of the real state of the case, and that the English were right, for before them you are simply schoolboys! “I now only do not know which of you three are speaking lies; you or General Kaufmann or General Stolaitoff?”

It was evident that the audience had begun to assume a very sharp character, and yet justice must be done to the Amír, for he was very composed both in tone and manner, for I suppose that an angel in his position would have got angry.

Then General Razgónoff, wishing to efface to some extent the bad impression produced on the Amír by what he had said, observed: “If the Amír-Sáhib is very much annoyed with the recall of my Mission from Afghánistán, the matter can be rectified. The present Mission is only temporary and must at some period or another quit Afghánistán; but if the Amír-Sáhib wishes to have with him always a permanent resident, he will be appointed immediately General Kaufmann is acquainted with the Amír’s wishes in this respect.”

In conclusion of his remarks, General Razgónoff added: “The Amír-Sáhib can send with the departing Russian Mission any one of his first counsellors, and he will be convinced that at Táshkand, as well as at St. Petersburg, every one is very much interested in the present conditions of Afghánistán, and will do all in their power to put the affairs of the Amír-Sáhib into the best order possible.”

After a certain amount of consultation between the Wazir, the Kázi, and certain other officials (the conversation being carried on in Pushtoo was therefore not understood by any of the members of the Russian Mission), the Amír to all appearances very favourably received the proposition made to him.

“It will be well that the Doctor-Sáhib should remain with me,” he added.

After this the theme of the conversation was changed and tea was handed round.

(The narrative now goes on to relate that the Amír began to discuss European politics.)

(Text resumed.)

The Amír then turned towards Zamaan-Bek, who was seated beside me, and thus addressed him : "Zamaan-Bek ! You always told me that the answer of the Russian Government would be favourable for me. What do you think about it now ? Will the answer that will come back by General Kaufmann's courier be favourable for me or not ?"

Zamaan-Bek hastened to express his belief that it would.

"You are wrong to think so," remarked the Amír.

The conversation then got back to the old topic, *viz.*, as to what the Amír was now to do; was he to consider the answer he had received final or not ? At length he asked General Razgónoff what he thought about his communicating the contents of General Kaufmann's letter to his people ?

The General gave various reasons for advising the Amír not to do so. Upon receipt of this advice the Amír observed that General Razgónoff should talk the matter over to all with all the members of his Mission, and then give him a final answer. After this he allowed us all to leave.

When we reached our quarters, the subject of what had taken place at the Amír's audience was much discussed. That I was to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif, and that the other members of the Mission were to return to Táshkand, seemed a settled matter. To General Razgónoff's question as to who should remain behind as my interpreter, I answered, "Zamaan-Bek."

At 1 o'clock the next morning, after I had finished writing up my journal, and was preparing to go to bed, General Razgónoff came to me, and, approaching my bed-side, he took from the pocket of his coat several letters, and, without saying a word, proceeded to tear them up. I regarded this action on his part not without astonishment. Then, after putting the hurried question as to whether all the other members of the Mission were asleep, the General, in a hesitating voice, began to express himself as follows :—

"See, doctor, I consider it necessary to make you acquainted, even though in an imperfect manner, with the past history of, and with the present state of affairs in, Afghánistán, as you are to remain in the country whilst all of us are going back to Táshkand. How needful this knowledge will be to you I myself know; for, when General Stolaitoff left Kábul, he gave me no instructions of any sort, and I, therefore, knew neither what to do nor what to say. This alone he advised me, *viz.*, to be always urging the Amír to wait for the necessary instructions from Táshkand. What has resulted from it, God only knows and I. I do not wish that you should be placed in the same awkward and disagreeable position which I have myself occupied during the past four months."

Turning to a letter, General Razgónoff added that he had only recently received anything in the shape of instructions from General Kaufmann.

“For a long time,” he continued, “I did not know and I could not understand what it was that our Government wished; that is, whether we were to leave Afghánistán to her fate, or whether we should support her? It is only in the last letter from General Kaufmann that I find anything of a definite nature.”

By the time we had finished reading several letters, and had come to the end of our conversation, it was 5 o'clock, and when I lay down, I slept like a dead man.

At 10 o'clock the next day, a packet addressed to the Amir was brought to the quarters of the Mission, and this was immediately handed to the Wazir for delivery to his master.

At noon the same day there entered the Mission quarters the Wazir, the Kázi, and Mirza Nabi, the first secretary of the Amír. They exchanged greetings with us all, sat down, and remained silent for some minutes. They then gave a packet to General Razgónoff, the cover of which had been opened. From the expression on the faces of these officials, it could be seen that the letter conveyed good news. As soon as General Razgónoff had read the letter, his countenance too was lit up with joy, for it turned out that the letter conveyed an invitation on the part of General Kaufmann for the Amír to proceed to Táshkand. I here insert the text of the letter.*

“After sincere wishes for your Highness's health and happiness, be it known to you as follows:—

“Prince Gorchakoff, Minister for Foreign Affairs, has telegraphed to me that the Great Hazrat, the Sovereign Emperor, has been pleased to command me to invite your Highness to come to Táshkand for a certain time.

“Whilst communicating with peculiar satisfaction this news to Your Highness, I consider it necessary to warn you that, regarding your journey from Táshkand to St. Petersburg, I have received no order of any kind.

“I rejoice that I shall have the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with Your Highness.

“I beg you to rest assured of my unchanged and heartfelt sympathy and friendship for you.”

“I have always told you,” said General Razgónoff, turning to the assembled Afghán officials, “that Russia would not leave the affairs of Afghánistán without her aid. You now see that I was right.”

The Afghán officials were evidently glad at the turn which affairs had taken, but they seemed not to be able to understand what had happened at all. “How is all this? Yesterday a refusal, and to-day an invitation! What does it all mean? How could there be such a rapid change in the settlement of so important a question?”

This much could be read in their faces.

How, indeed, could the circumstance be explained that one day the Amír had met with a refusal and the next had received an invitation.

* This letter and also the one received before it bore date 23rd December 1878 (4th January 1879). But herein is an evident mistake. How this was occasioned, the reader will see from the further exposition of the narrative.—*Author.*

The origin of this game I do not know, but I will explain how it was played out.

Whilst Bulátsel, who was returning with the Afghán Mission from Táshkand, was at Shira-ábád, courier overtook him. This man was the bearer of a letter from General Kaufmann to the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán, which *Yesaul* Bulátsel took from his hands and made over to the members of the Afghán Mission. Soon after this there rode up another courier with a second letter and an order from the Officer Commanding the Sámarkand district for the return of the first letter. This demand appeared to Bulátsel to be hurtful to his self-respect, and he therefore told the man to go on with the second letter, whilst the first remained in the hands of the members of the Afghán Mission. This letter reached the Amír at Mazár-i-Sharif, but after it there followed the courier with the second letter. The first communication contained the refusal, the second the invitation for the Amír to go to Táshkand.

“Why did you not give the first letter to the courier who overtook you with the order?” enquired General Razgónoff of Bulátsel.

“Under what regulation should I take a letter away from any messenger when such letter did not concern me,” said Bulátsel, justifying himself. “If he had brought me from proper authority an order to take such letter, I, of course, should not have delayed doing so, but there rides up somebody in an ordinary *khalat* and demands me to give up a certain letter.”

I can understand that *Yesaul* Bulátsel could not accede to the demand of a simple native courier. But this second courier was sent with a demand to the first courier, and the Sámarkand authorities never supposed that Bulátsel would take a letter from a courier and make it over to the members of the Afghán Mission. Indeed, he had no authority for so doing. If this had not happened, the courier with the order would have addressed himself to the first courier and the required letter would of course have been returned. Thus an unpleasant communication would have been kept back and our Mission would have been saved from the possibility of being unnecessarily placed in an awkward situation. But the matter proceeded otherwise, and who was to blame for the turn of affairs, it is not my business to decide.

The Afghán officials left us in a good frame of mind, but we, the members of the Mission, felt still more joyful. “It means that we shall all go, thought I, “and I shall not have to waste my existence in this ‘Sacred tomb.’”* On the one hand, I was glad at this conclusion, and on the other I was not so, for the thought that I should have to play the part of Political Agent turned my head. “But everything is for the best in this best of worlds,” reflected I.

During the last days of the stay of the members of the Russian Mission at Mazár-i-Sharif, they lived in the hope of a speedy departure from Afghánistán. On the 11th (23rd) January, Bulátsel and ChanushEFF took their departure, and with them went Benderski, the topographer with the Mission. Although I did not accompany them, it was

* Mazár-i-Sharif.—*Author*.

decided that they were to proceed to Kárshi in order to meet the Amír of Bukhára. But we had at the same time heard that the Amír of Bukhára had left Kárshi for Bukhára. Thus, if in accordance with orders received, I had gone with Bulátsel and Chanusheff, I should have had a favourable opportunity of staying in the famous centre of Central Asian Muhammadanism. But now I had to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif, a place that was so wearisome to us all, although it figures as no small "pillar" in the Mussulmán world. The other members of the Mission were not able to leave with Benderski, because the Amír had not yet completed his supplies at the different stages on the road.

Nevertheless when he left, it was decided that we all and the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán, should leave Mazár-i-Sharif not later than the week following, and, if possible, earlier. The Amír informed us that he intended to take with him 4 of his highest officials, *viz.*, his cousin, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, the Wazir, Shir-Muhammad-Khán, the Kázi, Abdul-Kadir, and one Mustafa-Khán.

Notwithstanding that General Razgónoff daily asked the Wazir to hasten the preparations for the departure of the Mission from Mazár-i-Sharif, an easy departure could not be anticipated, for the Amír insisted that General Razgónoff should first of all communicate his approaching departure to the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán. In the opinion of the Amír, it was necessary to send this intimation in order that preparations might be made at Táshkand for his meeting and reception, as befitted his rank. Moreover, the Wazir, too, insisted that General Kaufmann should acquaint the Amír of Bukhára of Shir-Ali's projected passage through his dominions. When General Razgónoff inquired why such an intimation was needed, the Wazir answered that as the Amír's retinue would consist of 400 men, 500 horses, 3 elephants, and a large number of servants, it was necessary that arrangements should be made beforehand for the reception and maintenance of such a vast cavalcade. In reply to this demand, General Razgónoff endeavoured to explain to the Wazir that Bukhára was an independent State, and that the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán had no authority to interfere with it in any way; that when the members of the Russian Mission entered Bukhárán territory, they were nothing more than guests; and that if the Amír of Bukhára chose to keep the Mission during its stay within the limits of his territory at his own expense, so as not to allow the members of the Russian Mission to pay for anything, the fact would only be an indication of the friendliness of the kind neighbours of Russia in Central Asia.

The Wazir listened to the General with attention and partly agreed with what he said, but, after a pause of a few moments, he again raised the question as to his sending an intimation to the Amír of Bukhára through the Russian authorities. This conversation, which was in the highest degree monotonous and altogether useless, dragged on for a long time. At length, the Wazir concluded it by observing that if General Kaufmann could not do so, General Razgónoff might take on himself to send word to the Amír of Bukhára of his master's proposed passage through his dominions.

"If I were to do this," said General Razgónoff, "it would be as though the Amír-Sáhib was not of himself going to Táshkand, but as if the Russian Mission was taking him with it for the sake of company. This reply shook the Wazir's impertunity, and he soon left us without saying even "Yes" or "No."

The day following this conversation, during a farewell audience which the Amír gave to Bulátsel,* the Wazir once more raised the question as to his sending an intimation to the Amír of Bukhára through General Kaufmann. Upon this Malevinski remarked that such a method of address would be inappropriate both on the part of the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán and also as regards the Amír of Bukhára, who was only a good neighbour of Russia's and quite independent. Here Shir-Ali broke in and ironically observed, "Yes. We know what sort of independence Bukhára enjoys."

From all this it was evident how the Amír obstinately, and as though with great unwillingness, made preparations for his departure for Táshkand. During the greater part of his time, too, Shir-Ali seemed to us, to say the least, to be behaving himself in a strange manner; thus, he would look on at fights between various animals, he would go out hunting and busy himself about fresh acquisitions to his harem and the like. All this made General Razgónoff very angry, for he was in a hurry to get out of Afghánistán as quickly as possible.

"Why does not the Amír permit us to leave," asked Malevinski of General Razgónoff. "By ourselves we could go quite quietly, and he could follow after us. You ought to tell him so." But General Razgónoff thought otherwise, for he said that, although it was very disagreeable to remain on at Mazár-i-Sharif in a perfectly needless manner, yet as the Russian Mission had got through an existence of 8 months in Afghánistán, it could at least manage to exist for another 8 days under any circumstances. And yet the General, with all his self-restraint when, after the lapse of some days, the Wazir again addressed him with the apparently endless question as to sending an intimation to the Amír of Bukhára, he could not refrain from exclaiming—"What inveterate potterers these people are! Important affairs of state await a settlement and they procrastinate. It is necessary to hurry, and they look on at camel fights and waste their time over idle correspondence!"

Thus was the period of the stay of the Russian Mission at Mazár-i-Sharif again prolonged in the same uniform and wearisome manner. One day resembled another just as two drops of water bear the same resemblance.

(In spite of this observation, Dr. Yavórski inflicts on his readers a wearisome account of how these days were passed; but in the course of his narrative, he incidentally makes the following statement regarding Shir-Ali's Wazir, Sháh-Muhammad-Khán.)

His indifference to the interests of the Russian Mission can, to a certain degree, be explained by the circumstance that he was not amongst the number of advocates for an alliance with Russia. When

* Dr. Yavórski has already stated that he had left Mazár-i-Sharif.—*W. E. G.*

Shir-Ali, on the receipt of the news that a Russian Mission was on its way to Kábul, called together in Darbár his Sirdárs and popular representatives and invited their opinion as to whether he should receive the Mission from the Russian Emperor or not, the voices for and against his doing so were unequally divided, but the majority were not in favour of a Russian alliance, and to this party the Wazir belonged. If, in spite of this fact, the Russian Mission went to Kábul, it arrived there chiefly through the personal wish of the Amír. The Wazir did not, however, cease to oppose Russian interests and this, too, though he was subsequently one of the authors of "The Projected Russo-Afghán Agreement." When Shir-Ali left Kábul, the Wazir persistently advised him to break off relations with Russia. And if he was not disgraced, it was probably because of the circumstance that the Amír did not wish to drive from his court such an influential man as the Wazir was. Although the Wazir was distinguished for his purely canine devotion to Shir-Ali, yet, towards the end, he did not enjoy the same influence with, and confidence of, Shir-Ali that he had some months before possessed.

He and the Kázi (Abdul-Kadir) were secret and irreconcilable enemies, but the latter was so skilful, that during my further stay at Mazár-i-Sharif he contrived to throw on his rival the shadow of infidelity in the eyes of the Amír.

Several times there came to us our old acquaintance the *Kamnáb* Muhammad-Hassan-Khán, and he, in contradistinction to the Wazir, was deserving of the general thanks of the Russian Mission. He is a man of subtle and clear intellect and has had in an Asiatic sense a brilliant education, and he moreover possesses an excellent acquaintance with Persian literature. He has travelled much and has visited India on several occasions. In appearance he is more like a European than an Asiatic, and he is without that conceit and haughtiness which are characteristics of Mussulmán officials in Central Asia and, moreover, he is not possessed of that adulation and flattery for which most Bukháran officials are distinguished. He is simple in his manner and modest in his conversation, and one very seldom hears a sharp remark proceed from his lips. His conversation was modest and with an easy flow. He has only one failing, and this is so perceptible as to cast shade on his otherwise bright countenance. He greatly loves strong drink. In contrast to the niggardliness of the Wazir, he is, at all times, ready to offer you anything that he has. Several years previously, he had occupied a high position in Afghánistán; he then fell into disfavour and was appointed Assistant to the *Lutnáb* of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*. Now, on his return from Tashkand, he had evidently been deprived still further of the Amír's good graces since his Mission had to come to nothing, and he had not only not brought with him any Russian troops, but he had failed to obtain from the Russian Government any sort of definite promises. And, of course, he was held responsible for the turn which affairs had taken.

Every time, however, that the *Kamnáb* came to us, he carried about with him an atmosphere of benignity and cheerfulness. His intelligent and refined conversation acted on us in a positively exhilarating manner after the awkward phrases of the Wazir.

On the 16th (28th) January, the Amír again expressed a wish to see the members of the Mission; he then sent word to say that he had a bad leg. We immediately put on our full-dress uniform and started for the Amír's residence. On this occasion, the Amír was in a room adjoining his bath-room, and he with great naïvete asked us why we had come. It was a curious picture to see the members of the Russian Mission sitting in full uniform in the Amír's dressing-room and the Amír in *déshabille*.

Immediately we came the Amír began to talk about his ailments and to seek my medical advice. He first of all told me that a year-and-a-half before, the other leg had troubled him, and that the present ailment had begun with the same symptoms as before.

(Here Dr. Yavórski, after an examination of the Amír's legs, gives his professional opinion as to the nature of the ailment, and then, after some further inquiries as to the general state of the Amír's health, resumes the narrative as follows.)

Shir-Ali now ordered that a recently received despatch from Yakúb-Khán, regarding the state of affairs at Kandahár, should be read out. Sirdár Muhammad-Yusuf-Khán, the Governor of that city, reported* that the English had approached within 10 or 12 *versts* ($6\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 miles) and had pitched camp there: that he and the garrison of the city, in view of the inequality of his forces, as compared with those of the English, had decided not to enter into an open engagement but to operate on the line of their communications.

After the letter had been read out, the Amír turned to General Razgónoff with the usual question: "How can you reconcile the acts of the English with the promises given by them to the Russian Government, *viz.*, that the independence of Afghánistán will be preserved?"

Instead of giving an answer to this question, General Razgónoff began to advise the Amír to start for Táshkand as soon as possible.

"There everything will be much clearer," he assured the Amír. "General Kaufmann will give you more circumstantial answers to all your questions: meanwhile I cannot tell you anything."

"To go to Táshkand is not difficult," returned the Amír, "but what's the use of going? Is there any advantage to be derived by such a visit? I have done everything for Russia, but she has, as yet, done absolutely nothing for me. Russia believes England's promises. Is she not sufficiently convinced by this time of the perfidy of the English? I want one thing only, *viz.*, armed assistance, so that I may, by force of arms, arrest the advance of the English. It is clear that words will not do this. I therefore wish to know whether, if I go to Táshkand, I can count on the complete co-operation of Russia. What should I do, were I to go to Táshkand and there meet with a refusal? In that case my honour, which has already suffered so much from the English proceedings, would be injured still further."

General Razgónoff endeavoured to assure the Amír as to the protection he would receive in Russia, but Shir-Ali was not to be driven

* When he wrote this report, Muhammad-Yusuf-Khán probably did not know that Shir-Ali had come to the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, and therefore he sent his letter to Kábul, whence Yakúb-Khán forwarded it to his father at Mazár-i-Sharif with a letter from himself.—*Author*.

easily from a position which he had once taken up. He ordered that General Kaufmann's letter of the 23rd December 1878 (4th January 1879), in which he counselled Shir-Ali not to go to Russia, but to await more favourable circumstances at Mazár-i-Shraif, should be read out.

"Here you see," continued the Amír, "that General Kaufmann distinctly advises me to remain here in order to settle my affairs. And certainly my presence here is indispensable. My State is in danger, for two-thirds of it are in the enemy's possession. Consequently my revenue which, before the war, amounted to Rs. 20,000,000 does not now exceed Rs. 2,000,000, for Kábul, Herát, and the *Chahár-Wiláyat* alone remain in my possession. But Kábul does not now bring me in a single rupee, because its chief source of revenue-trade has completely disappeared. I have only sufficient money to support an army for two months. After that time, I shall be a beggar, and my position will be critical. Moreover, if the English should occupy Kandahár, and of this there can be no doubt, their nearness to Herát might have an unfavourable effect on that province where it is possible that disturbances would break out. Then there will only be one thing left to complete the sum of all my misfortunes; this will be a rebellion in the only province left, namely, Afghán Turkistán. You now see what considerations compel me to reflect very much about taking a journey to Táshkand. I will not tell you more, *viz.*, that these same considerations induce me to altogether give up the wish, which I at one time very much cherished—that of journeying to Russia."

General Razgónoff vainly strove to assure Shir-Ali that it was absolutely necessary for him to go to Táshkand. Vainly did he demonstrate the utility of such a journey by pointing out how the Amír-Sáhib had General Kaufmann's latest letter, in which, by order of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, he invited the Amír to Táshkand, but all in vain. The Amír received with scepticism General Razgónoff's assurances or held fast to his own.

"It would now be much better for the Amír-Sáhib to go to Táshkand than to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif. If that had not been so, General Kaufmann would not have sent you an invitation."

"In his former letter* he, as a kind and sincere friend, expresses his personal opinion by counselling the Amír-Sáhib to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif, but he now asks you to go there, in obedience to higher authority. It is clear then that your journey to Táshkand is considered more useful than your stay at Mazár-i-Sharif would be. It is clear, too, that it will be best for the Amír-Sáhib to go to Táshkand."

So General Razgónoff continued to urge the Amír.

But Shir-Ali, without giving any definite reply, allowed the members of the Mission to return to their quarters.

On reaching these, they long and energetically discussed the question as to what this change in the politics of the Amír meant? Was it the result of simple caprice, or did it conceal some hidden motive. Had the

* Dated 23rd December 1878 (4th January 1879). General Kaufmann's second letter also bore this date, and in this the Amír was invited to go to Táshkand. In my opinion this second letter should have been dated 25th December 1878 (6th January 1879).—*Author.*

Amír sent, unknown to the Mission, a letter to the English, and was he now awaiting an answer to it? It might be that he was declining to take a journey, because his leg pained him. The hypothesis and the guesses were numerous, but at length it was almost unanimously decided that the Amír was deferring his departure, because, as General Razgónoff had observed, all Afgháns are inveterate potterers.

At 5 P.M. the same day, Ghulám-Haidar-Khán came to our quarters to say that the Amír was desirous of seeing me and of seeking my professional aid. Taking with me the Assistant Surgeon and certain medicines, I at once started off. Instead of my usual companion, Zamaan-Bek, Malevinski came with me as interpreter. I drew the General's attention to the inconvenience of such a change, in the event of the *Kázi* not being with the Amír, for he alone could render Malevinski's English into Persian for the Amír's benefit and reverse the same process in the case of Malevinski. But my protest met with both from Malevinski and from General Razgónoff the retort: "And why should not the *Kázi* be with the Amír? I could no longer hold out when I perceived that General Razgónoff very much wished that Malevinski should go with me to the Amír."

It should here be observed that General Razgónoff had for some time made more use of the services of Malevinski as an interpreter than those of Naziroff, although the change was very inconvenient. Malevinski had first of all to translate what the General said into English for the *Kázi* to convert the same into Persian for the Amír. Thus, before the Amír's answer reached General Razgónoff, it had gone through two other mouths and this method of exchanging ideas, besides causing delay, was inconvenient also, because a thought, thus conveyed, might, in process of rendering into another language, suffer mutilation or alteration in the mind and mouth of the particular speaker, or, perhaps, be represented in a sense totally different to that which it was intended by the originator to bear. Indeed, this happened more than once. Nevertheless, General Razgónoff evidently preferred this method of communicating with the Amír to doing so through Naziroff.

A short time after I had been with the Amír, it really turned out that I was placed in an awkward situation, owing to the *Kázi's* not being present. Although I can understand Persian fairly well, I speak it very badly; but I must here observe that even though I had been well able to do so, I should never have held communication with the Amír, except through the medium of an interpreter, for certain considerations induced me not to display before Shir-Ali what acquaintance I had with the Persian language, and these considerations proved to be perfectly well founded.

On the present occasion, the Amír was on the terrace whence there projected out on to the clean court yard paved with tiles a wooden balustrade. With the Amír were the Wazir and my old acquaintance, the Akhund-Sáhib, my colleague, or, to speak more correctly, my predecessor in the unsuccessful treatment of the hereditary prince, Abdulla-Ján. The large round head of the Akhund with its huge drooping ears was firmly set on a thick fat trunk, which rose up from small shoeless but sock-covered feet. The large cunning eyes and hooked nose gave to the broad and very flat face an impression that the owner was quick of

apprehension and a good judge of character. He was not fluent of speech, but he could look fixedly and observantly straight into the eyes of his interlocutor as though he were endeavouring to read his inmost thoughts. At me he gazed neither coldly nor yet malevolently. As he cast a look at me I too watched my opportunity and attentively regarded him, as though I also wished to sound his secret reflections. For some time, he quietly withstood my glance, but at length the expression of his eyes became restless and he turned his head away. It was perfectly in the order of things that the worthy Akhund should not display any special sympathy towards me, for I had stood for the second time in his way and had proved myself to be his rival before the person of the Amír.

In a few moments, the *Kázi* made his appearance and then our silent *tête-a-tête* came to an end.

(The next half-page is taken up with Dr. Yavórski's inquiries regarding the Amir's state of health.)

(Text resumed.)

After my professional visit was over, we began a general conversation. The Amír then sent for two of his children ; one appeared to be a boy of 8 the other of 12. But a glance at them was sufficient to show how great a difference there was in their respective types of countenance. The elder child was a type of the pure Afghán with large black eyes and slightly hooked nose set on a swarthy face. He was, in fact, already the very image of his father. The other child had reddish hair, grey eyes, and a whitish tinge of countenance, and he, too, had a slightly hooked nose. His features were not, however, so very regular as those of his elder brother, but he had a very attractive face. I subsequently learnt that the first child was not a boy at all but a girl, and the daughter of the Amír's favourite wife. As Shir-Ali greatly loved this child and wished to have her always near him, he dressed her up as a boy and so evaded the strict rules* of the harem, which do not permit the presence of females in men's society especially with unveiled faces.

As soon as I became aware of the respective parentage of these two children, the striking difference in their countenances became explained, for the mother of the first child was a pure Afghán; the mother of the second was a slave-girl of Káfiristán. Both children were dressed alike and well. On their heads they wore the national cone-shaped head-dress of black lambs-wool. Over their shoulders was thrown a fox-skin coat, embroidered with silk. Their feet were covered with thick silken socks, but they wore neither shoes nor sandals.

I should here state that Afghán officials and even members of the reigning family went shoeless in the presence of the Amír, wearing socks only ; but they had on their heads either a turban (*chulmá*), the national Afghán head-dress (*kulákh*) or the English helmet (*káska*).

The relations of the children, the one towards the other, were perfectly unconstrained ; but in the younger child there was not observable that haughty look which was traceable in the countenance of the elder.

* These rules do not necessarily apply to mere children.—*W. E. G.*

In the courtyard and before the open windows of the terrace there moved about many of the Amír's adherents, and close to the window stood a young man of 17, erect and tall as a poplar tree. The outlines of his face were beautiful and his eyes sparkled with intelligence. This was the Amír's grandson and the son of his eldest and favourite son, Muhammad-Ali-Khán. They called the lad Ahmad-Ali-Khán. Fourteen years had passed since his father's death in a tragic manner. And here I will insert what the Amír himself related to me.

"Fourteen years ago, whilst I was carrying on many wars with my rebellious brothers, a fight took place between my troops and those of Muhammad-Sharif-Khán, the ruler of Girishk, and of Muhammad-Amin-Khán, the ruler of Kandahár. The fight occurred near Khelát-i-Ghilzai. My deceased son, who was a hero in body and soul, as well as a powerful man, did not wish that so much blood of the people should be shed, seeing that they were innocent in respect of a purely family quarrel. Therefore my hero son imagined that it would be more just if the leaders themselves decided upon engaging in single combat. From my side, the challenge came from my son, Muhammad-Ali-Khán. Muhammad-Sharif-Khán, a known coward, would not listen to the message, but my other brother, Muhammad-Amin-Khán, was possessed of a soul of another kind, and he accepted the challenge. It was decided that the combat should be waged with swords only and either combatant was forbidden to take with him a fire arm of any kind. The spot having been chosen, the duel began. Amin-Khán first of all slightly wounded my son, who, with a terrific blow of his sword, mortally wounded his uncle. In his fall, Amin-Khán snatched a revolver from his breast and fired it point blank at my son. Both thus fell together and neither rose again.* My son! My son! never was there such a hero upon earth and never will there be such again! Grief and heart-felt anxiety, through the loss of my son, the repository of all my hopes, so afflicted me that I lost all joy in life. For six months I wandered like a shadow from one place to another, taking only just enough food to sustain life and now my grandson occupies his father's place in my affection."

This comely and evidently not robust youth interested me very much, and I tried to get into conversation with him. The Amír then told me that his grandson had a month before suffered much from fever and that he was not yet cured of the disease, having no appetite at all. The cunning *Kazi* hereupon did not fail to praise the powder which I had prescribed for him some time before for stomachic catarrh, and he recommended that I should give them to the young grandson of the Amír.

There now appeared amongst those standing in the court, and the *Lwináb*, Khush-Dil Khán, and Faiz-Muhammad-Khán, commanding the troops in the *Chahár-Wiláyat*. The *Lwináb* was clad in the same (lark-blue glazed and brocaded) fur-coat which he wore when he received me in December. The dress of the Amír's young grandson was very light for winter wear. The whole of it was comprised in a cone-shaped head-dress, cloth sleeve-less coat, a silver-lace belt, trousers of the same material as the coat, and long boots.

* As the reader will observe, the ancient Iránian custom of deciding the issue of a quarrel in single combat, which is so graphically portrayed by that most famous of Persian poet, Firdausi, in his duel between Rustam and Zorab (in the *Sháh-Náma*), still exists on the modern Afghán soil of ancient and classic Irán.—*Author*.

Although the evening was mild and bright, the temperature only stood at 41° F. Upon my observing that his young grandson should dress more warmly, the Amír answered that it did not do to coddle the body, and that one should harden it in the days of one's youth. "A warrior, such as my grandson will undoubtedly be, should look with contempt on the luxuries of life, and a warrior should have a strong constitution."

Amidst the throng of those collected before the windows of the terrace, my attention was attracted to a tall and handsome man with an intelligent expression of countenance. He appeared to be under 30 years of age. When I enquired who he was, the *Kázi* informed he was his "actor." I then became aware that the said "actor" performed at the Amír's court the same part as the jester of the age in Russia prior to Peter the Great's reign. At length my visit ended, and having taken my leave of the Amír, I returned home.

[The rest of this chapter (three pages) is taken up with an account, of no interest, about Dr. Yavórski's visit to an Afghán family, one of the members of which was sick and in want of his professional advice.]

CHAPTER VI.

WITH THE AFGHÁN AMÍR.

Departure of the Russian Mission from Afghánistán—I remain at Mazár-i-Sharif alone—The Amír receives the members of the Russian Mission for the last time—His farewell of them—Illness of the Amír—Afghán doctors and native medicines—My surgery—Ride out to Takhtapul—News from the Anglo-Afghán theatre of war and from the interior of Afghánistán—Hopeless condition of the Amír—His last moments.

ON the 18th (30th) January 1879, the Amír again invited the members of the Russian Mission to go and see him. After the usual salutations, he once more led the conversation up to the question as to whether he should go to Táshkand or not? And he seemed more than ever inclined to the idea that it would be best for him to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif. Amongst the number of reasons which he alleged would prevent his going, he brought forward his bad leg. This I again examined, and in it I again failed to trace any actual signs of disease. The temperature, colour and size were all normal, and the feeling in the limb was also unchanged. I, therefore, expressed the opinion that the Amír could travel in a palanquin with great convenience, and that his painful leg would certainly not interfere with his journey. "Moreover," said I, "I could at Táshkand employ such remedies for the treatment of your leg which I have not at my disposal at Mazár-i-Sharif."

To this the Amír replied that his bad leg was really not the chief cause which stood in the way of his journey to Táshkand, but circumstances of a totally different character. Hereupon he directed his First Secretary to bring and to read out a letter which he had just received from Muhammad-Yusuf-Khán at Kandahar.

This letter was accordingly brought and read out, and the contents proved to be very important, for they conveyed the news that the English had occupied Kandahar. This event was described in the letter as follows:—

"As your Highness is aware from my previous letter, I decided to refrain from making an open attack on the enemy, but on the 10th Muharram my contingent of horse, comprising 1,500 troopers, would not undergo further inaction, and so rushed to the attack of a whole division of the English army. The English forces consisted, as stated in my previous letter, of 8 battalions of infantry, 2 regiments of cavalry and 20 guns. Of course, the issue of the fight was very disastrous for my cavalry, who retired in two directions, *viz.*, towards Kábul and towards Herát."

"You see," said the Amír, turning to General Razgónoff, "how the English are carrying out their promises. It is useless to speak of the due observance of the independence of a country when one city after another of that country passes into the enemy's hands. Were I to set out for Russia, the English would take advantage of my absence and would gradually possess themselves of the whole of Afghánistán and then I should get back nothing. No, the condition of my country is so

bad that I cannot leave it, and I, therefore, definitely refuse to go to Russia at such a time."

General Razgónoff here tried to assure the Amír that his journey to Táshkand would prove the saving of him, as he would thus have the opportunity of conversing freely with General Kaufmann, who could give him a definite answer, for he was invested with plenary powers which General Razgónoff had not.

"As regards the Amír-Sahib's dread that the English will, in his absence, possess themselves not only of Herát but of Afghán Turkistán, this," returned General Razgónoff, "is easier said than done." From Kandahar to Herát the distance is 1,000 *versts* (606½ miles*), so that the occupation of the latter city could not be effected in a short time, whilst as regards Afghán Turkistán, the English could not reach it under two years."

But the Amír remained of his original opinion, and he gave expression to the dread that a rising would inevitably take place in Afghán Turkistán immediately the English reached Herát, and that danger would then most certainly threaten his family, and that, therefore, he could not go and leave his own people to their fate.

"Could I," he continued, "in case of danger send my family to any Russian town?"

To this inquiry General Razgónoff answered that the Amír might immediately despatch his family to Russia, and that they would there receive the most large-hearted hospitality. Here the Amír expressed the opinion that his journey to Táshkand would be possible only in the event of General Kaufmann stationing at Shir-abád† a corps of observation, consisting of 4 battalions.

"For then," said he, "I could be easy in my mind as to the safety of my family, and I should further be assured that the quiet of the country would be preserved."

When the Amír named the number of battalions of which the proposed corps of observation should be composed, the Wazir said to him, in Pushtu, that he ought to demand a larger number, *viz.*, 10 battalions.

It is clear that General Razgónoff could not promise that General Kaufmann would station any such corps of observation, and so the Amír definitely decided not to go to Táshkand.

"The matter may now be considered settled," said Shir-Ali. "Moreover it will not do for me to forget General Kaufmann's letter of the 23rd December 1878 (4th January 1879), for, in that letter, he distinctly counselled me to remain here. How then can I go to Táshkand? And what should I do if, on arrival at Táshkand, General Kaufmann were to say to me: 'why have you come here; did I not write and tell you to await a more favourable time for coming?' What could I answer then? With what eyes could I gaze on God's world, if, on arrival at Táshkand, I were to be told: 'look after your own affairs. We can do nothing whatever to help you!' There would then be only one thing left for me to do, *viz.*, to put an end to myself! You must clearly see, therefore, that I must remain here."

* Supposing the figures in the Russian text to be correctly printed, there is an error here, for the actual distance is a little more than half that named.—*W. E. G.*

† It is interesting to notice that this is the place which the Russians have tried to induce the Amír of Bukhára to cede to them.—*W. E. G.*

General Razgónoff tried to explain to the Amír how unfounded all his ideas were, but in vain. In vain too he quoted General Kaufmann's most recent letter, in which he invited Shir-Ali to go to Táshkand, for the answer was: "Nothing need be said about that now." The Amír, however, added that he would despatch a fresh mission to Táshkand composed of four of his highest officials. He further intimated that he would no longer detain the Russian Mission, and that it might leave with his own.

"But the Doctor-Sáhib I will detain," he said, in conclusion of his speech. I must, however, admit that the honour shown me by the Amír did not tickle me at all. In fact, by remaining at Mazár-i-Sharif, I should be exposed to a comfortless solitude which might continue for an indefinite period.

"Why am I to remain here?" thought I. "To cure the Amír of his ailment?" But who then will guarantee that the native *hakims* will not set the Amír against me? This might the more readily come about, seeing that the relations of Shir-Ali-Khán with the Russian Government had now entered upon a very uncertain footing, and might, at any moment, threaten to become strained. When once the Amír had listened to his own medical advisers, he would refuse to receive my advice, and I should find myself in a ridiculous position if not worse.

I, therefore, asked General Razgónoff, in the Amír's presence, whether I was to remain in Afghánistán or not?

The General confirmed what the Amír had said, and added that I must stay—*1st*, because General Kaufmann had directly ordered that I should do so in a letter to himself (General Razgónoff) and also in his letter to the address of the Amír of the 20th December 1878 (1st January 1879); and *secondly* that I should not remain alone but with Zamaan-Bek, and that, therefore, I would not be absolutely alone.

Of course I could not say anything further at the time, but still I did altogether abandon hope of persuading General Razgónoff to allow me to leave Mazár-i-Sharif with the other members of the Mission.

Meanwhile the disputes between the Amír and General Razgónoff were renewed, so that an audience, which began with a very pleasant conversation, passed to very angry speech, until at last the assembly became a regular bazaar, at which every one spoke at once. Each one tried to bawl down his neighbour and to compel him to listen to what he had to say. The Amír, the *Kázi*, and the Wazir all spoke at once, so that the interpreters did not know to whom they were to listen, and so, of course, they did not succeed in interpreting everything which each of the speakers might have said to General Razgónoff. As to conveying to the Amír and to his officials General Razgónoff's answers, nothing could be said; because when he was about to open his mouth, the people on the opposite side let flow a perfect torrent of words, and so the interpreters were obliged to catch them as it were *en l'air*. Moreover, General Razgónoff sat silent for the greater portion of the time, listening to his neighbours and answering them only with dumb smiles, both seasonable and unseasonable. I could not help noticing the silence of Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, the Amír's brother (? cousin), who was present at these audiences. I never once heard him raise his voice or get in the least heated during the controversy that raged around him. Whilst the *Kázi* shrieked out with hesitating speech, and when even the eloquent Wazir

got choked with the flow of his own words, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán very seldom put in a word, but when he did, his observations were always to the point. His majestic simplicity of manner and his open way of speaking produced an agreeable contrast to the buttery utterances of the *Kázi* and to the cringing demeanour of the Wazir.

At length the audience came to an end, and the next day [19th (31st) January] was fixed for the departure of the Russian Mission.

A short time after the audience was over, the Wazir came to our quarters, bringing with him the gifts which the Amír had conferred on the outgoing members of the Russian Mission. These gifts took the form of Kashmir shawls, and each member received two, except General Razgónoff, on whom were bestowed four. In addition to these the Amír sent for Malevinski's acceptance the ancient coins for the possession of which he had quarrelled with the Wazir. I did not receive anything "because," so said the Wazir, "the Amír-Sáhib is going to keep the Doctor-Sáhib, and when he too leaves Afghánistán, the Amír will reward him for his trouble."

The same day the departing members of the Mission began to prepare for the road, and I was once more summoned to the Amír, whom I found seated on a mattress placed on some carpets, and over the whole a bearskin. The Amír complained of a pain in the knee-pan and in the ankle-joint. The latter appeared to be somewhat swollen and its temperature was slightly high. Whilst I was carrying out an examination of the bad leg, the Amír groaned loudly. I now saw enough to convince me that Shir-Ali was suffering from rheumatism of the joints. I rubbed the ankle-joint with chloroform and bandaged the leg with flannel and cotton wool. For internal use I prescribed quinine and opium, but as soon as Shir-Ali became aware of the nature of the medicine which I proposed to give him, he refused to take it. Salysilic salts I could not give the sick man as I had none with me. Soon, however, the pain ceased and the Amír obtaining relief, I returned to my quarters. Amidst all the bustle and preparation for the road of the departing members of the Mission, I went about like a man out of sorts, for General Razgónoff's decision to leave me at Mazár-i-Sharif had greatly depressed me. But it was now evident that I must remain behind, for the Amír really was ill and I could not leave him without medical aid, even though he might have with him a whole crowd of local physicians.

To complete the history of my woes, my personal attendant (Cossack orderly) a very trustworthy, honest and deserving man, was about to leave me. He had done good service when I had left him behind at Kábul and when I had placed all my things, camp furniture, and horses there under his charge, and I must say that he had kept everything in the best of order. All the members of the Russian Mission had made very flattering remarks regarding the solicitude and care with which he had looked after the interests of his absent master. General Razgónoff too, in one of his letters, had written concerning him a whole diaphragm of praise. This was the kind of man I must now allow to return to Táshkand at a time when his services would be the more needful and valuable to me. And yet I must permit him to go, as the period, for which he had engaged to serve me, had expired in the month of August of the previous year (1878) and all his comrades had been allowed to return to their own homes on indefinite

leave. He had thus completed his engagement and could expect his release. This difficulty could, however, be evaded as our present expedition was considered to be on a war-footing, and consequently completion of a period of service had no signification, and yet to detain him in Afghánistán would be a harsh measure on my part. With the submission to fate, which characterises our glorious and honest soldiery, my orderly only hesitatingly asked me if I would not allow him to go with the members of the Russian Mission who were leaving Afghánistán, "as here," said he, "I am pining and my heart longs for my native-land." I, of course, could not forcibly detain this excellent man, and so I gave him a fully caparisoned horse, a little money, and allowed him to go; but I repeat with sincere regret.

On the morning of the 19th (31st) January, the departing members of the Russian Mission were quite ready to set out and only awaited the permission of the Amír to do so. Soon there came the Wazir and Ghulam-Haidar-Khán, the Amír's Aide-de-Camp, with an invitation for the members of the Mission to go and take leave of him. And so all of us, whether going or staying, went off in marching kit to see the Amír.

Shir-Ali was lying on a mattress in the room wherein he had usually given audiences to the members of the Russian Mission. By his side were two native physicians. One of them was the Akhund-Sáhib, whom I knew; the other man I did not recognise. The latter held the Amír's leg, which was wrapped in muslin, over a copper basin, whilst the Akhund kept pouring iced-water over the wrapped-up limb. On my asking the Amír why he was being so treated, he told me that all had been done with the Akhund's advice, for some hours past, and that now his leg was no longer paining him.

I advised the Amír to be as cautious as possible with the use of iced-water, observing that a too free application of this method of treatment might intensify the disease, even though it apparently and temporarily seemed to lessen it. "I would willingly give up the fomentations of iced-water," answered the Amír, "if this method of treatment could be replaced by another, which would do as much to relieve the pain."

I proposed certain other remedies, but the Amír impatiently refused them all, saying that he felt quite himself again.

In taking farewell of the members of the Russian Mission, the Amír expressed the hope that they would get safely back to Tashkand. He then communicated the names of the Afghán members of the Mission that was to go to Tashkand with our own. This Mission was composed of three persons, *viz.*, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, the Amír's cousin; Wazir Sháh-Muhammad-Khán (Minister for Foreign Affairs); *Kázi* Abdul-Kádir. With them was also to go the Amír's former envoy, Mirza-Muhammad-Hassan-Khán.

"I beg that my envoys may be trusted as I would be myself, and believe that whatever they may say is equal to what I should say myself," observed the Amír.

When General Razgónoff asked who would be the senior member of the Afghán Mission, he received the following answer: "All will be of equal rank, but the *Kázi* will carry on negotiations with General Kaufmann through Mr. Malevinski."

Thus the *Kázi* was *de facto* made the first member of the Mission, and this could not be altogether agreeable for the other members, especially for the Wazir and Shir-Ali-Khán.

Then turning to General Razgónoff, the Amír said :—

“ Communicate to General Kaufmann the expression of my sympathy with Russia and that from her alone do I await assistance. You know the present condition of Afghánistán as well as I do myself, and there is nothing hid from you. For the sake of Russia’s friendship, I have broken up my sovereignty. I give into her hands the keys of India ; it depends on herself whether she will take them or not. Let the Russian Tsár look on my kingdom as on a portion of the Russian Empire, for I regard the Great Russian Emperor as my sole protector. It will be well both for Afghánistán and for Russia herself. The disintegration of Afghánistán would be a calamity for Russia, and now, if Russia should refuse me her assistance, my honour will suffer”

General Razgónoff then asked the Amír the following question, amongst others,—Would he send one of the members of his Mission to St. Petersburg if General Kaufmann should deem it expedient ?

“ If it is necessary to send any to St. Petersburg, then send all,” answered the Amír. “ It would be well, however, before any of my envoys should go to St. Petersburg that a corps of observation should be sent to Shir-ábád.”

General Razgónoff could not give any kind of definite answer to this opinion, and therefore the question as to the despatch of any of the members of the Afghán Mission to St. Petersburg remained unsettled.

On learning that Zamaan-Bek was to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif and seeing that he was very depressed by the circumstance, the Amír began to comfort him, and to beg that he would not give way to *ennui*, saying that he would do all in his power to amuse those members of the Russian Mission who remained behind.

The audience at length came to an end and the Afghán envoys were furnished with a letter of credit addressed to General Kaufmann by the Amír. The following were its contents :—

“ Soon after my arrival at Mazár-i-Sharif, I received your three friendly letters, dated respectively 8th, 13th and 17th Muharram (20th, 23rd and 25th December 1878, O.S.).* I have perused these and have understood their meaning. The agreeable expressions contained in your letter of the 17th Muharram delighted the heaven of my wishes, and the fragrance of the Imperial favours of His Majesty the Tsár, and also the desire to have a joyful meeting with you strengthened my intention of visiting Russia. I had made up my mind to speedily set out, and after conferring with the envoy of the renowned Government, I informed His Majesty the Amír of Bukhára of my intention ; but by the Divine Will I became suddenly ill, and now I am availing myself of the advice of the Russian doctor and of my own physicians. This circumstance has hindered my continuing my journey to Russia.

“ As time is passing away, I have given permission for your Mission to depart and am despatching, with all haste, to Táshkand the representatives and Ministers of this God-granted Government, *viz.*, my cousin, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, Sháh-Muhammad-Khán and Kázi Abdul-Kádir, who will, without delay, represent to you by word of mouth the

* This letter does not appear in the “ Diplomatic correspondence ” between General Kaufmann and the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán. I, therefore, reproduce the English text of it taken from the “ Correspondence presented to both Houses of Parliament (enclosure No. 60, No. 1).”—*Author.*

condition of affairs in this land, and who will recall to you that passage in your letter in which you conveyed to me the assurance that His Imperial Majesty the Tsár, having demanded of the British Government a recognition of the independence of Afghánistán, the British Ministers had given His Ambassador in London an assurance that they would not interfere with the independence of my country.

“But the English, in spite of this agreement and assurance, have advanced from Shir-ábád to Jalálábád and from Pishin to Kandahar, an account of which events the representatives of this God-granted Government will give you in detail. I hope that you will receive as true all that my Ministers will relate to you touching the affairs of this God-granted Government, and that you will permit them to depart without any delay, after they have satisfactorily performed the duty entrusted to them. Be it known to you that I am very satisfied with the good behaviour of General Razgónoff and of his colleagues. And certainly the General is a conscientious and able officer of the renowned Government and a well-wisher of our God-granted Government.”

When we left the presence of the Amír, the weather was very wintry and the snow lay in thick flakes, covering the earth with a deep layer. The Afghán envoys were in no way disconcerted by the bad weather, but, on the contrary, according to their notions, a fall of snow previous to setting out, on their journey, was a good omen. Neither did the bad weather dismay the members of the Russian Mission, but it rather seemed to them to be beautiful, for they were all possessed of the strong desire to get as quickly as possible out of Afghánistán which had so palled on them “as,” to use General Razgónoff’s expression, “to have stuck in their throats.” But to myself and to Zamaan-Bek this day seemed to be truly terrible, not because the possibility threatened us of having to make our own way through snow and rain, but because we had the prospect of being sheltered from either by having to remain for a long time at Mazár-i-Sharif in a heated atmosphere. I go through with equanimity all the ups and downs of life, but I acknowledge that at this moment I felt myself to be very unfortunate.

“Do not grieve, Zamaan-Bek,” said General Razgónoff to him as he sat with downcast head near the stove, “for you will not have to remain here long. I give you my word that, immediately I reach Táshkand, the first thing I will request General Kaufmann to do will be to send for you.”

But Zamaan-Bek paid no attention to what the General had said, and gazed in an absent way into the very centre of the dusty fire place. He had eaten scarcely anything the day before, and he ate nothing that day; and though I did not feel in at all good spirits myself, I tried to divert him with jokes, declaring that if he did not eat his dinner that day; he would have to take several doses of quinine on the morrow, since he would certainly get an attack of fever.

At length the preparations for the road, the loading of the pack-animals, and all the shouting that was possible came to an end. The horses were saddled and impatiently pawed the ground as they waited for their riders. Then General Razgónoff and the other members of the Russian Mission shook us by the hand for the last time, wished us everything that was good, and having mounted their horses, slowly filed out in a long thin line from the precincts of our quarters. Zamaan-Bek and I were now alone.

At first the conversation between us did not get on very well, for gloomy thoughts would arise in the mind of either speaker; but after a time we came to the decision that we would not sit within the four walls of our quarters as we all had to do when General Razgónoff was here, but that we would either walk or ride from time to time about the city suburbs. General Stolaitoff's system, which had been kept up by his successor, of being afraid to take a single step beyond the walls of our mud-built quadrilateral, we considered to be at an end for ever, and we further resolved to take the first opportunity of riding to Takhtapul or Bákh.

The Amír did not ask to see me either that day or the next, and so the idea, which had occurred to me, that I should have to play the part of Court Physician without a patient, was evidently beginning to be realised.

But with each succeeding day there came to me, in ever increasing numbers, patients of all kinds, and so I gave up the whole morning of each day to the care of the sick.

The number of those who came to me was so large as to give very ample material for a compilation of a work on local medical geography. Both medical advice and medicines were given by me *gratis*, but I had a very good camp dispensary. If the reader wishes to become acquainted with the nature of the diseases of those who were amongst my patients, let him come with me to one of my morning receptions.

(Dr. Yavórski here enters into a description of the various diseases, which he treated, during his stay at Mazár-i-Sharif. The following are comprised in his list: fever with enlarged liver and spleen, rapid consumption, venereal of the worst form, ophthalmia and various eye-diseases, &c., &c.)

(Text resumed.)

On the occasion of one of these receptions, there came to me a case which merited especial attention. It was that of a boy, aged 10, whose face was so disfigured by *lupus* that it was painful to look at it. Zamaan-Bek, who always accompanied me in my examination of the sick could not look on this boy, and so he interrogated him with averted head. And certainly the boy's countenance presented a terrible sight.

(Here follow some repulsive details.)

(Text resumed.)

I did for the sufferer all that I could.

Sick women too began to appear amongst my patients.

Knowing how jealously natives guard their harem and their wives from the gaze of strangers, and especially of Europeans, and being aware too of their extreme suspicion and fanaticism in this respect, and on the other hand having in view the results of the Don-Juan conduct of the first English visitors to Afghánistán, at the head of whom was the famous Burnes—results which led to the first catastrophe that befell the English at Kábul,—I made my reception of sick women subject to such conditions, that in the minds of the natives there could not arise even the shadow of suspicion or accusation against either their women or myself. I, therefore, usually examined the women patients in the presence of the Afghán orderly of the day. And in such cases where it was necessary

to examine certain other parts of their bodies, I invited the patient to a tent pitched in the centre of the court-yard. With the patient and myself went her relative, whether husband, father or brother, as also Muhammad-Din-Khan, who was in attendance on us and the Afghán orderly of the day. In this way I avoided crowding, whilst the particular relative could have no feeling towards me but that of gratitude. In course of time the number of women who came to me considerably increased. The greater portion of them had external ailments, such as blotches of various kinds, and not a few were suffering from inflammation of the eyes.* Some of these women were very pretty.

I should here observe that I did not meet with in Afghán Turkistán a single case of goitre or of *filaria medinensis*, of which the first form is so prevalent in the province of Farghána (former Khánate of Khokand) and of which the second form is so widely distributed throughout Russian Turkistán and the mountain ranges in the neighbourhood of Samarkand. Of *Makhau* (a kind of leprosy, *elephantiasis arabum*?) I did not even hear, but of the so-called "Sart plague" (a sort of guinea-worm) I had a good number of cases.† Very early in the morning of the 21st January (2nd February)—it was not 6 o'clock—a messenger came to me from the Amír to say that his master desired to see me.

I immediately dressed and accompanied by the usual escort of Afghán infantry and by Zamaan-Bek, I went off to the Amír's residence.

I found Shir-Ali half-dressed with his bad leg uncovered and smeared over with some preparation which his native physicians said was composed of white of egg and rose leaves. The Amír complained of pain in the knee-pan whence the irritation extended downwards in the direction of the principal nerves and arteries to the very tips of the toes. He also complained of intense cold in the bad leg, which he said felt benumbed. In consequence of the great pain, the Amír was in a cold perspiration which was running down his face and neck. After the leg had been cleansed of the preparation above indicated, I examined it, when it presented the following appearance. The colour of the skin was whitish and the leg seemed to be bloodless, whilst the calf was slightly swollen. To the touch the leg up to the knee was as cold as ice, but above it the temperature was normal. I tried to detect a pulsation in the *arteria dorsalis pedis* or in the *arteria tibialis postica*, in the place where it passes over the ankle-bone, but in vain. In like manner I failed to detect any pulsation in the *arteria poplitea*. But when, for the sake of comparison, I felt the same parts of the Amír's right or sound leg, I could feel a pulse perfectly well.

And so an examination of the diseased leg induced me to diagnose local stoppage of the arteries. But then the question arose as to the cause of such stoppage? I carefully interrogated the Amír as to whether his bad leg had at any time been injured, but I received an answer in the negative. I then made up my mind that the stoppage

* From the time that I learnt that the houses of the natives had no outlet for the smoke, I was no longer surprised at meeting with so many cases of inflammation of the eyes. In the eye infirmary attached to the Kazán University, the greater number of those suffering from inflammation of the eyes, eyelids, and mucous membrane come from the banks of the Volga, where the same defective method of heating houses prevails.—*Author*.

† The four named forms of disease are common along the banks of the Sir-Daria and of the Amu-Daria.—*Author*.

of the circulation must proceed either from a severe pinch or from a blood clot, and I was the more inclined to think the latter, but of what character was this clot? To this question I could not at the time find any answer. I very well remembered, however, one case in my hospital practice at the infirmary of the Kazán University (presided over by the late Professor Nicholski) where, for several days, a patient had no pulse either in the radial or humeral arteries of the left arm, and that nevertheless circulation was ultimately restored. In this case the cause of the stoppage was mechanical, *viz.*, a violent bruise on the shoulders. Professor Nicholski explained this case in the following manner. The mechanical injury to the shoulder caused a rupture of the inner membrane of the artery, and it consequently got stopped up. But in this case there existed collateral circulation which showed that, though the arm was much colder than the right or healthy one, yet its temperature was above that of its central part.

But in the case of the Amír's leg, the limb was evidently without collateral circulation, for it was very cold, and he complained of great pain in the knee-pan. I carefully felt the part, but I could detect nothing, and here I repeat that the Amír categorically denied that any mechanical injury had been received, and so it would be difficult for me to diagnose either a pinch or a rupture as the cause of the stoppage of the inner membrane of the artery below the knee. It was more likely then that I had to deal with an artery, of which both the main channel and its branches were stopped up. Such a diagnosis was extremely disquieting; I will say more, it was harrowing and hopeless!

It was now necessary for me to decide another question, when did the stopping up of the artery occur? The last time I had seen the Amír, was on the 18th (30th) January, on that date there was no appearance of a stoppage. On the contrary, the only symptoms were those of rheumatic suffering. And so the stoppage must have occurred between the 18th (30th) January and 21st January (2nd February). What then was the immediate cause of the stoppage? And what had brought about this terrible complication in the disease? But all these were questions which I could not answer, except in the form of a mere surmise. And consequently all that I could do with the diseased limb was to induce surface circulation. I, therefore, lightly rubbed the skin over with spirit of *Feratin* and then wrapped the leg in cotton-wool. After this treatment the Amír said that the leg had again begun to get warm, but that the great pain below the knee still continued. It was now necessary to have recourse to narcotics, but here there took place a misunderstanding between the Amír and myself. When I offered him morphia powders and he became aware of the fact, he at once refused to take them and those standing around, including his native physicians, all joined in a chorus in expressing the same opinion.

"Morphia" said the Amír, "is a hot and dry" remedy, and as my temperament is also "hot and dry," it would be very bad for me to take "morphia."

Here it would seem to be apposite to acquaint the reader with the present state of native medical science in Central Asia.

It should be observed that the Afgháns, like all Central Asiatics, in their notions of cosmogony adhere to the doctrine of metaphysics, and they hold that there are four operating forces, *viz.*, heat, cold, dryness

and humidity. That the combination of these forces in given proportions bring about the various mundane phenomena, whether within the province of purely physical working or as respects that which is interesting to human psychology.

It is perfectly natural then that the same system of metaphysics should prevail in the practice of native medical science. The various combinations of the four named forces or elements, they say, occasion either benefit or injury to man. Hence they believe that the very temperament of man is nothing else but a proportional sum of these forces to the extent that they may enter into the formation of his soul and body, in other words his organism. They maintain that, if a man is nervous and ardent, then, in his organism, there are combined heat and dryness in larger proportions than either cold or humidity. In a man of phlegmatic temperament, on the other hand, there must indisputably prevail forces which are the opposite of those working in the case of the nervous man.

In conformity with this definition of temperament, native physicians divide the whole human race into four categories; dry, ardent, cold and humid. But always, or in a considerable majority of cases, according to their teaching, there preponderate in man any two forces or elements which impart to his nature one or other physical and moral trait. Most frequently in man's organism the following forces will be found in combination, dryness with ardency, and on the contrary humidity with cold. On the standpoint of this sort of classification, the Afgháns hold themselves to be a dry and ardent race. Europeans or *Puringhis* they speak of as a cold and humid people.

Throughout the whole of the metaphysics of this classification, we cannot but perceive a certain realistic substratum. For of course, warmth implies dryness and cold humidity. But it is only worth while to look at the picture for the purpose of understanding the origin of these, so to speak, cosmic positions of native mundane philosophy. On three sides Afghánistán is flanked by limitless, waterless and heated wastes. And hence dryness and extraordinary warmth prevail everywhere. On the other hand, amidst the snow-peaks of the Hindu-Kush, it is very cold and damp certainly there predominates. Moreover, the wild and easily excited nature of the Afghán, in combination with the lightness and leanness of his frame, gives him the right to class himself in the category of "dry and ardent" persons. But the Europeans with whom he has chiefly had to do, were Englishmen who, as is known, are possessed of phlegmatic and very inert natures. I do not know what an Afghán would think of Europeans when he saw the fiery Spaniard, the lithe-some Italian, and the mobile Frenchman. As I have said above in medicine, the Afgháns adhere to the same fundamental ideas which they hold in respect of the philosophical cosmogony of the universe. Thus they say that cold, heat, humidity,* and dryness in their action on human and animal organism are generally productive of either benefit or harm. If, for example, in a human organism there be a superabundance of cold and humid elements, that organism cannot be called a perfectly healthy

* It is worthy of observation that the physiology of the Talmudists also treats of 4 forces which direct the course of existence, and that these are cold, heat, dryness, and humidity. The whole teaching of Talmudistic physiology is nothing else than the variation of the combination of the four elements, fire, air, water and earth. See *History of Medicine* by Dr. Kovner in the *Kieff University Intelligence* for 1878, No. 2.—*Author.*

one. And the same thing must be said of that organism in which dry and hot elements preponderate. According, then, as the various elements are distributed in an organism, will there exist they say a predisposition or otherwise to diseases of various kinds. Thus, for example "a dry and ardent man" will be the first to suffer from the action of forces of a like nature to his own, *i. e.*, from heat and dryness rather than from those of an opposite kind. On the other hand, for such an organism cold and humidity can act only in a beneficial manner.

So reason the Afghán and the physicians of Central Asia generally. They accordingly divide all medicines into 4 categories: hot, dry, cold, and humid. Morphia, they say, is at once a "dry" and a "hot" remedy. And in the placing of this drug in this classification of the native pharmacy, one cannot but admit there is good reason, for it is known how morphia acts on the intestines. But to place quinine in the same category, appears to be a purely arbitrary proceeding. And, therefore, in consequence of the *à priori* recognition of the heating properties in certain drugs, Afghán doctors will not give either morphia or quinine in burning fevers nor in cases where there is internal inflammation. In intermittent fevers they will, however, administer quinine. This drug is very well known throughout Afghánistán, for sometimes a man, instead of giving explanations as to the nature of his illness, will at once ask for "kunein."* Musk is also held to be a "heating" drug, and to a certain degree this is comprehensible. Laxatives are called a "cold damp" treatment, and here again it is comprehensible to a certain extent why they are so called. But it is altogether unintelligible why, when water is held to be a "cold-damp" remedy, ice should be classed as a "dry" and "hot" one! Russian or black tea is classed as "dry and hot," but green tea imported from India is recognised as "cold and damp."† Similar contradictions occur throughout the classification of the native pharmacy.

This then was the reason why the Amír refused to take morphia. The same reason no doubt induced him to decline to have his leg rubbed with ice instead of being wetted with ice water.

Ice has "hot and dry" properties, and the Amír's organism is "hot and dry." *Ergo* to rub his leg with ice must be baneful.

That same day I was sent for by the Amír four different times, and on the last occasion at 12 o'clock at night. I then again carefully examined the bad leg, and I at the same time compared it with the healthy one.

Whilst I was thus engaged, the native physicians assured me with an ironical smile that this leg was perfectly healthy, and that there was no occasion to look at or examine it. I, of course, did not fail to enlighten them as to my object in examining the sound leg, but they continued to laugh at me. They were heartily joined in their ribaldry by those standing around, as, for instance, by the *Luináb*, the Amír's nephew, and others. I then gave them to understand that their master's illness was very serious, and that their jocularities were out of place; but all in vain. It was evident that the local doctors, instigated by the adherents of the Amír, had resolved to keep me away from him.

* Quinine is imported into Afghánistán from India, and it is sold in large quantities, but, unfortunately, it is very expensive and, moreover, very bad and impure, for it is highly adulterated.—*Author.*

† Perhaps this tea is so classed, because it has laxative properties.—*Author.*

Scarcely any of the remedies that I recommended on this occasion were accepted by him, and I was dismissed, as the phrase is, without anything.

The next day I waited in vain for a message from the Amír, and I did not see him for the two following days. Meanwhile the "Steward of the Household," Muhammad-Din-Khán, who had charge of the quarters in which I lived, and who was entrusted by the Amír with all the arrangement of our "mud palace," went every morning and evening to the Amír's residence to make his report and to pay his respects. After one of his visits, Muhammad-Din-Khán informed me that the Afghán doctors had succeeded in effecting some improvement in the progress of the Amír's illness. I did not know whether to believe him or not, but more detailed information I did not possess.

Being weary of a useless detention within four walls in a vain expectation of being summoned by the Amír, I resolved to take a short walk through the city and its suburbs. Accordingly on the 24th January (5th February) I sent Muhammad-Din-Khán to the Amír to ask whether I might take a short ride through the environs of the city. In answer to this request, the Amír sent his Aide-de-Camp to accompany me.

The weather during the previous two days had been beautiful, and there was no trace of either snow or mud. Zamaan-Bek accompanied me, and we had an escort of six Cossacks, but no Afghán horsemen were of the party.

On passing out of the courtyard, I took a westerly direction, telling the Aide-de-Camp, who was with me, that I intended to ride to Takhtapul.

It took us a quarter of an hour to ride through the city of Mazár-i-Sharif, and, after passing outside its limits, our route lay through ploughed fields, crossed in every direction by irrigation canals of various dimensions. In some places these fields were sown with winter crops of wheat, of which were rapidly becoming green under the influence of the warm and animating rays of the sun. But the canals did not contain a single drop of water, for it was still too early to carry out irrigation works.

Towards the west, and on the horizon straight in front of us were masses of gardens, and the white lines of what looked like vast buildings. Soon, however, we could distinguish two large villages. One of these, which extended in a long dark line, almost up to the foot of the mountains, is called Shir-Abád. In this locality the mountains recede and give place to a vast bare surface with an almost meridional direction. The village to the right of Shir-Abád, and at a distance of 4 *versts* ($2\frac{2}{3}$ miles) from it, is Takhtapul.

Here the Afgháns say stands the strongest fort in the whole of Afghán-Turkistán, and here lies the point whence the natives of the country can be held in subjection. Both Shir-Abád and Takhtapul are about 8 *versts* ($5\frac{1}{3}$ miles) from Mazár-i-Sharif. At one *verst* ($\frac{2}{3}$ mile) in the Takhtapul direction rises a detached hill encircled by a double row of walls with a castle on the top. This, the former citadel of Shir-Abád, is now thrown down and is half in ruins.

As we gradually drew near to Takhtapul, its walls and bastions stood out more clearly, and one could count the number of towers the fort contained. In shape the fort is a regular square, each face being turned towards the four main points of the compass. The length of

the southern wall, to which we drew near, is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, the height of the walls being from 21 to 28 feet. There are altogether on this face of the fort 11 towers, including the bastions at the corners. The towers rise about $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the walls which are castellated. Both the walls and the towers are loopholed. The corner bastions stand well out, so that all the walls which they command can be enfiladed from them. From an embrasure there projected the dark muzzle of a gun.

On reaching the walls of the fort, I made as though I would turn my horse's head; but the Amír's Aide-de-Camp politely invited me to enter, and so we passed through and emerged at the eastern gate, whence we returned to Mazár-i-Sharif. The gateways are in the centre of each face, and they are protected by a low rampart and ditch, which was quite dry. The gates were wide open, and there was not a single sentry at them, so that anybody could enter or leave the fort as he pleased. The walls of the fort are of beaten clay, and are from 14 to 21 feet thick.

The interior of the fort is not attractive, for almost the whole of its area is covered with *yurta*-shaped clay huts. These are for the soldiers who were standing about in large numbers, both singly and in groups. With open mouths and with evident curiosity they looked at us. I examined their countenances with attention, expecting to meet with some expression of enmity; but I read in all only curiosity mixed with astonishment. Even a dirtily-clad dervish was so taken aback as to turn up the whites of his large eyes, and in his attempts to smile displayed his beautifully white teeth, and then stretched out his hands for alms.

In the centre of the fort, and apart from the huts, there rose up a very large but unpretentious mosque, unadorned by chiefly eatables, the traditional tiles. Here, too, there was a small bazaar, in which chiefly eatables were being sold.

Here, too, there were a number of soldiers, some of whom I recognised as former patients. They loudly called out their greetings to the "Doctor-Sáhib," their countenances lighting up with a broad grin. The loquacious Aide-de-Camp informed me that there were 30 guns mounted on the walls of the fort, and that the present garrison consisted of 8 battalions of infantry. The water-supply is received from canals diverted from the Báلكh river and from wells. There is too a small pond inside the fort.

On issuing from the east gate of the fort, we struck a level and wide road leading to Mazár-i-Sharif. This is the post road that runs from Báلكh, whereas the one we had traversed an hour before on our way to Takhtapul is only a cross road. Mazár-i-Sharif, which lies in a slight hollow, now appeared before us as though it were on the palm of the hand.

The descent from Takhtapul to Mazár-i-Sharif, although not great, is still very perceptible. Two shapely minarets with emerald-green cupolas rise in a picturesque manner above the dark mass of peaceful gardens. The ride from Takhtapul to Mazár-i-Sharif took us just about one hour.

At 10 o'clock on the 25th January (6th February) the Akhund came to ask my advice as to what he should do to the Amír's bad leg.

"The Amír-Sáhib," said he, "for three whole days has not closed his eyes on account of the pain in his leg,—a pain which has not ceased for

a moment, notwithstanding that we have used every remedy to allay it. I have given him, amongst other things, opium and the juice of the poppy seed, but without the wished-for result. Will not the Doctor-Sáhíb, therefore, recommend something both for the pain in the leg, and also that the Amír-Sáhíb may get some sleep?"

I answered the Akhund that I would never refuse to give all the aid I could, and that I would now do whatever I was able; but that without being present I could give no advice, the more so as I had not seen the sick man for four successive days.

The Akhund then got up, saying that he would repeat our conversation to the Amír, and with this he left me.

Some minutes afterwards Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, the Amír's messenger, came for me; and as soon as I had provided myself with the necessary medical appliances, I immediately set off to see the sick man.

On entering the precincts of his residence, I saw the *Luindb* and several others of the Amír's adherents assembled in the first room on the left. The room in which the Amír was lying was very dark, so that when I had passed the threshold of the door I could not see at all where I was going, and so I stood still. The Amír, perceiving my difficulty, raised his voice, and I then proceeded towards the spot whence the sound came, and so reached his bedside. He was propped up by pillows and the arms of his attendants; and his face bore the marks of great suffering. His eyes were encircled by dark rings, and dimly shone from under his beetle brows. His face was bathed in perspiration, and he groaned hoarsely.

Inviting me to sit beside him, he told me how badly he had felt for some days past. The terrible pain which seemed to arise "from the rending of his bones with a cold saw" had been almost insupportable during the previous night. He had not closed his eyes from the 21st to the 25th January (O. S.), nor had he been insensible to what had passed during the whole of that time. And therefore the first request which he addressed to me was that I would give him something that would cause him to sleep.

I asked the Amír to allow me to look at his leg, which was at the time smeared over with some sort of yellow ointment. After I had removed this coating, it seemed to me that it was apparently in the same condition as when I examined it on the 21st January (2nd February). But the lighting of the room was so bad that I could not see at all the slight discoloration of the skin that was going on.* The Amír took my hand in his and tried to put it on the spot where he said he felt the greatest pain.

But I could not perceive anything more than that the tendons and muscle were drawn out like tightened cords on both sides of the knee-pan. In the knee-pan itself I failed* to detect any pulse in the *arteria poplitæa*.

It was evident that the leg was in the agony, verging between life and death, and that the issue towards the latter was without doubt. In order to lessen the pain, I sprinkled over the locality of the disease $\frac{1}{6}$ th grain of morphia, and I at the same time gave the Amír a good dose of chloral-hydrate. After some time had elapsed, I repeated the dose, and

* Here some wearisome details are omitted.—W. E. G.

after his leg had been rubbed over with spirit of camphor and wrapped up in flannel, the Amír fell asleep.

In about three hours' time I was again summoned to the Amír. He then told me that immediately after I had left his room, he had awoke and that the pain had returned. He complained that this pain was terrific, and he groaned loudly. Agreeably to the wish which he expressed, I removed the binding. I then perceived that certain changes had occurred in the colouring of the skin. In the upper part of the leg there were faint indications of lateral and zig-zag streaks of a dark purple colour. Below these the skin was as cold as ice, but above them again the temperature was somewhat higher than in the corresponding part of the healthy leg. It was evident that the line of demarcation had begun to show itself, and that the gangrene had received its limits. It was evident, too, that the case had become a bad one. But now there also appeared at least the hope that the progress of the disease would be localised, and yet in any case the consolation was for me but a poor one.

The Amír then called out to me, and said, "Doctor-Sáhib," the Akhund and my other physicians advise me to have leeches put on, what do you say to this?"

I answered that in my opinion the time had gone bye for applying leeches, and that I now thought them perfectly useless.

"But you yourself advised me to have them applied up to the 21st January (2nd February)," interrupted the Amír.

I answered: "Then such a simple operation had meaning, but now I question its benefit."

"What then is the harm of them, would they intensify the disease?" again inquired the Amír.

"No," was my reply.

"Then let the leeches be applied," said the Amír.

They thereupon summoned a woman, the features of whose face indicated a Tatar origin. She was without the usual veil, and her age appeared to be over 40. Her bare feet made no sound on the felt carpets, and, as she approached the Amír, she made a low *saluam*. She then took from the pocket of her "Beshmet" a handkerchief, and in the corner of this were tied up the leeches. These she slowly and deliberately took out, inquiring where they were to be placed, and then after rubbing the leg over with sour cream, and uttering some kind of exorcism, she proceeded to apply the leeches one after the other. But the leeches were capricious and would not suck. Half an hour went by and not one of them had extracted a single drop of blood, the woman then drew the attention of those standing by to the amulet (a leathern scent-bag which was suspended to the Amír's bad leg, and remarked "this amulet will not allow the leeches to draw."

The amulet was at once cut off, and still it was a long time before the leeches drew even a little blood. Some of them were then removed and placed below the line of demarcation, but not one of them would draw even then.

Occupied as I was in looking on at this procedure, I sat motionless for two whole hours. At length I felt disagreeably cold and a pain down the right side of my body, and so I asked the Amír's permission to get up and walk about; but to do so for a long time was, of course,

inconvenient, and I therefore again resumed my seat. I did not fail to advise the Amír to change his room for a more convenient one, but I received the answer "All the buildings in this country are on the same plan, and there is not a better room than this."

On my returning to my own quarters, I considered it necessary to invite the Akhund and certain of the Amír's adherents to come to me, for the time had arrived for me to think of my own position, inasmuch as an unfavourable issue of the Amír's illness was very probable. It was necessary, therefore, that I should guard myself from possible, although vain, reproaches. In case of a fatal termination of the Amír's illness, the populace might make me out to be at fault. Afgháns are fanatical, and Afghán doctors would not hesitate to remove from their own shoulders the responsibility attending a fatal termination to the illness of one under their charge. Therefore, in order to secure myself from danger, I resolved to convene at my quarters something of the nature of a consultation at which both the Amír's native physicians and his nearest relations should attend. Accordingly, that evening there were assembled at my quarters the Akhund, Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, the Luináb's brother, Muhammad-Shah-Khán, and certain other of the Amír's adherents. I then straightway asked the Akhund what he thought about the Amír's illness? I further invited him to express his real ideas on the subject. In answer to my question, he asked me to hand him his own medical work, which I had at the time, and he evidently wished to read me out a whole chapter out of native pathology. But I asked him to give me his personal views. He then replied that, in his opinion, the Amír's illness arose from the fact that his blood was too abundant and heated, and that it *had thus descended by the force of its superabundance and heat into the leg, which had thus become chilled!*

It was evident that the worthy Court Physician of His Highness had not the very slightest notion as to the character of his master's illness. I therefore endeavoured to explain to him the nature of the progress of the disease, and I then put to him the two following questions: (1) Would a cure be effected or not? and (2) if a cure were to be effected, would it be easy or the reverse?

The Akhund replied that he considered that the illness admitted of an easy cure and he continued.

"I hope" (*Insh'Allah*) "in two or three days to perfectly cure the Amír-Sáhib."

After this I gave my own opinion of the disease, and I explained to all present that the diseased leg might be considered as lost to the Amír, and that serious danger even threatened his life.

"Leave the matter to me," interrupted the Akhund, "and you will see the Amír-Sáhib quite well again."

Against such a bare-faced piece of self-opinion it was difficult to advance, and so, after inviting those present to keep the fact of our consultation, and, above all, my opinion a secret from the Amír, I gave them leave to depart.

I was now no longer in doubt that I should see the proof of the saying "in another man's banquet there will be a headache next morning." "We will see," thought I, "how it will all end."

The next day I had a strong paroxysm of fever, and I therefore did not go to the Amír. The following days, and up to the 30th January (11th February), although I was quite well, I still did not visit the Amír, as I was not invited to do so. In the meantime the Akhund came to me several times, and communicated with evident satisfaction that the Amír was better; and he informed me that the Amír's bad leg had been smeared over with the blood of a recently slaughtered goat, and had then been covered with the entrails of the animal.

Meanwhile, too, the following rumours* reached me. Several days before Yakúb-Khán sent a letter to Sirdár Faiz-Muhammad-Khán, the Officer Commanding the troops in the *Chahár-Wilayat*, containing an order not to permit his father, the Amir Shir-Ali-Khan, to go to Russia. If the troops there stationed allowed Shir-Ali to quit Afghánistán, Yakúb-Khán threatened to take his revenge on their families which they had left at Kábul. On receipt of this letter, Sirdar Faiz-Muhammad-Khán read it out at a meeting of his officers, and asked them what he was to do?

“You are our Chief,” said they, “as you decide, so we will do.”

Whereupon the Sirdár remarked that to-day he was their Chief, but that to-morrow it might very well happen that they would not listen to him, and would refuse to carry out his orders; he, therefore, might be placed in a very awkward position, and this he did not at all fancy.

Then those whom he had assembled decided not to act in a hurry, and to think the matter well out. Faiz-Muhammad-Khán at the same time ordered Yakúb-Khán's letter to be read to the troops quartered throughout Afghán-Turkistán, and he also sent a copy to every Afghán Sirdár. In this letter the detention of Shir-Ali in Afghánistán was explained by the consideration that “as yet there is no real need of foreign assistance, since the Amír has still at his disposal many troops.† Moreover, he, Yakúb-Khán, did not desire that people should say of his father that he was afraid of the approach of the English, and that he was a coward and had run away.”

All these rumours appeared to me to be very strange. Why should Yakúb-Khán have begun to oppose his father's going to Russia when he had himself agreed to his going. That he had given his consent was evident from the address which Shir-Ali had received from the various popular assemblies and elders,—an address which bore the signature and seals of many Sirdárs and army leaders, as well as of Yakúb-Khán himself. This address empowered the Amír to go to Russia, and to personally, and on behalf of the Afghán people, beseech the “White Tsar” to defend Afghánistán against England. Now it would seem that this very Yakúb-Khán was using every endeavour to hinder his father's going. What did this mean?

The following alternatives, perforce, suggested themselves: either the address and the signatures and seals thereon were forgeries, or Yakúb-Khán had, in his father's absence, succeeded in coming to terms with the English, and had consequently now begun to act under their instigation?

* These rumours were current before the departure of the Russian Mission from Afghánistán; but then no one paid any attention to them. Now, however, they were corroborated by fresh and very trustworthy information.—*Author*.

† There were at this time at Kábul in the *Chahár-Wilayat* and at Herát 45 battalions of infantry, several regiments of cavalry, and 100 guns.—*Author*.

He was evidently acting in his father's interests, but who knows what lay hid under the mask of this good action? Of course Yakúb-Khán could not forget that he had been released by his father, thanks only to exceptional circumstances. "But we shall see," said I, "in completion of my reflections."

The following news was received from the theatre of war. Some days after the departure of the Amír and of our mission from Kábul, the English cavalry had approached within 15 *verst*s (10 miles) of that city. At this point there was an Afghán picket of 50 infantry soldiers. These the English disarmed and carried off as prisoners to their main body.

It now became authoritatively known that the Momands had not ceased to give assistance to the English even after Yakúb-Khán's release. But, generally speaking, there was a break in the military operations.

In Afghánistán herself and in her very centre—Kohistán—disorder had broken out. At the time when the Amír was still at Tásh-Kurgán, news had been received of a revolt of the mountain tribes within the region bounded on the west by Haibak and Koh-i-Mard and on the east by Indarábád. In this neighbourhood lies the Khost valley, and in it is an Afghán fort, which was then occupied by 300 Afgháns.

The people of Khost, joined by those of Indarabad and Panj-Shir, took counsel together, and, having surrounded the fort, threatened to starve out its garrison if they did not surrender.

The Afgháns, perceiving that resistance was useless, resolved to surrender; but on their issuing out from their fort, they were robbed of everything. The fort was then occupied by the insurgents, who declared that they would not recognise Shir-Ali-Khán as their sovereign. On receipt of this news, whilst he was at Tásh-Kurgán, Shir-Ali despatched to the locality two companies of soldiers, and when he reached Mazár-i-Sharif, he sent off another company, and at the same time directed the Governor of Bádákhshán to send two more companies from amongst his troops. He further entrusted the management of the affair to the ruler of Kunduz. At the particular time of which I speak nothing was known of subsequent events in this part of the country.

Some days before the date of which I am now writing a trading caravan, "moving from Kábul towards the *Chahár-Wiláyat*," was attacked by robbers on the Kara-Kotal Pass. The force, however, at the disposal of the people with the caravan was so considerable that the robbers were beaten off with loss. But two of the men with the caravan were killed. There were many wounded on both sides, and amongst them was the *Caravan-Báshi*. Two or three days afterwards the caravan reached Mazár-i-Sharif in safety, and the robbers after their failure descended into the valley of the Gori river, and plundered the village of Baldur. A body of Afghán cavalry went in pursuit, and 13 men were seized; but nine of these were recognised as not belonging to the robber band, and the two others were blown away from guns at Mazár-i-Sharif. Thus had the times of Burnes returned to Afghánistán. Three days later on the Afghán troops at Mazár-i-Sharif were very nearly shedding each others blood. The quarrel arose in the following manner. The *Luináb*, hearing that a game of hazard was being played by the Herát cavalry soldiers, sent a party of infantry with orders to stop it. When, however, the infantry soldiers came and delivered the order entrusted to

them, the cavalry men would not obey it. On the infantry men insisting, they were seized, disarmed, and severely beaten. Those who were thus treated, then went and told their comrades of the indignity which had been put upon them, whereupon the rest of the infantry immediately seized their firearms and declared they would take their revenge. As soon as the issue of the affair had been reported to the Luináb, he went and brought the matter to a peaceful issue.

On the 30th January (11th February) the Akhund again came to me. On my enquiring as to the state of the Amír's illness, he answered: "It is nothing, for, thanks be to God, the Amír-Sáhib is now free from that violent pain which he used to suffer; the leg is not now painful, but it emits a bad smell."

"The Amír-Sáhib," he continued, "begs that the Doctor-Sáhib will go and see him immediately."

As soon as I reached the Amír's room, I was immediately struck with that peculiar penetrating smell which indicates the nearness of decaying flesh. The Amír was now lying on the bedstead which had been provided for him as I had suggested on the 25th January (6th February). He was groaning deeply, whilst his breathing was hoarse, loud, and uneven.

The number of respirations amounted to 36 a minute, and hoarse gurglings were audible in the chest. The pulse was very strong and rapid, reaching 100 beats a minute. The temperature of the body was not excessive. The face was bathed in perspiration. The Amír complained of exceeding lassitude and weakness, arising from want of sleep and the absence of appetite.

I then again examined his leg, and the sight was truly awful! From the knee down to the sole of the foot the colour of the leg was a dark-green. In certain places the skin had peeled off and the flesh had begun to decompose and to emit that strong odour of decay which had struck me as I entered the Amír's residence. Further examination shewed that the entire leg was dead. The limit of decay was marked by a line of a purplish-red colour.*

As I was carrying out my examination, the Amír put the question to me: "Will the disease be cured or not?" And he demanded a decided answer to his question. Now it was apparent that the leg must, of course, be considered to be irrevocably lost to the Amír. Nor was this all, for now even his life was in great danger, since blood-poisoning might easily ensue; and once this had set in, the Amír's days were numbered. It is clear then that, through simple humanity, I could not give the Amír a decided answer to his question. However hard may be the nature of a man, and however prepared he may be through the process of long suffering to face an afflicting event, still, in the case of Shir-Ali, any remark of mine that death was very near would have been a grievous blow. I therefore said that of late the disease had very much developed, but that I could not give an answer one way or the other.

"What do your own physicians think about it?" I enquired of the Amír.

"We will not speak of them," answered Shir-Ali with warmth, "for they have shewn themselves to be ignorant fools. I have been already

* Some repulsive details have been omitted, but enough has been translated to show the hopeless nature of Shir-Ali's last illness.—*W. E. G.*

sufficiently punished in that I have listened to their advice until now. Henceforth I will obey you alone, and I will carry out scrupulously all your advice and arrangements. My house is yours. Dispose of all my belongings as you think proper. And all my adherents and my physicians you can employ as you would your own assistants and hospital assistants."

"Poor Amír! Thou hast arrived at such a decision a little too late, for humanity does not know the science of restoring life to that which is already dead!" But what was now my own position? I would not have desired any such for any mortal.

Now my immediate task was to check the further progress of decay on the one hand and to strengthen the Amír's organism on the other. Having prepared some disinfecting ointment, and having administered to the Amír some internal recuperative remedies, I returned to my own quarters. Here I again summoned the Akhund and certain of the Amír's adherents, and having once more explained to them the state of the Amír's illness, I said that European doctors in such cases sometimes resort to amputation of the diseased limb.

"What do you say to this?" I asked them.

"No, in this case such a method cannot be resorted to," was the unanimous reply of the assembled officials. "We also," continued the Akhund, "have recourse to the amputation of a diseased limb, but in this particular case such an operation cannot be performed, because the patient is our sovereign and not an ordinary mortal. A sovereign cannot be subjected to an operation of this kind. If it be Allah's will, He will cure the Amír-Sáhib without any operation; but if He, in His wisdom, decides that the Amír-Sáhib shall die, then let His will be done!" I passed almost the whole day at the bedside of the sick Amír, whom I recommended to take a little wine. The Amír then ordered to be brought from his cellar several bottles of what he called "port-wine."

"This port-wine, which is seven years old, *khub ast*," said Shir-Ali, praising the wine.

I tasted it and found it to be nothing out of the way, but when I reached my quarters I felt very unwell. Suspecting that I might have been poisoned by the native doctors, an event which might very easily happen,* I took an emetic. This caused me to vomit, and then my misgivings were at an end. About an hour afterwards the Amír sent me a large bottle of the same wine, but it remained untouched up to the very time of my leaving Mazár-i-Sharif.

My last visit on this date to Shir-Ali took place at 12 o'clock at night. On this occasion he constantly put his hand to his stomach, saying that "they were cutting his belly with knives." This condition was from what he told me produced by the very wine which I had tasted, and of which he had drunk two glasses. I gave him a strong emetic, and then, after it had taken effect, an opiate. The Amír then obtained relief. It was a remarkable circumstance that on this occasion I could not obtain a single drop of milk.†

* When I began to treat the Amír at Tásh-Kurgán, he warned me to be very careful in the matter of my food and drink by whomsoever offered. On the present occasion the Amír himself had offered me the wine, but he was ill and could not be responsible if anything had been mixed with it.—*Author*.

† This story, as related by Dr. Yavórski, reads much more like an attempt to poison the Amír than himself.—*H. E. G.*

To-day Zamaan-Bek accompanied me, when I paid my last visit to the Amír, and he went armed with a revolver, and I too was armed . . . but only with a syringe.

The rest of that night I passed at my writing table in drawing up a report to be sent to Táshkand. When I lay down to rest, it was 6 o'clock and day was breaking. According to the news which I had received the previous day, the answer that was sent to Yakúb-Khán by the troops was to the following effect: "As at the present time the Amír-Sáhib is very ill, he could not, if he wished, go to Russia; under these circumstances any mention of detaining him at Mazár-i-Sharif is out of place."

On the 1st (13th) February, there came to me a messenger from the Bek of Shir-Ábád bringing me a long letter from his master. With it the Bek sent two boxes of sweetmeats containing various kinds of sugared nuts. These comfits were so delicious that they would have done credit to any confectioner rather than to such an insignificant little town as Shir-Abád.

Some hours afterwards, and on the same date, they handed me a letter from the envoy of the Amír of Bukhára, who was accredited to the Court of the *Lwináb*.

Ishán-Khwája—for that was the Envoy's name—in his letter to me said: "An unbroken chain of friendship connects the hearts of both the neighbouring peoples, Russian and Bukháran." He then went on to say that any Bukháran would be very glad to meet a Russian, wherever he might be. He further informed me that he had been to Táshkand, and that he knew many of the Russian officials there, and had many acquaintances in that city. "I would be very glad," he continued, "if I could see you and personally express to you those good wishes which I carry in my heart."

Of course I gave Ishán-Khwája's messenger an answer to the effect that I was ready to see the envoy of the Amír of Bukhára, and Zamaan-Bek* also wrote him a short letter in my name.

That day the Amír felt sufficiently well to converse for a long time both with me and with the officials surrounding his bed.

[The next few lines are devoted to the narration of the purport of some of the Amír's remarks on the subject of foreign politics, and as they are not of an interesting character, they have not been translated.]

(Text resumed.)

The Amír gave me various information, as, for instance, of the content of the last post which he had received from his envoys *en route* to Táshkand. They wrote to him from Kálta-Minár, and said they hoped to reach Sámarkand on the 3rd (15th) or 4th (16th) February. Shir-Ali then told me that throughout Bukháran territory from the Amu-Daria to Sámarkand an Afghán postal service had been established.

I was in the highest degree pleased that the Amír was even to a slight extent in brighter spirits, and that he had obtained some relief from his terrible illness. But such relief could only be of a transient character, and even on the following day there were no traces of this improvement. The gangrene slowly rose higher and higher.

* Zamaan-Bek was, if I remember right, attached by Yakúb-Beg, late Amír of Kásbgária, to Colonel Kuropátkin, on the occasion of his Mission to Yarkand in 1877.—*W. E. G.*

“On the 3rd (15th) February,” thought I, “if the disease increases in this way, in two or three days’ time at the latest he must die.”

On the evening of the 4th (16th) February, the Akhund came to see me and conversed with me for a long time, and with apparent candour. Of course the subject of our conversation was the Amír and his illness.

“Yes, Doctor-Sáhib,” said he, “I now see that the Amír-Sáhib has not long to live; I was really in the wrong and you were right. Tell me what is the Latin name for this disease?”

“*Sphacelus*,” I answered.

The Akhund repeated the word several times, and then informed me that the Afgháns called it *Shokaklus*. He then went on to speak of the habits and general character of Shir-Ali.

“You will not believe me when I tell you that he is a self-willed man! He has always held to his own opinions. Thus I, as his personal physician, have had on several occasions to offer him advice of all kinds. But when he is well, he will listen to no one.”

“If he ails, he will send for a doctor at once, for a doctor is, in his opinion, an all-powerful man, scarcely inferior to a god; and on medicine he looks as though it must guarantee recovery from diseases of every kind. I tell you, and I say this only to you, because it is the secret of my life, that the Amír-Sáhib has for a long time past taken spirituous liquors to excess. At first he drank only ordinary wine, and when I besought him to forsake a beverage that is forbidden by the *Kurán*, he left off drinking wine, but he began to drink *vodka*.”

This means, thought I, “that on this occasion too popular rumour was right as it always is. I have long heard rumours about the Amír’s abuse of spirituous liquors.”

“You remember,” continued the Akhund, “when the Amír called for you on the 30th January (11th February) at 12 o’clock at night, and complained so of pain in the stomach? Well, he was suffering because he had that evening drunk off two bottles of wine. You remember, too, that evening, I think was the 31st January (12th February), when the Amír was very fatigued and complained of lassitude? He was then dead drunk. When you came to steam his throat, it was the period of the *Namáz-i-Digar* (the hour of prayer which should be said about 5 P.M.). He then inhaled the fumes of your medicines, but at the period of the *Namáz-i-Sham*, he and the *Kázi* inhaled fumes of a totally different kind. The two in fact drank all night together, and I often said to the *Kázi*: “Dost not thou fear God, thou art a drunkard thyself, but thou art encouraging the Amír in thy bad habits.” But the *Kázi* is a man without a conscience.

It now became clear to me why the *Kázi* had so great an influence over Shir-Ali,—an influence so great that even the Amír’s cousin, Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán, and even his Wazir, his devoted dog, were effaced by the *Kázi*.

“I only beg you most humbly not to speak to any one of this,” continued the Akhund. “For the revealing of such a secret I should risk my head. I have told you because I felt bound to do so in the interests of the Amír himself. I do not know; but you, who is of course a much more enlightened man than myself, know whether such an abuse of spirituous liquors cannot but be very pernicious in respect of the progress of the Amír-Sáhib’s illness.”

I thanked the Akhund for his communication, and I promised to respect his secret. That day Ishán-Khwája came to visit me, and we conversed for two hours on various subjects.

[As the greater part of the remarks of the Bukháran envoy refer to utterly valueless praise of General Kaufmann, they have not been translated.]

(Text resumed.)

Within the limits of our mud-built quadrangle things were not going on at all well, for our Cossacks had again begun to get ill, and on the 4th (16th) February Assistant Surgeon Ozerni, my right hand man, sickened too.

During his last days the health of the Amír became worse and worse, for he now began to have strong fever. He had become too very nervous, capricious, and irritable. Once he asked me for a definite answer to the question, would he recover or not?

It is clear that I could not give a categorical answer, for such an answer might have results in the highest degree unfavourable in the sense of a prediction *quo ad vitam*. The Amír then took it into his head that I refused to give him a definite answer, because, although I could cure him, I did not wish to do so. He thereupon threatened to write to the Turkistan authorities, and even to the Emperor himself, on the subject. On the other hand, he promised to give me a *lakh* of rupees if I effected his cure, and that his wives and relatives should thank me in person, &c., &c. A little later on Shir-Ali began to rave, and he fell into a kind of half-forgetfulness. He appeared to be in the condition of a deaf man. His pulse became feeble and yet rapid. It was now apparent that the effect of the blood-poisoning was setting in which I had so much dreaded. Now, therefore, the days and even the hours of the Amír were numbered. During the last two or three days of his life he was in one uninterrupted agony, and the greater part of this time he passed in an unconscious state. The day before his death Shir-Ali lost the power of swallowing. He at the same time was deprived of the power of speech. Notwithstanding the large doses of musk which I gave him,* he only passed for a few minutes into a condition of semi-consciousness. In his efforts to speak there was heard only a subdued murmuring. The Amír Shir-Ali slowly passed away at 8 o'clock on the evening of the 8th (20th) February 1879.

* By means of sub-cutaneous injection.—*Author*.

CHAPTER VII.

Short biography of the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán—Sketch of his reign—His five years' struggle with his brothers—Period of the English influence over him—His reforms—Lessening of English and increase of Russian influence—Physical and moral traits of the late Amír—Ethnography of Afghán-Turkistán—Statistics; approximate census of the population, agriculture, cattle-breeding, and other occupations of the Afgháns—Meteorological observations.

[The first pages of this chapter are taken up with a short biographical sketch of Shir-Ali's life; but as sufficient information already exists on the subject, it seems needless to translate this portion of Dr. Yavórski's work. The only passages which call for notice in the narrative are the following:]

“I am like a wooden cup,” Shir-Ali is reported to have said of himself; “as many times as it falls it will not be broken; but Abdul-Rahmán-Khán resembles a china or porcelain bowl, and when it falls it is at once smashed to shivers.”

Abdul-Rahmán went to Russian-Turkistán in 1870. He was then directed to live at Sámarkand, where the Russian Government granted him a yearly allowance of 25,000 *roubles* (£2,500). Shir-Ali-Khán could now sit peacefully on the throne of his father's; and if he had been an ordinary man, he would, of course, have been content to do so; but his was a different character, and he could not sit with folded hands. He was energetic and sought for employment. He, moreover, conceived a whole series of reforms, which, unfortunately, he was not able to completely carry out.

First of all he directed his attention to his army. Up to his accession to the throne there had been no regular troops in Afghánistán, but levies only, and in fact mere bands of men, who were only called to the standards in times of emergency. Shir-Ali knew that *Giázis* (or warriors for the faith) could never be pitted in battle against regular troops. He, therefore, set himself, as his first task, the creation in Afghánistán of a regular army on the European model. But he had neither money, nor the proper arms, nor trained instructors. Of himself he could, therefore, do nothing, and so, *nolens-nolens*, he had to turn for assistance to the old enemy of Afghánistán—England.

Meanwhile the English, having perceived that Shir-Ali had triumphed over his rivals, were not disposed to leave him without the circle of their influence. They, therefore, immediately sent him their congratulations on his accession to the throne of Kábul, and offered him an alliance with themselves. On the same occasion they gave him several *lakhs* of rupees, and also a large number of arms. But their promises proved more attractive than anything else which they sent.

It may be that at the very time that Shir-Ali bent his back to the English he would have offered his friendship to Russia, if she had made him any sign that she would accept it. Instead of doing this, Russia received Abdul-Rahmán, Shir-Ali's bitter foe.

He was thus compelled to accept the alliance and assistance of the English. The meeting at Umballa between the Amír of Afghánistán

and the Viceroy of India seemed to give to that alliance a character for intimacy and heartiness ; but such feelings were only on the surface. Shir-Ali never, indeed, forgot that the English are the bloody and only foes of Afghánistán. By his presence at Umballa, the Amír only desired to raise the sum of the *honorarium* which the English had bound themselves to pay him for his friendship. And he succeeded in his purpose. He received also both money and arms and instructors for his army *in embryo*.

On his return from India, Shir-Ali entered upon the organisation of his regular troops. To this end he had translated into Pushtu the English *Field Exercise* and similar works, copies of which were served out to his forces. The uniform, too, of his soldiers received a certain amount of resemblance to that of the *Sipáhís* of the Indian Army, and, generally speaking, all his military arrangements followed the model ready to hand—the Indian troops which he had so lately seen and inspected. The failings alone, and those are of great magnitude, which are the characteristics of the Anglo-Indian troops, the newly-enrolled Afghán army avoided, *viz.*, immobility and an unnecessary burdening of the combatant ranks with rabble masses of various followers, whether servants, drivers, or sutlers, &c., &c. Shir-Ali's troops were at all times in a state of readiness for a campaign directly the order might go forth for their mobilisation. Thus to-day they would be in their respective quarters ; to-morrow they could set out on the march.

Having given the system of filling the ranks of his army by voluntary enlistment a trial, and being convinced that it would not work, Shir-Ali directed a *levée en masse* for the purpose of completing his army organisation. Accordingly, every Afghán and Mussulmán living in his territory was obliged, on attaining a certain age, to enrol himself amongst the Amír's troops, and to serve with them for a fixed period. This measure, effected in combination with the disarming of certain districts of Afghánistán, called forth strong opposition on the part of many of Shir-Ali's Sirdárs who had hitherto enjoyed a position of *quasi* independence. Accordingly they refused to give to the Amír either their children or their kinsmen, or even their retainers. In order, then, that he might attract to his army the retainers of his Sirdárs and their sons for service in his *corps d'élite*, he adopted the following plan. He enrolled his own cousin, Naik-Muhammad-Khán, as an ordinary soldier, and in this grade this Sirdár remained for two whole years. When, too, his grand-son, Ahmad-Ali-Khán, the son of Muhammad-Ali-Khán (his eldest son, who was killed before Khelát-i-Ghilzai), grew up, he dealt with him as he had done with Naik-Muhammad-Khán. In consequence of these two steps, although the opposition to his army reforms did not altogether cease, it became very considerably weakened. Towards the close of his reign, therefore, Shir-Ali had 60 battalions of infantry, all of which were well drilled and fairly well armed. Indeed, certain of his Kábul battalions were equipped with breech-loading rifles. For field artillery the Amír did not want, but of siege batteries he had scarcely any at all.*

* It is worthy of note that Shir-Ali would only take into his ranks very strong and perfectly healthy youths. The slightest physical defect was sufficient to bar a man's entrance to the ranks of the Amír's army, and all hairless or in any way bald people were at once rejected.—*Author*.

The various roads through his territory likewise attracted the attention of the Amír, and he established a postal service between Kábul and the chief towns of his sovereignty. This postal service not only fulfilled the requirements of his administration, but private persons also availed themselves of it. Stamps of the value of one rupee and $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{10}$ th rupee were issued, and these were required to be affixed to letters according to their weight. The post was carried by messengers both mounted and on foot. During the winter season the postal service across the Hindu-Kush was usually carried out by footmen. All the Afghán postage stamps in use were struck off in the local press. In all probability Shir-Ali's activity would not have been confined to what has been above narrated if the same amount of quiet internally as externally had occurred during his reign. But in some part or other of his territory there broke out on several occasions disorder or rebellion, which could only be suppressed by a display of armed strength. On such occasions Shir-Ali would test his troops by embarking upon small expeditions undertaken with the object of extending the circle of his power. Thus, in 1872, he conquered Bádakhshán,* and in 1875 he overran the Khánate of Maimana.

[The next paragraph is taken up with the well-known tale of the alienation between Shir-Ali on the one side and his sons, Yakúb-Khán and Ayúb-Khán, on the other, in consequence of the Amír's open declaration that he would make his younger son, Abdulla-Ján (the son of a favourite wife), his heir to the detriment of the rights of his elder brother (by another mother) Yakúb-Khán].

Meanwhile the external foes of the Amír and of Afghánistán—the English—likewise made themselves felt. Two or three years after the Umballa Darbár they began to demand that payment of the annual subsidy which they allowed him should be abated; that such abatement should continue, unless Shir-Ali would consent to help them to lay hands on the independence of Afghánistán. At first this attempt was to take the form of the acceptance by the Amír of an English Resident at Kábul. Besides this the Amír was to allow English officers to visit the northern and western borders of Afghánistán in order to explore the country in every direction. Subsequently the demand was put forward that English garrisons should occupy Herát and Báلكh. The Amír was then told that he must come to Simla to welcome the new Viceroy of India and to offer an address to the lately proclaimed Empress of India.

Shir-Ali now clearly saw where his further friendship for the English would lead him. They would not deny him either money or arms, but they would ask from him in return the forfeiture of his own independence as well as that of Afghánistán.†

On the other hand, the Amír could not but perceive that Russia, his northern neighbour, is much more powerful than England, and that her line of action is altogether different. He could not but perceive that she

* The Afghán claim to this country has been disputed by the Russians, and will probably form a great stumbling block in the delimitation of the Amír's frontiers.—*W. E. G.*

† Here seems to be an appropriate place for the insertion of an extract from the *Englishman* work of the celebrated English traveller, Moorcroft, regarding the opinion held in 1823 by the natives: "The English," said the natives to Moorcroft, "have never entered any corner of Asia without keeping in view their own self-interested objects. The result has been the complete enslavement of the natives.—*Moorcroft's Journal to Kábul, Vol. II, pages 488-489.—Author.*

does not display towards her neighbours the same craftiness in which England is so skilled. He could not but be aware that Russia has punished Central Asian Khánates, contiguous to her territory, only when all the peaceful measures for the settlement of frontier quarrels which she offered had been rejected by them. On such occasions Russia has honestly and openly said to them: "I will punish you, and she has punished them." The Amír could not but know that Russia has twice magnanimously assisted the Amír of Bukhára to preserve his throne, and that she has recovered and restored for him two districts of his Khánate.

Shir-Ali, finally, could not but be aware that if Russia has occupied a considerable portion of Central Asia, she has not treated the local Mussulmán population in the same way that England has done. The people of India prior to their subjugation by the English were rich, or in any case they were not badly off. The English came and India became a skeleton, for all the life-blood of her 250,000,000 of inhabitants has been energetically sucked out by the English administration. The line of policy pursued by Russia and by England respectively is altogether different. The natives of Central Asia have only gained by the change of their rulers, for to their former Kháns they paid considerably higher taxes than they do to their present Russian administrators. Moreover, formerly no one was certain what the morrow would bring forth, for at any time a Khán might kill one of his subjects and confiscate his property.

The Amír Shir-Ali knew all this, and so little by little his dread of the Russians gave place to the highest respect for them.

The same feeling entered into the official relations between the Russian Government and the Amír, for the tone of General Kaufmann's letters to Shir-Ali was at all times very delicate; and at the same time this delicacy in no way lessened the persuasiveness of all his communications. Regarding every prominent event in the life of Russian-Turkistán, General Kaufmann considered it his bounden duty to inform the Amír of Afghánistán, who could not but value such attention towards him on the part of the high representative of powerful Russia. And it is evident that he requited this dignified style of treatment, for he notified to the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán his intention to make Abdulláh-Ján his heir and various other projects. During the conference at Pesháwar between the British and Afghán plenipotentiaries, Shir-Ali was completely under Russian influence; and if Russia had not sent a Mission to his capital, at the critical moment, he would in all probability have been the first to stretch out his hand towards Russia.

It now only remains for me to outline a picture of the physical and moral traits of the late Amír.

In his youth it might be seen that Shir-Ali had been a very handsome man, of a little above the average height, thick set, with a broad and deep chest. His features were of a strong Semitic type. A hooked nose and large black eyes gave to his face a character for decision and firmness. Thick and arched eye-brows, of a grey colour rather than black, were in very good harmony with a thick and wavy beard, also black, but sprinkled with a few hairs of a golden tinge. The hair of his head was unshaven,* and over it was placed a hat something in the

* Afgháns generally neither shave nor even cut short the hair of the head.—*Author.*

Polish style. The hair of his head was thick and slightly wavy, black in colour, and very coarse. The tips of his fingers, or rather the nails, were dyed a bright red.

In the early days of his youth Shir-Ali probably enjoyed excellent health, but when I first saw him his vigour had been perceptibly shaken. There is no doubt but that this falling-off had arisen in consequence of those ups and downs of life through which he had passed, and of those cares which had so plentifully gathered round his head. But in the matter of the undermining of his health, his failing, and hardly the only one, had played no slight part; this was his abuse of spirituous liquors.

Of the results of his drinking bouts one could to a certain degree judge by the nervous twitching of his hands (*tremor potatorum*) which accompanied all his discretionary movements.

In respect of his mental powers, Shir-Ali was a prominent personage, *i.e.*, for Central Asia. He was a knight without fear and without reproach. His peaceful disposition and his good-nature have been sufficiently revealed by the preceding historical outline of his struggle with his brothers; but when it was necessary for him to be strict, he was so.

For an example of his magnanimity it is unnecessary to go far. It is sufficient to say that up to the last moment of his life he was very favourably disposed towards the members of the Russian Mission to his country. Justice requires that we should again declare that that Mission, or, to speak more correctly, General Stolaitoff, did not justify his expectations. The former chief of that Mission gave him a whole heap of diffuse promises which Russia could not carry out. Thus the Russian Mission to Kábul was made to appear at fault in the sharp turn which the Anglo-Afghán struggle took.

Subsequently, General Razgónoff, General Stolaitoff's successor as the head of the Russian Mission to Kábul, advised Shir-Ali to go to Russia with the object of personally beseeching the Russian Emperor for his protection against the exactions of England; and when the Amir listened to this advice, and made a request to be allowed to go to St. Petersburg, this request was finally refused. Speaking generally, one cannot give expression to sufficient surprise that the heads of the Russian Mission to Kábul should, out of alarm and contrary to their instructions, have given the Amír advice of all sorts, and have made him promises which could not be fulfilled. But he unconditionally believed what the Russian envoys told him, and placed himself unreservedly in their hands. Alas! for his misplaced confidence he was severely punished. Any other Asiatic sovereign (and Asiatic only?) in his place would have certainly subjected the members of our Mission to various reprisals. Stoddart and Conolly were far from being as guilty before the Amir of Bukhára as were the members of the Russian Mission before Shir-Ali-Khán; nevertheless they preserved their heads on their shoulders. And more, they received from Shir-Ali naught but unchanging friendliness and kindly forethought. Truly, he did at times give vent to expressions of displeasure; but, as the reader can see from the preceding narrative, even the greatest of the Stoics would in his place have gone out of his mind.

The Amír was a complete stranger to that conceit and insupportableness which characterise not only Central Asian potentates, as,—for

example, the Amír of Bukhára,—but their more or less highly placed officials. Shir-Ali was simple in his mode of life and in his habits, and he was at all times the same. He knew how to behave himself to all, and he could converse with intellectual fluency with any chance visitor. On one occasion at Tásh-Kurgán the Amír, who had not asked any of the members of the Russian Mission to come and see him for some days previously, said: “Don’t be angry with me because I have not invited you to come and see me for a long time. You do not know how many swine, asses, sheep, bears, and other beasts I have had to see during this period, and with each of them I have had to converse in his own language. It was necessary for me to see and hear each one of them, and so I could not do otherwise lest they should have taken offence.”

Once he had given his word or had made a promise, the Amír un-faillingly carried it out; for “honour” was to him above everything. Once, therefore, that he had decided to go over to the side of Russia, he kept to that side to the day of his death, and for the sake of his friendship for Russia he nearly deprived himself of his throne. “Let the English,” he said on this subject, “occupy many of my cities, let them put forth all their strength in order to force me to come to terms, I will not do so. I do not want to hear anything more about the English and their peaceful propositions. But I will give them a still greater number of my cities; I will make over to them the half of my sovereignty if the great Russian Emperor shall counsel me to do so. I am the vassal of His Majesty, and my kingdom is his kingdom. Everything, therefore, that he orders me to do I will do. On these terms I have concluded friendship and an alliance with him.” In respect of the nobleness of the Amír’s nature, his accessibility and delicacy towards others, the following instance will give some sort of idea.

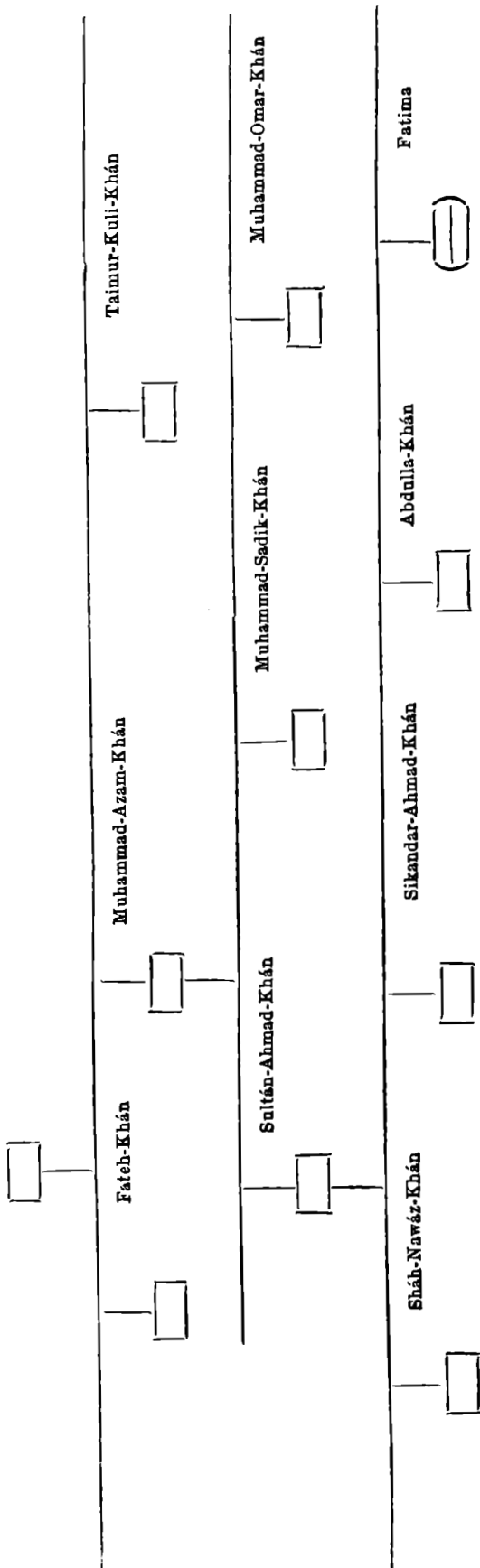
During the stay of the Russian Mission at Kábul, on account of the peculiar circumstances in which the city was placed, and also on account of the Wazír’s peculations, the members of the Mission often felt hungry. At last Shir-Ali heard of this, and so, after an audience, he turned towards Zamaan-Beg, and said:—

“Zamaan-Beg, I ask you to tell the members of the Russian Mission that I hope they will not be angry with me if they have been in want of anything, for I did not know it, and nobody told me. If, then, the members of the Russian Mission, out of a feeling of delicacy, did not speak to me of their needs, from their point of view such silence is intelligible, seeing that they are my guests; but why did *you* not tell me about this? You are more than a guest of mine, for I look upon you as a brother.”

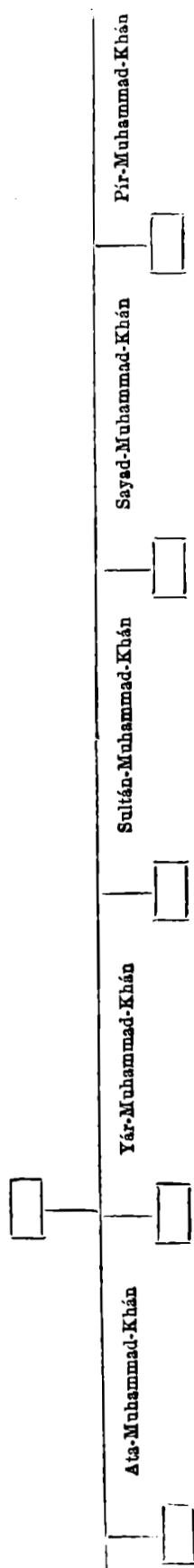
Shir-Ali was possessed of a very sharp understanding, and he rapidly took in any fact, event, or circumstance. His curiosity sometimes was simply astonishing to those standing about him, for he wished to know everything. He was excellently informed as to general history, and he specially loved to speak of Peter the Great. Fatalism and Mus-sulmán intolerance were quite foreign to his nature. I never heard him utter that which every Mussulmán ejaculates on every possible occasion, “Insh’Allah,” for his desire was to do that which he had thought out for himself.

In conclusion of this brief sketch, I will attach a genealogical tree of the house of Sarfaráz-Khán, who reigned in Afghánistán in the year 1820.

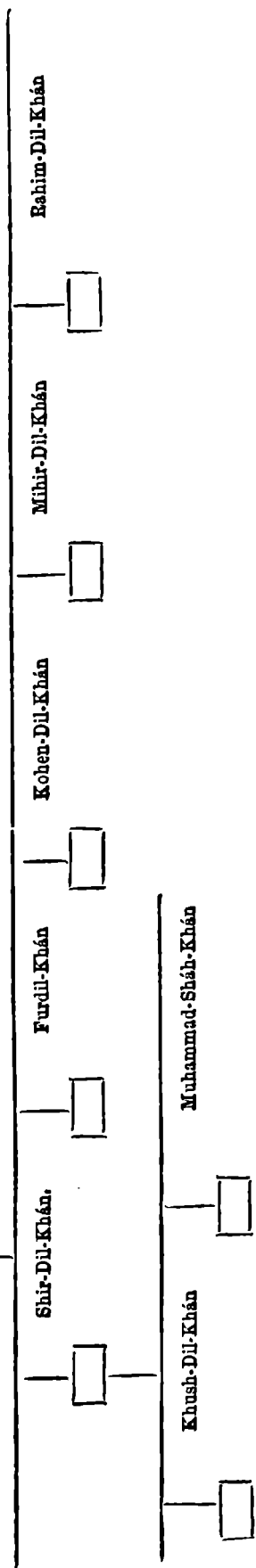
1. From Sarfaráz-Khán and Rui-Bakht, Muhammadzai, the first of his wives, were born—



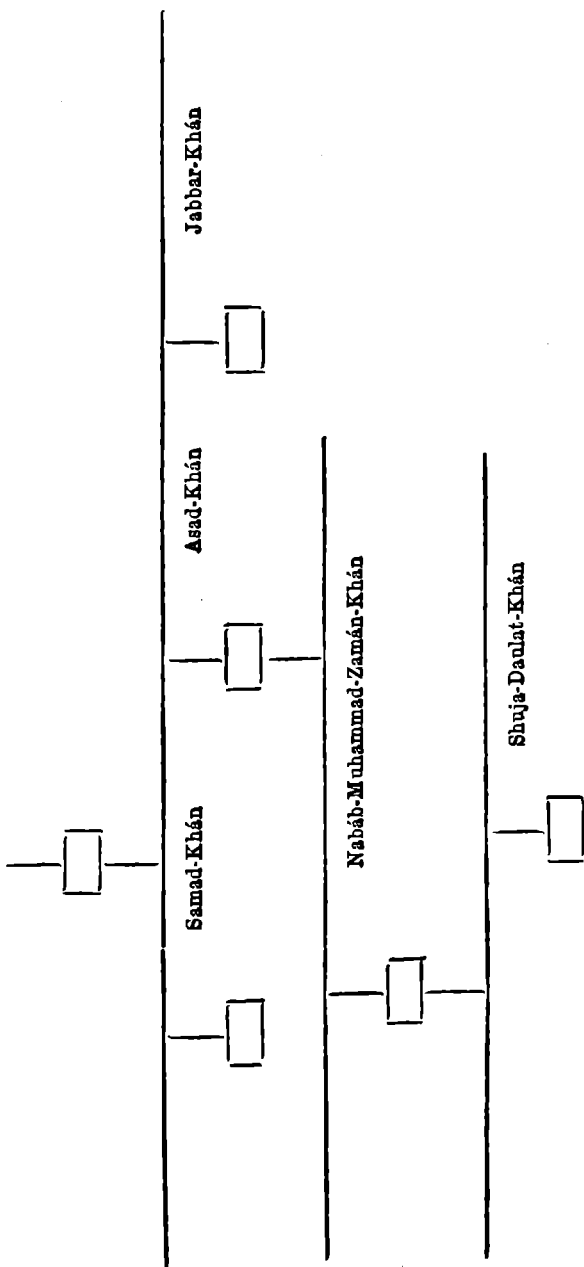
2. From Sarfaráz-Khán and his Ghilzai wife—



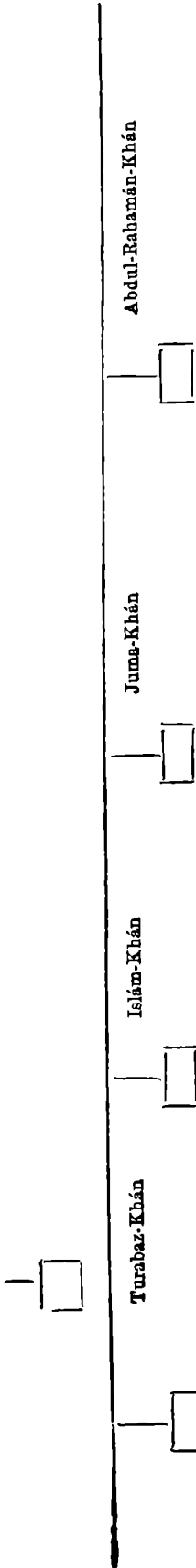
3. From Sarfaráz-Khán and the first of his Duráni wives—



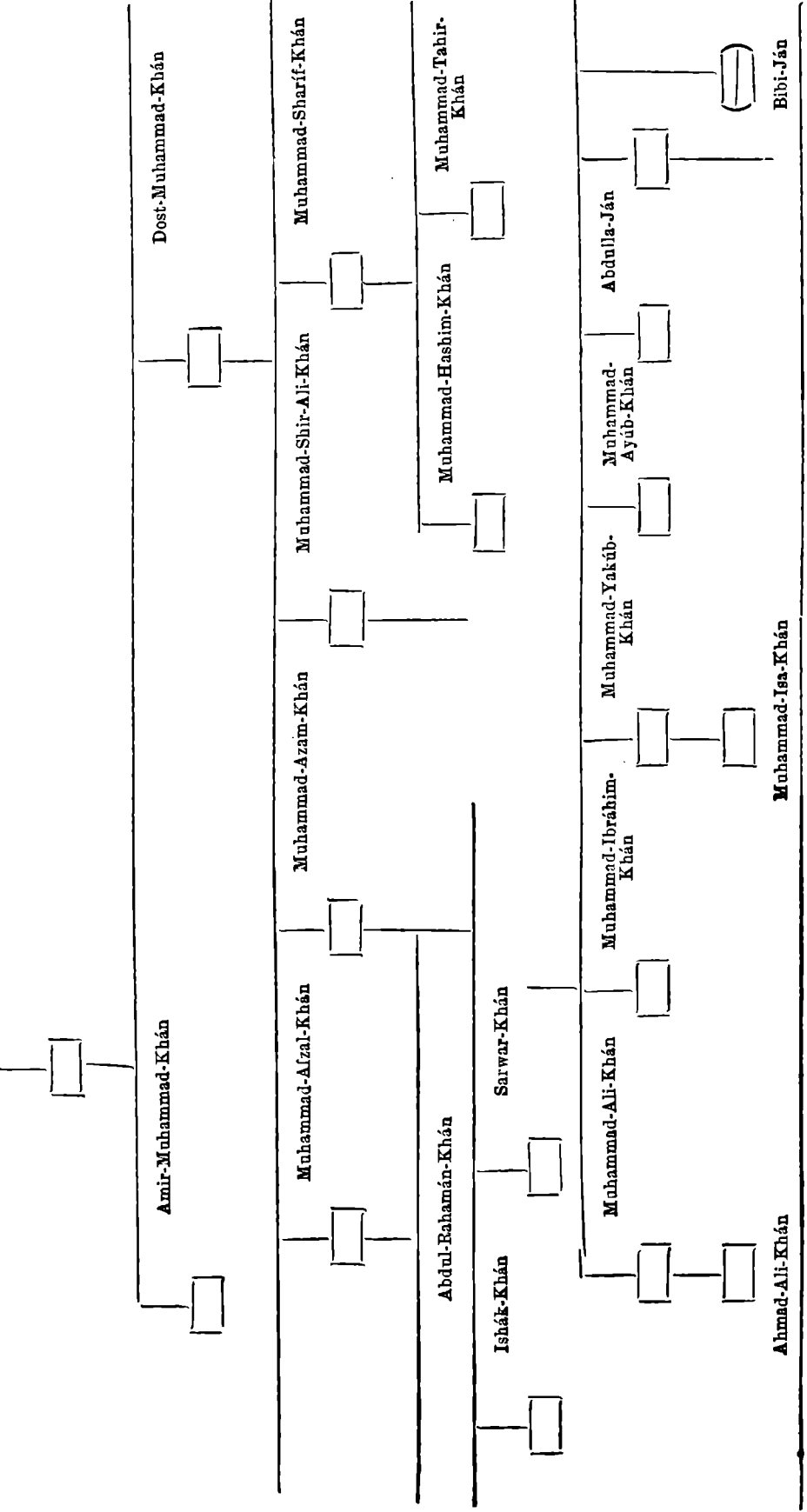
4. From Sarfaráz-Khán and his several Duráni wives—



5. From Sarfaráz-Khán and his various wives of low birth—



6. From Sarfaráz Khán and his Persian concubine—



The remaining sons of Dost-Muhammad-Khán were—

Muhammad-Akram-Khán.
 Muhammad-Aslam-Khán.
 Muhammad-Hassan-Khán.
 Muhammad-Hussein-Khán.

Muhammad-Wali-Khán.
 Muhammad-Akbar-Khán.
 Ghulám-Haidar-Khán.
 Naik-Muhammad-Khán.

Sultán-Ján (stepson).

The population of Afghán-Turkistán, as of Central Asia generally, is a very mixed one, but in Afghán-Turkistán Uzbaks of various tribes preponderate ; and indeed they constitute a dense population, especially in the districts of Kunduz, Andkhui, and Shibirkhán.

Here the Uzbaks represent the remnants of the great Urta-Yuz horde. In the districts of Kunduz and of Tásh-Kurgán the Uzbaks are chiefly of the Kattagán tribe, whereas at Mazár-i-Sharif and at Báلكh the Sarai and Ming Uzbaks preponderate amongst Uzbaks of other tribes as well. The total number of Uzbaks in the *Chahár-Wiláyat* may be computed at 400,000 souls.

The other inhabitants of Afghán-Turkistán are the aborigines of the country, the Tájiks or descendants of the ancient Bactrians. But there are now very few left, because most of them were positively swamped in the Uzbek-Mongol flood which poured into the *Chahár-Wiláyat*. The Tájiks are exclusively confined to the towns, but the Uzbaks are scattered over both villages and towns. There are now not more than 100,000 Tájiks, and these are principally confined to the mountainous parts of Afghán-Turkistán, and especially of Bádakhshán. Of the other and less numerous peoples of the *Chahár-Wiláyat* we may enumerate Kirghiz, Turkumáns, Iránians (*i.e.*, Persians), Avshárs, Hindus, Jews, Hazáras, Arabs, &c., &c. All these together do not exceed 50,000 souls. Thus the total population of the *Chahár-Wiláyat* may be said to be between 500,000 and 600,000 souls.

The chief occupations of the inhabitants are agriculture and cattle-rearing, but in both of these the Uzbaks are exclusively engaged. In Afghán-Turkistán the same kinds of grain and of gramineous plants are raised as in Russian-Turkistán, *viz.*, wheat (spring and winter crops) *sorghum* (*jugára*), barley, millet, rice, lucerne, *sesamum*, &c., &c. The harvests are very abundant, for wheat never yields less than 25 fold. It is clear that such crops are obtained, on the one hand, because of the good quality of the soil (which consists for the most part of *löss* or alluvial deposit), and, on the other, through skilful irrigation.

Horticulture in Afghán-Turkistán, as everywhere else in Central Asia, is in a very low state of development. Although there are many gardens (for every village has its garden), the kinds of fruit-trees in them are all wild, receiving scarcely any attention at the hands of man ; for of crossing the various kinds by grafting and budding, the local inhabitants have not the slightest notion. Were indeed horticulture to be pursued, as it might be, the most brilliant results might be obtained.

And yet, however primitive may be the rural economy of Afghán-Turkistán in respect of both husbandry and horticulture, the crops of both grain and of fruit do not merely suffice for local consumption, but yield every year a large surplus of agricultural products, and these are exported to adjoining countries, for example, Bukhára and Bádakhshán.

Cattle-rearing plays almost the same *rôle* too in Afghán-Turkistán as does husbandry, and in this the Uzbaks are chiefly engaged. In spite of the despotic *régime* of the Afghán authorities, in spite of the unbridled exactions of the Afghán administrators, the Uzbaks may still be said to have great riches in the shape, of their flocks and herds. They principally rear horses and sheep, but they also breed the *Bactrian* or two-humped and the *nar* or one-humped camel as well as milch kine.

Out of the abundance of their harvests and of the increase of their flocks and herds, the inhabitants of Afghán-Turkistán chiefly pay their State dues. According to information which I collected, the total amount of taxes and imposts paid by the inhabitants of Afghán-Turkistán into the treasury of the Amír of Kábul, and for the maintenance of the Afghán administration of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, reaches the very respectable figure, 3,000,000 rupees, or about 2,000,000 *roubles*.* Dividing this sum by the number of tax-paying units of the country, we find that each worker pays to the Amír's treasury no less than 10 rupees—a huge sum if we consider that, in addition to the sources of income above detailed, the people have scarcely any money-bringing property. Hence it is that the Uzbaks so detest the Afgháns, who look upon the *Chahár-Wiláyat* as on a granary, whence they can take as much as they please. The imposts levied upon the inhabitants of Afghán-Turkistán are chiefly paid in kind, *i.e.*, in either grain or cattle.

Trade is but poorly developed in the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, and the fact is intelligible, for local industries can scarcely be said to exist, and therefore products are almost *nil*. Sericulture is fitfully carried on, and the large quantity of wool obtained from the enormous herds of sheep in the country finds scarcely any market. Carpets and felts constitute the most valuable of the local manufactures; but the yearly number of these would not fetch a very large sum, and yet, under other conditions, this article of trade alone would bring in to the manufacturers more than a million *roubles*. The local markets are in fact overstocked with wool, and yet it is not possible to send the surplus to more distant marts because of the bad state of the road communications of the country.

Nevertheless, in passing through the country, the traveller will very often meet with long strings of camels; and in the majority of instances these are found to be carrying Indian or English goods to Bukhára, the chief trade mart of Central Asia. There is not, however, a monopoly of English goods, for side by side with these Russian wares may also be seen. And such articles of trade as Hubbard's Yekaterinburg candles and Vorojtsoff's lucifer matches are not rarities.

Notwithstanding that the mountains of Afghán-Turkistán are rich in minerals of various kinds, mining is not very briskly carried on. Even the once famous ruby mines of Bádakhshán and the beds of *lapis-lazuli* are deserted; but in the local markets there are on sale many Nishapúr turquoises, and for these very moderate prices are asked.

* That supposes the *rouble* (a mere paper tender) to be worth 3 shillings, which it is not.—*W. E. G.*

At a point in the mountains from 20 to 30 *versts* ($13\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 miles) to the south of Mazár-i-Sharif are some sort of mineral springs, which are frequented by the people of the country because of their great healing properties in cases of sickness of various kinds. I was not myself able to visit these springs, and I therefore cannot say anything positive about them.

In conclusion of this chapter I will adduce some particulars relating to the meteorology of Afghán-Turkistán. My stay within the limits of the *Chahár-Wiláyat* extended over two perfectly opposite seasons of the year, *viz.*, the summer (June, July, and August), and the winter (December, January, and February). Therefore my meteorological observations must necessarily bear a character of extremes. Here then are the average readings of the temperature in the shade during my stay in the country.

Of 23 observations taken at the end of June and beginning of July (O. S.), the average readings were as follow :—

8 A.M.	1 P.M.	8 P.M.
78° F.*	95° F.*	86° F.*

At Naibábád on the 8th (20th) July the *maximum* temperature at 1 P. M. was 120° F.

At Mazár-i-Sharif on the 2nd (14th) July the *minimum* temperature at 1 P. M. was 89°.

Of 40 observations taken during the winter (December, January, and February) of 1878-79, the following were the average readings:—

8 A.M.	1 P.M.	8 P.M.
34° F.	53° F.	40° F.

The *maximum* reading was 69° F., the *minimum* was 17° F.

The coldest month was January.

The few English travellers who visited the valley of the Amu-Daria 40 years ago give us almost the same information. Here is what Dr. Gerard says in his letters on this subject: "The temperature of the air at Mazár-i-Sharif reached 100° Fahrenheit,"† and in another place he says the temperature of the air in the shade varied between 74° and 103°.‡

Burnes, Dr. Gerard's fellow-traveller, does not give quite the same figures, for he writes as follows: "The climate of Bákh is extremely injurious to the health, and yet it is very agreeable." In June the temperature did not register more than 80° Fahrenheit, and the hottest weather was in July.§ In another part of his book the same author says: "In the early morning the thermometer stood below 52° F., notwithstanding that more than two-thirds of this country (the valley of the Amu-Daria) is a perfect desert.||" But he once quotes the reading of the thermometer at 103° F.

* In this translation the readings of the Réaumur and of the centigrade scales have been converted into those of the Fahrenheit thermometer.—*W. E. G.*

† *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. II, page 13. Dr. Gerard's observation was taken during the summer-season.—*Author.*

‡ *Ibid.*, page 22.—*Author.*

§ Burnes's *Journey into Bukhára*, Vol. II, page 345.—*Author.*

|| *Ibid.*, page 352.—*Author.*

If we examine the figures above given, we shall find that the average reading of the thermometer throughout the year in Afghán-Turkistán is 56° F. Of course these figures have a very small importance, as they are derived from a very limited number of observations. But if we compare the readings at several points on the earth's surface, of which the latitude is almost the same as of those places in Afghán-Turkistán which I have named, we shall find that my deductions are, to a certain degree, upheld.

			North Lat.*			Average temp. during the year.
Algiers	...	...	36° 47'	...	...	63° F.
Gibraltar	...	...	36° 0' 6"	...	...	68° F.
Malaga	...	...	36° 42'	...	...	68° F.
Palermo	...	...	38° 07'	...	...	62° F.
Lankorán	...	...	38° 46' 14"	...	...	57° F.
Ashurada	...	...	36° 54'	...	...	63° F.
Baku	...	...	40° 22'	...	...	57° F.
Sámarkand	...	...	39° 39'	...	...	59° F.
Pekin	...	...	40° 0'	...	...	54° F.

Thus we see that, from the readings just quoted, my figures for the average yearly temperature for certain named points in the country locally known as the *Chahár-Wiláyat* are very nearly right. Of course, in making this comparison it is necessary to bear in mind the difference in the longitude and in the relative altitudes of the points compared. In the case, however, of Mazár-i-Sharif and the places named in the above list, there is no great difference in height. The reader will, of course, not fail to notice the sharp variations of temperature in the space of the 24 hours, and that such variations are considerably more marked during the summer-season than in the winter. It should, however, be stated that the winter of the particular year which I have quoted was, according to native statement, a mild one, whereas this season of the year is generally very severe. From what the natives say, the Amu-Daria, in the meridian of Mazár-i-Sharif, never freezes over.† When I crossed it, with the thermometer standing at 17° F., although the river banks were fringed with ice particles, which extended to a breadth of about 4¼ feet on either side, the actual current of the river was not ice-bound.

The number of cloudy days in the Amu-Daria valley, especially during the summer-season, are very few in number. Thus, during 23 days which I observed there were only 3 cloudy days. During the winter season, however, the number of cloudy days greatly increases, for of 43 days, the limit of my stay in the valley of the Amu-Daria, there were 26 that were overcast, and on 8 of these either rain or snow fell. During three days the rain was sufficiently heavy to thoroughly soak the ground. Of the three snowy days, the fall was very heavy on two; but on none of them did the snow lie less than 3 inches deep. As regards

* Observatory whence meridian is reckoned not stated.—*W. E. G.*

† Burnes, however, asserts that the Amu within the provinces of Kobádian and Kunduz freezes over, and this very frequently.—(*Journey into Bukhára*, Vol. III (Russian Edition), page 279).—*Author.*

the direction of the prevailing wind, observations are very confused ; for sometimes a double current was noticeable, the lower bearing the clouds towards the west, the upper towards the east. During the summer-season, perhaps a southerly wind is the more frequent.* During my stay at Mazár-i-Sharif I always noticed, however, that even during the summer there was a wind only at a certain period of the four hours. Generally speaking, from 9 P.M. to either 7 or 8 P.M. there was no wind except, perhaps, a weak current of air. But from 7 P.M. there would arise a slight, warm, and southerly breeze, which would be at its greatest force at 3 or 4 A. M., after which it would strike cold and die away gradually, so that by 9 A.M. there would be no wind at all. During the winter, eastern and southern winds are the most common in Afghán-Turkistán and about the "Garm-Sir." I have already made mention in the first volume of my present work. I made no barometrical or psychrometrical observations because of the habitual denial, exercised by the Táshkand Section of the Military Topographical Department, of the necessary grant required to enable me to procure the particular instruments.

* And not a northern, as Lieutenant Irving asserts in his Memoirs (see *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. VIII).—*Author*.

CHAPTER VIII.

PERIOD OF ANARCHY.

Various rumours and propositions—Three candidates for the vacant throne of Afghánistán—Concerning Yakúb-Khán—Intrigues of Shir-Ali's favourite wife—Muhammad-Háshim-Khán, the most powerful candidate for the Amirship—My position amidst the factions preparing for the strife—Beginning of disorders—The Takhtapul massacre—An anonymous letter—Afghán arrangements against my sudden departure from Mazár-i-Sharif—Night attack on my quarters—Bribery—Various ominous rumours—Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán—Without food—Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán—The Amír of Afghánistán—Another massacre and more blowing away from guns—Visit of Sirdár Muhammad-Tair-Khán.

SOME days before the death of Shir-Ali, the town of Mazár-i-Sharif had begun to get excited, because of various rumours and ideas that were prevalent. For instance, it was affirmed that the Amír was already dead, but that his death was being concealed by those about him until a more convenient time. The reasons put forward for this concealment were various. Some maintained that the fact was not notified because the proper arrangements had not been made with regard to the question of succession to the throne. Others stated that nothing was yet ready in connection with the burial rites. Other and more simple folk affirmed that the Amír's death was being concealed, because his body had not yet been sewn up in the hide of a *yák* or of a white camel. A minority of the city population, which perceived in this, as in all other cases, facts that were more or less authentic, asserted that the Amír was still alive, and was making progress towards recovery. Meanwhile the rumour regarding Shir-Ali's death had become so current that even Ishán-Khwája, the Bukháran envoy, was inclined to believe it, and sent his *Mirza-Báshi* to me to make enquiries as to whether the Amír was really dead or not? And with the rumours of the above kind, other unexplained reports were in currency to the effect that, with the death of the Amír, disorders would inevitably break out; indeed mention was made of the murders and plunderings that were imminent.

Regarding the approaching succession to the throne, the following was reported. Two days before his death, Shir-Ali had named, as his successor, his nephew, Sirdár Muhammad-Háshim-Khán. This Sirdár was the son of Muhammad-Sharif-Khán, who, as we have seen above, played such a double part in the struggle between the Amír, Shir-Ali, and his elder brothers for the throne of Afghánistán. But when Shir-Ali had triumphed over his rivals, he banished his intriguing brother, Muhammad-Sharif-Khán, to India, keeping with him Muhammad-Háshim-Khán and Muhammad-Tair-Khán. Subsequently Shir-Ali gave to Muhammad-Háshim-Khán his daughter by his favourite wife, who was usually called "the Walida." And so it came about that this nephew was acknowledged by the Amír as his heir.

It should here be stated that after the death of Abdulla-Ján, who had been acknowledged both by Russia and by England as the heir to the Afghán throne, the Amír made no fresh arrangements concerning

his successor. And so the matter stood over until his last days. When Yakúb-Khán was released by his father from imprisonment, he was placed at the head of the government and made the ruler of Kábul, as well as chief of the forces stationed in the eastern confines of the State ; but he was not proclaimed heir to the throne. This behaviour on the part of Shir-Ali was apparently very strange, for what hindered him in ratifying the choice of the people and recognising Yakúb-Khán as his successor? The answer to this question we shall find only when we glance towards the harem of the Amír.

Almost from the date of his accession to the throne, Shir-Ali fell under the influence of his Ghilzai wife. The attachment and respect displayed by the Amír towards this wife, a woman who, according to the statements of the courtiers, was possessed of a very energetic character, were so strong that she exercised a very decisive influence in the family councils. The Amír concealed hardly anything from her, and she, therefore, enjoyed a great influence in the carrying out of the domestic policy of the Amír, who scarcely did anything without first consulting her. By this wife Shir-Ali had several daughters, but only one son, *viz.*, Abdulla-Ján.

After the death of Muhammad-Ali-Khán, the Amír's eldest son, the resolute Yakúb-Khán, was generally considered to be the heir to the throne of Afghánistán. Indeed, he enjoyed these rights up to December 1873. But about that time Shir-Ali, acting under the influence of his favourite wife, announced that the young Abdulla-Ján would be his successor.

[Dr. Yavórski here enters upon a disquisition as to the various means adopted by Abdulla-Ján's mother to remove Yakúb-Khán out of her own son's way.]

(Text resumed.)

Meanwhile Yakúb Khán's party of adherents was not asleep, for it worked up a strong agitation against the Amír, nor did it lose sight of the Prince Abdulla-Ján, until at length, in August 1878, it succeeded in effecting its purpose. I have certain grounds for the assertion that the death of Abdulla-Ján was the result of poisoning by means of some sort of corrosive mixture.

The extraordinary occurrences at Kábul towards the close of 1878 assisted in bringing about Yakúb-Khán's release, and when he became free, he also became strong. It is intelligible, therefore, that the party of the Amír's favourite wife should fall into dejection ; but though its power was shaken, it was far from being broken, and it did not refrain from a further conflict ; but now all its efforts would be required in order to defeat Yakúb Khán's candidature. It therefore, in the first instance, endeavoured to defer the question of the succession to the throne, and so Afghánistán, almost up to the death of Shir-Ali-Khán, was without any declared heir to the throne.

It became evident, however, that the party of the late Amír's favourite wife must, at any cost, advance its own candidate for the vacant throne. This then was the origin of the report that was being suddenly noised abroad that Shir-Ali, before his death, had acknowledged Muhammad-Háshim-Khán as his heir, for at the particular time this party had no better candidate than he.

Meanwhile, the popular votes were far from being in his favour. "Why should they make Muhammad-Háshim-Khán Amir?" was the question asked in various circles of the Afghán population. "Was not his father the enemy of the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán? And did he not do much harm to our country? And is he not now with the hated English? Are there not more worthy candidates for the throne than Muhammad-Háshim-Khán? Where are Yakúb-Khán, Muhammad-Ibráhim-Khán, or even the late Amír's grand-son, Ahmad-Ali-Khán? He at least has some right to his grand-father's throne."

But of two of these pretenders, the following opinions might be heard. Muhammad-Ibráhim-Khán, the eldest surviving son of the late Amír, was considered a simple man of a kindly disposition; and though the common people liked him, the Sirdárs held him to be unfit for the government of the country. And certainly he was not possessed of any special degree of intelligence nor of any striking qualities. He was a quiet, silent man, thick-set and with a very ordinary expression of countenance. His age appeared to be about 40. During the audiences which Shir-Ali gave to the members of the Russian Mission, and also during my private visits to the Amír, I always found Muhammad-Ibráhim-Khán standing by his father's side; and though he usually listened with very great attention to what his father said, he scarcely ever uttered a single word, and Shir-Ali considered him to be of weak intellect.

As regards Ahmad-Ali-Khán, the Amír's grand-son, only flattering opinions could be heard, and Shir-Ali himself thought well of him. He had, therefore, a large party of adherents, and the people, bearing in mind his father's virtues, looked upon him with respect.

"If Ahmad-Ali-Khán were made Amír," said Muhammad-Din-Khán, our respected *Major-Domo*, to me, "everybody would be satisfied."

Notwithstanding all this, the prevalent idea was that the late Amír had nominated as his successor Muhammad-Háshim-Khán.

On the 7th (19th) February, when the rumours about this selection were especially persistent, I met, in the course of one of my visits to the Amír, a closed palanquin in which was sitting Shir-Ali's favourite wife.* The same day I saw at the Amír's residence Sirdár Faiz-Muhammad-Khán. He was in full-dress uniform, with plumed helmet, and a ribbon of some order across his shoulder.

I then learnt that, on this date, a military council had been convened at the Luináb's palace. The Council was composed of Sirdárs and of the various military chiefs, and the purpose for which it had been convened was twofold, *viz.*, to pass an opinion on the present state of affairs, and to hear the Amír's decision regarding the succession to the throne. When it was announced that the Amír's choice had fallen on Muhammad-Háshim-Khán, and the opinion of those present was invited, the majority gave its assent to this selection.

"I cannot pretend to power in Afghánistán," said the *Luináb*, "since neither my father nor my grand-father were Amírs. I have, therefore, nothing to say against the Amír's choice of Muhammad-Háshim-Khán. Speaking generally, I must say that I will join him who gets the upper hand."

* Both this woman and the Amír's other wives occupied a separate house.—*Author.*

Sirdár Faiz-Muhammad-Khán spoke in the same sense, but it was known that they were both supporters of Háshim-Khán.

At the same council it was decided that the *Luináb* and Sirdár Faiz-Muhammad-Khán should remain at their respective posts until the new Amír could make other arrangements. It was remarkable that of Yakúb-Khán no one present had any recollection. It was evident that the Amír's selection of Muhammad-Háshim-Khán could not please Mubammad-Ibráhim-Khán, and he being enraged at the turn which affairs had taken, swore an oath that he would most certainly kill the *Luináb* as the prime mover in the got-up revolution. The *Luináb*, therefore, who was informed of this resolution, adopted precautionary measures against any sudden attack on him on the part of Ibráhim-Khán's adherents.

Ahmad-Ali-Khán, the Amír's grand-son, is said to have remarked: "I have nothing to say against either of my uncles Ibráhim-Khán or Yakúb-Khán succeeding to my grand-father's throne, but I will not consent to Muhammad-Háshim-Khán being made Amír."

Thus he went over to Ibráhim-Khán's party.

During the two last days of Shir-Ali's life, I did not see at his bedside either his son or his grand-son, or the *Luináb*, all of whom sat in their own houses surrounded by armed retainers, for they all feared to leave their own abodes lest they should render themselves open to reciprocal attack. Thus it had now become known that as soon as the Amír died, civil war would certainly set in, for the chief actors had been indicated. It was also evident that the principal arena of this strife would be Afghán-Turkistán, and that its centre would be Mazár-i-Sharif.

My certainty as regards this kind of issue of the state of things was so strong that when, during the evening of 7th (19th) February, I heard the sound of volleys and also of stray shots resounding in various parts of the city, I thought that the beginning of the bloody drama had set in. But on this occasion I was wrong, for these shots were the outcome of superstitious belief and not the realities of a revolution. The fact is that the Mussulmáns of Central Asia consider the month *Safar* to be unlucky, and so, when it comes to an end, they express their joy by various noises, such as firing of guns, beating of drums, clanging of metals, shouts, whistling, &c., &c.

Having received information of the disturbances which were preparing at Mazár-i-Sharif, and of the civil war that was imminent, I naturally thought of my own position; for, of course, if a bloody drama should supervene, I might regard my own situation as the worst. If, therefore, influential natives could not guarantee themselves against various unfavourable contingencies, I, a foreigner, a *Káfir*, and a whilom member of the Russian Mission, which was held to be so guilty before the Afgháns, could not reckon on peace or safety in the midst of warring parties. I might, moreover, feel apprehensive concerning the death of the Amír, or at least regarding the fact that I had not been able to effect his cure. This dread was the more intense, seeing that the native physicians of the Amír would very readily try to transfer from their own shoulders to any head the burden of the blame attending the unfortunate issue of the Amír's illness.

Once let such an idea be started amongst the mass of the people, and my position would become extremely critical, "for a crowd never discriminates." * Therefore, on 8th (20th) February, the date of the Amír's death, I formed the resolution of intimating to the *Luináb* that I intended leaving for Táshkand at once. But the following considerations induced me to abandon my intention. I had been left in Afghánistán not only in the capacity of the Amír's private physician, but in the unofficial position of Political Agent of the Russian Government. Although I had not received any formal instructions, yet I felt that the verbal directions which had been given to me were as binding as any official order would have been. When General Razgónoff left me at Mazár-i-Sharif, he had yet another object in view, but that of making me the "rear-guard of the returning Russian Mission to Afghánistán," and it was that of placing me in the post of Political Agent. Of course, he had so acted not because of his own alarm, but under the direct orders of General Kaufmann. Thus, *volens-volens*, I must remain at Mazár-i-Sharif, and be the witness of all that might take place when disturbances arose.

Meanwhile, Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, an *Avsháret*,† one of the Amír's aides-de-camp, in speaking to me of the civil war which was about to break out, advised me to leave Afghánistán as quickly as possible. "It would be well," he said, "if you were to quit Mazár-i-Sharif this very night [8th (20th) February,] and if you endeavoured to get across the Amu-Daria by next morning, for great disturbances are to be anticipated at Mazár-i-Sharif."

"But," said I, "in the approaching strife of the great and small folk for the inheritance of the Amír, I shall take no kind of part, so that I shall only be a spectator of all that happens."

"Eh! but you do not at all know Afgháns," answered my former patient. "Believe me that, as soon as a single drop of blood appears, Afgháns cease to be men and become veritable wild beasts, and at such a time they do not discern between the innocent and the guilty, and spare neither themselves nor others. When their passions are roused, they might make themselves very disagreeable to you without considering either what was right or feeling apprehensive of the ultimate retribution that would be exacted by the Russian Government."

Although I, to a certain extent, agreed with what he said, I felt that I must, for a time at least, remain at Mazár-i-Sharif.

As soon as Ghulám-Haidar-Khán had gone away, Násir-Khán came to me to say that there was no more provender for the horses. The fact was that when the *Luináb's* servant went to the forage stores, which were alongside the barracks of the Herát cavalry, and began to take the usual amount allowed for my horses, the soldiers drove him away, saying that there was now no *Luináb*; that they would obey nobody; that they were now their own masters, &c., &c. The *Luináb*

* Justice, however, requires me to say that the Afgháns—those Central-Asian barbarians, as the English call them—seem'd at the particular time to be more noble-minded than were their Indian and more civilised neighbours, for no Afghán ever accused me of being the cause of the Amír's death, whilst the Anglo-Indian Press repeatedly and energetically disseminated regarding me this abominable calumny—*Author*.

† The Avsharets are a Turki race of which a considerable portion during the reign of Nádír-Sháh migrated from Persia to Afghánistán.—*Author*.

then sent to the neighbouring small town of Shirábád for the provender for my horses. At 7 P.M. that day the usual *farrásh** came to me bringing a sheep, a fowl, and some fuel, candles, &c., &c., but no fodder for the horses, and so the night passed away. That day I had again been attacked with a paroxysm of remittent fever.

The next morning, as soon as we had got up, we heard various items of news, each more interesting and more important than the other.

In the first place, the following report was received regarding the events of the previous night:—

On the evening of the 8th (20th) February, Muhammad-Ibráhim Khán and Ahmad-Ali-Khán left Mazár-i-Sharif for Takhtapul, where they made an attempt to draw the troops to their side; but in this they did not succeed. It was evident then that Faiz-Muhammad-Khán had already secured the soldiery for Muhammad-Háshim-Khán's party. The pretenders now had recourse to bribery, for they promised to give the troops six months' pay in advance if they would espouse the cause of the son and grand-son of the late Amír. The soldiers were evidently willing to place themselves under Muhammad-Ibráhim-Khán's orders, but when he began to open his money chests and to calculate how much each man was to receive, some one in the crowd cried out, "plunder;" and immediately the troops threw themselves on the money, and began to fight for the possession of it with the adherents of Muhammad-Ibráhim-Khán and of Ahmad-Ali-Khán. This affair did not, it was said, get as far as loss of life, although several men received wounds. After this Muhammad-Ibráhim Khán and Ahmad-Ali-Khán, with a few adherents and six other boxes of treasure, fled from Takhtapul, and made for Kábul by the Yusuf-Dara gorge.†

The *Luináb*, who was immediately informed of what had occurred at Takhtapul, at once sent off 120 horsemen in pursuit of the fugitives, hoping that the six boxes of treasure might be taken from them.

The fugitives were overtaken that same night beyond the town of Shirábád, but the results were quite unexpected by the *Luináb*, for half of his horsemen went over to the side of the fugitives, whilst the rest had nothing else to do but turn back, and tell the story of their own failure.

At the very time that we were being told the particulars of this event, we heard the sound of artillery discharges from the direction of Takhtapul. At 8 A.M. on the 9th (21st) February, Mosin-Khán, with whom the reader is already acquainted, came to me to say that he had been sent by the *Luináb* with orders that he was to be constantly near us, so as to secure us from insult; that he was to look after the native guard, and to carry out any of our wishes, &c., &c. Accordingly the Afghán guard round our quarters was strengthened, and to each soldier was administered an oath that he would protect the "Urus" (Russians) from all injury. Our mud-built residence then assumed the character of a veritable fortress, although of its investment by an enemy

* A sort of Steward or Commissary.—*Author*.

† This gorge runs due south of Takhtapul. Through it lies the most direct road between Mazár-i-Sharif and Koh-i-Mard. This route leaves to the left the Chambarak, Kizil-Kotul, and Kara-Kotal passes, and is usually adopted by the flying postal service from Kábul.—*Author*.

and of its bombardment there were no signs. Sentries were posted at all the entrances and exits; and likewise at every angle Mosin-Khán, too, at once assumed the position of a commandant, and his penetrating voice bored us excessively, for he was constantly calling out "*O pahredar! nazdik darwáza babashad! O Sari-Ján, Chi Shuma miqunad? In-ja bianad!*" &c., &c. At 9 A. M. Nassir-Khán brought me an anonymous letter, written in the Persian character. Its unknown author informed me that there had been bloodshed at Takhtapul, that the troops there had refused to obey the *Luináb*, and that Sirdár Faiz-Muhammad-Khán had been removed from the office of commandant of the troops at Takhtapul. Further on the writer corroborated the episode above narrated, and concluded his letter with the assurance that the Russians had nothing to fear, for that, if any danger should threaten them, he, the writer, would come to the aid of the "Doctor-Sáhib" with 300 of his kinsmen, who were in and about Mazár-i-Sharif.

Of course I very much wished to learn who was the author of this letter, but all my enquiries led to no result.

After Mosin-Khán had finished putting our quarters in a complete state of defence, he came to the room which I was occupying, and began to converse apparently in a very quiet way with Zamaan-Bek; in fact just as if nothing unusual had happened. And when I questioned him regarding what had taken place at Takhtapul, he feigned ignorance. And he either really did not know, or he did not wish to alarm us, and so I could get nothing out of him.

"With the advent of the Russians into Afghánistán," said Mosin-Khán, "a whole deluge of misfortunes and calamities has rained on our unhappy country. You came to Mazár-i-Sharif, and the *Luináb* Shir-Dil-Khán died; you arrived at Kábul, and Abdulla-Ján, the heir to the throne, died. And now the Amír-Sáhib himself is dead. Besides all this, the English have invaded our country, which is falling to pieces."

Upon this Zamaan-Bek answered that certainly one could not but notice a certain coincidence in these events; but if the Russians had not come to Afghánistán, the very same things would have happened.

"All this depends on God and the working of His Will," remarked Zamaan-Bek in conclusion of his observations. Mosin-Khán fully agreed with this concluding remark, but he then went on to enquire whether Russia would help the Afgháns in their struggle with the English, especially since the Amír-Sáhib had died? Would General Stolaitoff return to Afghánistán, &c.

Soon after this Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh* came to me. It then transpired that he was the writer of the anonymous letter which I had received, for that very morning he had heard, when he was at the *Luináb's* residence, of what had taken place the night before, and he had at once informed me by letter. In addition to the news therein given, he now told me that the Takhtapul troops had acknowledged as Amír Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán, whose youngest son, Muhammad-Isa-Khán, they had at once

* Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh was a *khansama* attached to the *Luináb's* household. He also catered for the members of the Russian Mission. The Mirza, who is of the Istalif tribe, has a large number of kinsmen both at his native place and at Mazár-i-Sharif. He was very fond of the Russians, and at the time spoken, as well as afterwards, he shewed them great service.—*Author.*

mounted on an elephant, and brought from Mazár-i-Sharif to Takhtapul, whither, it seems, the Luináb had gone.

Some time afterwards, the events of the day were thoroughly explained, facts were established, and the bloodshed at Takhtapul received a strictly definite character.

It turned out that when Muhammad-Ibráhim-Khán and Ahmad-Ali-Khán fled from Takhtapul, a portion of their adherents fled to Báikh, which is distant from Takhtapul 15 *versts* (10 miles). There they related to the troops what had happened at Takhtapul, and then three of the battalions of infantry quartered at Báikh, having declared for Muhammad-Ibráhim-Khán, arrived at Takhtapul early on the morning of the 9th (21st) February, and began to bombard it. The garrison of Takhtapul, not anticipating anything of the kind, were altogether cowed, and soon began to fight amongst themselves, whereupon the Báikh troops effected an entrance, and an indiscriminate slaughter took place. The adherents of Muhammad-Háshim-Khán slew those of Muhammad-Ibrahim-Khán, whilst the troops who had declared for Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán attacked both the warring sides. It now seemed as though there would be no end to the general chaos, when there came forward the aged but vigorous Sirdár Abdulla-Khán, who arrested the bloodshed by clearly showing that Muhammad-Háshim-Khán had no sort of right to succeed to the throne. His remarkable speech had its effect on many of Háshim-Khán's adherents, and they abandoned his cause.

Then the energetic widow of the Amír, not wishing to let the power slip from her hands, hastily sent off from Mazár-i-Sharif to Takhtapul her own daughter Bibi-Ján, and proposed that she should be *regente* during the *interregnum* which had arisen in the country. Of course on account of Bibi-Ján's tender years, the real *regente* would have been her widowed mother. But the troops jeeringly escorted the girl back, saying that the "administration of a country is not a woman's business."

There then appeared upon the scene a candidate for the throne who previously had been altogether unknown; this was the son of a certain Sirdár Zakaria-Khán. His candidature very nearly resulted in another general scramble. But at this time Naik-Muhammad-Khán, the late Amír's cousin, summoned to Takhtapul Muhammad-Isa-Khán, Yakúb-Khán's son, and proposed him as the ruler of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, and his father Yakúb-Khán as Amír of Afghánistán.

"If you do not agree to this," said Naik-Muhammad-Khán, "Yakúb-Khán will take his revenge on you, seeing that many of you have left your families at Kábul, so that he can kill your nearest relatives."

Either because of this threat, or because the troops generally were well-disposed towards Yakúb-Khán, he was acknowledged as Amír. Although the internecine slaughter was arrested (in which there had been killed one general of brigade, several officers, and many soldiers), the agitation was still not at an end. All were afraid of each other, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to enter upon a fresh civil war.

At this time a rumour reached me, which, I was told, was very prevalent amongst the soldiery and the people generally, *viz.*, that the Amír, before his death had appointed his executor, and had made the promise that when I should leave Afghánistán I should take with me the family of his favourite wife.

I was greatly surprised at hearing such a report, and could not conceive what it meant? The Amír had promised that in the event of his recovery he would give me a *lakh* of rupees; but he was now dead, and I had not received one. In thinking over the matter, I came to the conclusion that the report must have been disseminated by my enemies, the late Amír's native physicians. But why they introduced the late Amír's family into the story, I could not at all understand. In any case, I now clearly saw that I could not remain at Mazár-i-Sharif any longer, for it was evident that I really should be subjected to serious unpleasantnesses, if nothing worse. I therefore told Mosin-Khán to go to the *Luináb* in order to inform him of my intention of quitting Afghánistán for Táshkand, as since the Amír had died there was no longer any necessity for me to remain at Mazár-i-Sharif. I therefore requested the *Luináb* to give me an escort and to conduct me to the frontiers of Afghánistán with honour, as became a member of the Russian Mission, and as the guest of the Afgháns.

Whilst Mosin-Khán was at the *Luináb's* quarters I made arrangements, so that the Cossacks and the *Jigits* should gradually and without hurry be prepared for our departure. The pack-horses were immediately saddled, the riding horses were re-shod, and our things were packed up. Mosin-Khán came back from the *Luináb* late the same evening, and informed me that I should be conducted to the frontiers with honour after the days of mourning for the Amír should be over, but that three days had still to run.

"You need not be alarmed, Doctor-Sáhib," continued Mosin-Khán, "for not the slightest danger threatens you. The *Luináb Sáhib* will do all that is necessary for you, for power is still in his hands."

Although I was obliged to believe Mosin-Khán, I was in no way comforted by his assurances. And so that night I kept the pack-horses ready saddled. In the outer court-yard, where our horses were tethered, in addition to the Afghán guard, a body of *Jigits* was detailed. In the inner court-yard, *i. e.*, in the quarters which I occupied, a guard of Cossacks was drawn up. But I made a great mistake in leaving the horses in the outer court-yard, and this mistake subsequently occasioned us very great trouble. There was, moreover, plenty of room in the inner court-yard for all the horses, and had I had them tethered there I should not have been punished for my want of forethought.

Mosin-Khán remained to pass the night in our quarters, but he did not get to sleep for a long time, boring us with his chatter about this thing and that. I did not hear the last of his remarks, for I fell into a troubled sleep.

During the whole of the night of the 10th (22nd) and 11th (23rd) February pillaging and fighting amongst the several bodies of troops at Mazár-i-Sharif and at Takhtapul were continued. In spite of the fact that a choice of a new Amír had been made, that a fresh *Luináb* and commander of the troops in Afghán-Turkistán had been appointed, complete anarchy reigned on all sides. The troops did as they pleased, and plundered those commanders whom they did not like, and certain of these were even killed by the rebel soldiery. Nor was the lawlessness of the Afghán troops confined to attacks on their own commanders or the adherents of the rival parties, for both Uzbaks and Tajiks, who had

nothing to do with the several political factions, were the victims of the plundering bands. The same night I myself nearly fell a victim to the prevailing military terror and lawlessness, for an attack, which was apparently prompted by a wish to plunder, was made on our quarters. This is how the disagreeable incident arose.

About 2 A.M. a large band of soldiers came to the northern gateway of our quarters (the commander of our Afghán guard said that a whole battalion or *paltan* was there) and tried to make its way into the outer court-yard. The Afghán guard at this gate-way refused to allow the raiders to enter, and threatened to fire if they made the attempt, whereupon the members of the band began to abuse and to upbraid my defenders.

“Shame upon you,” they said, “for protecting *Káfirs* (or unbelievers). Why do you let slip the opportunity of getting some spare rupees for an evil day? People say that the late Amír made over to the Russian doctor all his treasure. Let you and ourselves plunder him of this treasure.”

But my defenders would not yield to the enticing suggestion, declaring that they had taken an oath to defend their “Russian guests.”

The conversation went on for a long time between both sides, and ended in the would-be plunderers going away without having secured anything.

Some time after they had left, another band of raiders made its appearance at the southern gate-way. It also was refused admittance by the Afghán guard there stationed. The raiders then left with the threat that they would reckon with the guard afterwards. These examples had, however, a very bad effect on my defenders, who began to reason among themselves to the following effect. “To night every soldier is looking after himself, but we are not getting a single *cheka*.* Of course, we are fools to defend a *Káfir*, and especially one who is possessed of so much money.” At first such reasoners were in the minority, but in course of time the advocates for plunder increased. “Let us go and plunder him ourselves” was at length the cry on all sides. But the commander of the guard, who had been a patient of mine, stood out against such an act.

“You are contemplating a dishonourable act,” he said to those below him. “You have taken an oath to protect the ‘Doctor-Sáhib’ from all injury, and you must now fulfil your vow. Remember, too, that many of you have been cured by the Doctor-Sáhib free of charge. Do not, therefore, be ungrateful by doing him an injury.”

Unfortunately at this time news was received that one of the bands, which had withdrawn from our quarters, had proceeded to the houses of some of my defenders, and had pillaged them and insulted the inmates. This information decided the question of the attack on me.

The traitorous Afgháns had not succeeded in breaking through the door leading from the outer court-yard to the inner, before my *caravan-báshi*, Nassir-Khán, had come and warned us of what was about to take place. My first disposition was to collect all my Cossacks behind the walls near the inner gate-way, and since all their rifles were loaded, they only awaited the order from me to open fire.

*A *cheka* or *chokh* is a copper coin of almost nominal value.—*Author*.

Just as Nassir-Khán came to us, Mosin-Khán got up hastily from his bed, seized his *poshteen*, took a hurried glance at his revolver, and rushed headlong from the room. Whilst Nassir-Khán was relating to Zamaan-Bek the details of the projected attack on us, I summoned the sergeant of Cossacks and some of his men, and having opened the leathern bags containing the money, divided it off into 10 parts, giving to each man a part. The sum thus dealt with amounted to about 1,000 rupees in Bukhárán silver coin. I kept with me about 400 rupees more in Afghán silver.

Whilst I was engaged in this operation, Mosin-Khán entered the room, and asked me to give him some money.

On my enquiring why he did so, he nervously replied: "I want to give it to the soldiers of the Afghán guard. They wish to attack you, and so it will be best to give them some money."

"But yesterday you assured me there was no danger," said I to Mosin-Khán. "But, Doctor-*Sáhib*, you see this is no ordinary time. What was impossible yesterday is perfectly possible to-day. Don't forget that you are in Afghánistán."

Now before Mosin-Khán had asked me for any money, it had entered my head to offer a certain sum to the mutineers. I therefore no longer opposed what he demanded; indeed, there was no time to do so.

"How much do you require,"? I asked. "Give me 300 rupees" was his answer.

I then gave him 400 rupees, with an order that he was not to give it to the traitors all at once, but to offer them first of all a less amount, say 200 rupees. I also gave him general instructions as to making the best terms he could with them.

I had not succeeded in counting out the 400 rupees before Nassir-Khán rushed into the room and announced that the Afgháns had broken through the sentry who was placed at the gate which led from the outer court-yard to the centre one, and that they had reached the gates separating the corridor of our quarters from the court-yard. He further stated that they had got possession of our riding and pack-horses. Our situation seemed now to be very critical. Provided the attacking party were to consist of only 60 men, our 12 Cossacks, armed with 12 Berdan rifles, would be quite sufficient to engage them;* but I did not wish to proceed to extremities until the very last moment. At the particular time it was the more necessary to avoid doing so, seeing that the whole city was filled with soldiers, who were robbing everybody and everything they could. The sound of rifle-volleys would be sure to attract crowds of idlers, and it was quite certain that they would join the number of those who were desirous of attacking us. Thus, the number of people whom we should have to engage might grow to immeasurable proportions. In this way the "gruel might boil over, and we should then not be able to eat it with a spoon." Under such circumstances I decided upon coming to terms with the raiders by bribing them off.

* There were at Kábul several Afghán regiments armed with breech-loaders, but those in the *Chahár-Wiláyat* were equipped with muzzle-loaders only.—*Author*.

Having received the stipulated sum, Mosin-Khán, accompanied by Nassir-Khán, Muhammad-Din-Khán, and several of our servants issued forth from the inner court-yard. As they were so long in coming back, and as I was weary of waiting, I went out of our room into the inner court-yard. Beyond the outer wall proceeded noise and disorderly shouts. Occasionally I could hear Mosin-Khán's indistinct expostulation, but his voice seemed to be almost drowned amidst the shouting of the crowd. All at once the night air resounded with the report of two shots, and bullets whistled through the gnarled branches of the *chinar* trees. Something unexplained and apparently very dangerous was taking place behind the wall. By degrees, however, the noise ceased, the sound of the voices died away, and then Mosin-Khán came to me to say that the mutineers had agreed to come to terms for the sum of 400 rupees.

From what Nassir-Khán told me it seems that immediately the party with the money made their appearance, two Afgháns of the guard fired at Mosin-Khán; but as they did so, the commander of the guard struck the weapons on the butt, and the bullets flew over Mosin-Khán's head, whereupon the commander of the guard began to urge the soldiers not to do anything dishonourable by killing the Russians. The answer to this advice was: "What sort of counsel is this? Away with him! let us advance." The commander of the guard hereupon received some cuffs from his subordinates, but he still continued to beg them to desist from their senseless intention.* "It will be better," said he, "to take from the Russians their money and to leave them alone. Of what use will it be to you to kill them; although they are *Káfirs*, they are nevertheless our guests." At this juncture Mosin-Khán offered to treat with them for a certain sum of money, whereupon the soldiers demanded 2,000 rupees. Mosin-Khán then offered them 200, but they would not hear of it. Mosin-Khán now raised his offer to 300 rupees, beyond which he said he would not advance a single *cheka*. The noise thereupon was renewed, the soldiers declaring that they could not consent to so trifling an amount, and from threats they proceeded to action. And now Mosin-Khán thought of the following stratagem, which thoroughly succeeded. Having stated that the Russians had not more than 300 rupees, he observed that to this amount he could add 30 rupees of his own, and that he would give it for the benefit of the soldiers. He then asked Muhammad-Din-Khán and myself to make up the balance between us. In this way he pretended to raise the total amount up to 400 rupees; but, as we knew, you had already given him precisely that sum. But still the soldiers would not agree to the offer, and said they would break in the door. Then the commander of the guard again began to argue with them, saying, "Of what use is it your plundering the Russians when they offer to give you all they have? But have a care! If you really wish to kill them, you may not perhaps succeed, seeing that behind the walls there are 12 armed men, whose weapons can give forth 20 shots during the time that yours can only fire one. Think well of what you are doing . . . ; you will find it best to take the money."

* Nassir-Khán expressed the opinion that this cool-headed commander of the guard saved the whole affair; for if to the abuse he had answered with abuse, and to the blow with another, blood would certainly have been shed.—*Author*.

Mosin-Khán now began to persuade the mutinous soldiery to spare the Russians. "Better kill me," he said, "but do not interfere with our guests." He then even began to weep. Muhammad-Din-Khán also spoke to the same effect. He, moreover, threatened the rebels with punishment on behalf of the recently elected Amir. The simple-minded soldiers were thus talked into agreeing to take the sum which had been offered them. They really believed that we had no more money. Moreover, the prospect of a closer acquaintance with our Berdans considerably cooled their warlike ardour. As soon as the money had been made over to the soldiers, and they had divided it amongst them, I demanded that all our horses should be brought into the inner court-yard. Nassir-Khán went to convey this demand to the Afgháns, but returned almost immediately, saying that they would not allow the animals to be removed from the outer court-yard, their reason for refusing being that no further danger threatened either ourselves or our property. But as I had but a poor opinion of native custodians, I adhered to my demand.

"Leave the horses in the outer court-yard, Doctor-Sáhib," said Mosin-Khán to me; "for if the soldiers have promised to restore them, they will carry out their promises. If, on the contrary, they wish to do you any injury, it will not matter where the horses are. You can do nothing against such a lot of men, who can at least starve you out, if they desire to do so."

I still thought otherwise, and I reflected that, if the worst came to the worst, we could break down a portion of the wall, and having mounted our horses could save ourselves by flight. I therefore again gave the order that the horses were to be brought inside at any cost. But my instructions remained a dead letter, for, after a lapse of from 15 to 20 minutes, Nassir-Khán reappeared without having effected the desired result. I now became almost beside myself with anger, and I said many unpleasant things to Mosin-Khán and to Nassir-Khán, reproaching them with folly and with undue haste in having given the money to the Afgháns.

"You should not have given it to them before they had restored the horses," I angrily observed. Of course, when I said this, I forgot that for this turn in affairs I was the sole responsible person, because I had foolishly left the horses in the outer court-yard. Had they been placed in the inner court-yard in the first instance, in all probability we should not have found ourselves in such a difficult position. By degrees the matter cleared itself up, for the horses were brought in after all, and then I breathed more freely.

One battalion of our Turkistán Rifles would be quite sufficient to reduce to dust the entire town and the "terrible" fort of Takhtapul! But what could 10 Cossacks do? Against our will we had had to pay. . . . But it was to be feared that such payments were not yet over. It might happen that another band of plunderers would also demand a ransom. Where, then, would there be an end to such payments? We had not more than 1,000 *roubles* of Government money, and Zamaan-Bek and I had another 400 *roubles* between us. It might so happen, therefore, that at last we should have nothing left wherewith to pay. It thus became still more apparent that we must at once quit Afghánistán. This I decided to do.

Accordingly at 6 A.M. the next morning I sent to the *Luináb* a letter written by Zamaan-Bek, in which I demanded from him a suitable escort to accompany us to the Amu-Daria.

“If you do not accede to this demand,” ran the letter, “and do not return an answer by 10 o’clock to-day, I will leave the place without an escort. Should any evil befall us, both the Afghán government and you, the *Luináb*, Khush-Dil-Khán, in particular, will be held responsible by Russia. The Russian government will not delay to take the necessary measures to secure the safety of its subjects and of its envoys within the limits of Afghánistán.” This letter Mirza-Muhammad-Din offered to deliver, and the *kháusamah*, Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh, also promised to tell his master about what had happened to us during the previous night. Mosin-Khán, too, informed me that he was about to go to the *Luináb*, and so all our Afghán protectors left us, and we remained alone.

At 8 o’clock that morning rumours of the riots made by the Afghán soldiery on the previous night reached most improbable dimensions. Thus it was asserted that 200 of the *Luináb*’s personal escort had attacked his residence, plundered him of everything, and then decamped with their booty to Takhtapul. After this the *Luináb* was said to have hidden himself, but his whereabouts had not yet become known. It was also stated that Sirdár Faiz-Muhammad-Khán had been plundered, and some said he had been killed.

Up to this particular time neither Muhammad-Din-Khán, nor Mosin-Khán, nor Muhammad-Tásh had yet returned to me, and I therefore had doubts as to whether my letter had reached its addressee or not. In any case I kept the horses ready saddled and the Cossacks under arms, four men being constantly on sentry duty.

Mosin-Khán returned after 8 o’clock, but to all my questions he returned evasive answers. About the *Luináb* he did not say a word in spite of my enquiries, but it was evident that he had not seen him. In the name, however, of the *Luináb*, he announced that the time for our departure from Mazár-i-Sharif had been arranged for 10 o’clock that night. I protested against such a late hour, for it seemed to me more practicable to get away from the place during the day. For then, thought I, every danger which could threaten us would be seen the more clearly, whilst at night even a trifling alarm might be taken for a serious danger. But Mosin-Khán held to his own opinion. “It will be dangerous to leave in the day,” he repeated, “whilst at night we can get away from the city unperceived. Now such a time has set in that even I, an Afghán, can only appear at great risk in the streets of the city.”

Of course against such a reason there was no use my bringing anything forward, and so I had to agree with Mosin-Khán on this occasion.

“Don’t be uneasy, Doctor-*Sáhib*,” continued he, “for we will get you out of the place in safety. Have confidence in me, for as long as I live not the slightest danger threatens you. If, however, I am killed, I do not know what will befall you.”

But I was very sceptical regarding Mosin-Khán’s assurances, because I was of opinion that danger threatened him quite as much as it did us. Indeed, whilst they, under the worst circumstances, could only rob us of

everything we possessed, they were much more likely to kill him outright. They had, in fact, told us that a portion of the Afghán guard attached to our quarters was very irritated with Mosin-Khán on account of his harsh demeanour towards them, and of course a report of this kind was not altogether destitute of foundation. And here I must observe that not only Mosin Khán, but all Afghán officials, whether military or civil, are very harsh towards their subordinates. I was myself a witness as to how the *Kamnáb*, Mirza-Muhammad-Hassan-Khán, one of the most mild and humane of Afghán military chiefs, would beat his subordinates with his own hand. It was clear, therefore, that Afghán soldiers could not entertain tender feelings towards their chiefs, and that they would, when the chance presented itself, deal with them in their own way; a knife thrust in the side, and there was an end of the business.

After Mosin-Khán's return, they informed me of the arrival of Sirdár Abdulla-Khán. I expected that he would come to my room, but he confined his visit to a stay of a few minutes' duration in the outer court-yard, talking to the Afghán guard, and thanking the soldiers for their faithful service (?) and for the self-denial (!) with which they defended the "Doctor-Sáhib." He further promised them a money reward, and after this he went off to Takhtapul. His visit to that place was for the express purpose of bringing to Mazár-i-Sharif Muhammad-Isa-Khán, the newly elected ruler of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*.

At 9 o'clock Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán, the deceased Amír's cousin, came to me. He is a small and very spare man with a very expressive countenance. It was evident from his appearance that he had not slept for several nights in succession, for round his eyes were traceable dark rings; his eye-lids too were swollen, and his eyes had a glass-like glaze. His age appeared to be about 28. He had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the troops stationed in the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, and during Shir-Ali's lifetime he was commander of the Amír's personal escort.

After the usual interchange of salutations, the Sirdár informed me that he had received my letter addressed to the *Luináb*, and that its content had pained them all very much.

"We did not suppose that anything of the kind could happen to, or that at such a time you should suppose we could forget even the existence of, "our dear guests." The Amír's death, the ceremonies attending his burial,* the election of a new Amír had quite taken up our thoughts. I do not wish to justify ourselves, for we are to blame in that you should have experienced such unpleasantness. But now no one will lift a finger against you. All the soldiers have promised not to interfere with you in any way."

He then informed me that Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán had been elected Amír of Afghánistán, and his son, Muhammad-Isa-Khán, was chosen to be the ruler of Afghán-Turkistán.

At the close of our short conversation, Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán declared that he would do all in his power to escort us out of

* The Amír Shir-Ali's body received, as though in secret, a very modest burial. His tomb lies near that of the saint whose place of sepulchre gives its name to the city. On the tomb has been placed a marble slab with the inscription—"Here lie the ashes of Shir-Ali-Khán, Amír of Afghánistán."—*Author*.

the city safely and "with honour." On my enquiring what time had been fixed for our departure, he indicated the same night, *i.e.*, "2 or 3 hours after the sun had set." When I asked why our departure from Mazár-i-Sharif had been arranged for the night, he answered that it would be better so. I then expressed a doubt on the subject, whereupon he remarked, "Although there now exists recognised authority, order is far from being re-established, so that unpleasantness is to be apprehended, should troops be met with on the road." It was evident that the Sirdár had contradicted himself, for, only a short time before, he had said that the soldiers had given a promise not to touch us, and now he admitted that there was apprehension lest the same persons should cause us some unpleasantness. The Sirdár's contradictory statement was the best testimony as to the degree of intensity of the dread inspired by the actions of the riotous soldiery. It was also a clear proof that over the Afghán authorities there hung at the unbridled will of these rioters a veritable sword of Damocles. I had however, of course, to consent to Naik-Muhammad-Khán's arrangements relative to the time fixed for our departure from the city. After this he took his leave, promising that he would come again that evening before we set out on our journey.

Soon afterwards Mirza-Muhammad-Din-Khán returned, stating that he had found out where the *Luináb* Khush-Dil-Khán was, *viz.*, in the house of Naik-Muhammad-Khán, where also was Muhammad-Háshim-Khán. On receipt of my letter, the *Luináb* had expressed a wish to reply to it; but Naik-Muhammad-Khán decided to speak to me in person as far as might be necessary, and so he immediately came to me for the purpose. The *Luináb* and Muhammad-Háshim-Khán had been arrested.

Meanwhile in the city there almost momentarily resounded gunshots, and sometimes volleys. It was painful for us to sit within the four walls of our quarters when all around there were looming the shadows of violence and of death. It is true that the commander of the Afghán guard assured me that now we had nothing to apprehend, as he would protect us from all plunderers; but after the occurrences of the previous night, I did not place much credence on his words.

About 11 o'clock there came to me a Háji of the Avshár tribe who had been a patient of mine. He had long recovered of his illness, but he had since been in the habit of visiting me from time to time. After the usual interchange of salutations, he began to pacify me by giving the assurance that nothing now threatened my personal safety, for that if, in the city, great disorder had taken place, such was ordinarily the case in Afghánistán on the death of an Amír and until his successor had been chosen.

He then repeated several times: "Now no one will lift a finger against you." He sat with me for some minutes, talking the while great rubbish. He then took his departure, having received the powders which I had prepared for him; for, although at this particular time he was in good health, he had had jaundice (*icterus*), and so on the occasion of every visit he would ask me to give him some medicine, adding "the Doctor-*Sáhib* is going to leave us to-day."

At this time Zamaan-Bek was suffering from a paroxysm of remittent fever—a fact which was not, perhaps, to be wondered at. I myself

had a bad headache, and I was therefore apprehensive of a like attack, especially as it was the third day since the former attack had left me. That morning, however, I had taken 10 grains of muriate of quinine, a dose which would, to a certain extent, guarantee me from a renewal of the paroxysm. As I had scarcely slept at all for two nights, I intended to make up for the deficiency of rest on that occasion, but sleep proved to be an irreconcilable enemy. It is said that soldiers sometimes sleep with bullets flying all about them. Now, of course, there is much in the force of habit, but I very likely should not have slept under any such circumstances.

Here Nassir-Khán came to me to say that the horses would this day have to remain hungry, because he had only managed to pick up a small quantity of *saman* (chopped maize stalks). This surprising man had endeavoured to procure some barley, but a sad misfortune had befallen him in his attempt to do so. He had placed a sack of it on an ass's back, and was leading the animal along, when he met a body of Afghán soldiers.

"What art thou carrying?" gruffly cried out one of the soldiers.

"Barley, *Sáhib*," meekly answered Nassir-Khán.

"For whom and whither?"

"The Doctor-*Sáhib* and to his quarters."

The Afghán then seized the ass by one of its long ears, and dragged it to one side of the road.

"*Sáhib*, don't drag the animal in that direction; this is the way I want to go," exclaimed Nassir-Khán.

He had, however, to quickly hold his tongue, for the soldiers began to belabour him with the butt ends of their muskets.

He managed to buy somewhere or another a little bread for the Cossacks, but he could get neither a sheep, nor a fowl, nor milk, nor butter. At 6 o'clock that evening the ever-present Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh prepared for us a *pilau*. If he had not done so, we should have had to pass another day on the food of St. Anthony. Involuntarily the thought occurred to us regarding what they were doing in Russia at this time. There during the same season, even in the poorest houses, and amongst the most humble families, there was an abundance of everything to eat and drink, seeing it was Saturday in Shrove Week. There they would have pancakes and dainties of every kind, but with us the season of Lent had apparently begun.

Having nothing else to do, I went for about the hundredth time to look at the horses. Two days short commons had apparently had no effect on them; for, during our stay at Mazár-i-Sharif, they had become so fat and lusty, that they could stand a certain amount of starvation without showing its effects.

Meanwhile there was positively nothing to be done, and the having to wait for our departure was especially wearisome. I never hoped to get away from the place in safety in spite of the assurances that there was no danger on the part of the few Afgháns who still shewed that they had any friendship for us left. It may be that I discredited their statements, because they were so profuse. Meanwhile fresh rumours of civil war continued to reach my ears. Thus it was said that the

Luináb was being sent under a guard to Takhtapul, where he was going to be kept in close confinement, whilst his house was given over to pillage.

At 2-30 p. m. gun-shots were again heard.

Soon afterwards cannons were fired off just outside the very walls of our quarters, and in the direction of the city an undefined sort of noise and crying resounded.

Just at this time I had settled myself down to drink tea, but, on hearing some shots fired, I rushed to the door. At the wall I saw the Cossacks with their rifles at the "ready," and their eyes flashing like hot coals. "What sort of people are these Afgháns," I jokingly observed to the Cossacks; "they will not allow one to drink one's tea in peace!" This joke evidently encouraged the Cossacks, for some of them smiled.

"*Dar-khána babashad, dar-khána babashad, Doctor-Sáhib!*" shouted out Nassir-Khán, though I had scarcely left the door. He was standing with a group of his own people at the gate leading from the inner court-yard into the one beyond. It now seemed to me that the eyes of his men flashed in the same way as did those of the Cossacks.

"What is going on there?" enquired I of Mosin-Khán in Russian, forgetting, for the moment, that he could not understand a single word I said.

In answer to my exclamation, he only waved his hand repeatedly in the direction of my room.

I slowly withdrew, not knowing what was going on outside the walls of our quarters.

Some minutes afterwards it was reported that the *Luináb's* house was being plundered of everything it contained, even to the matting on the floors, as Muhammad-Tásh informed us.

"It is nothing; don't be alarmed," cried out one of the Afghán sentries, "they are plundering the *Luináb's* house!"

The musket shots which I had heard at 2 p.m. came from the firing of two distinct bands of plunderers, for both Herát and Kábul cavalry troopers, after pillaging the *Luináb's* quarters, began to quarrel amongst themselves for the spoil, and so there arose a general fight. At the same time, too, the house of the *Mustafa*, or collector of taxes, was also given over to pillage.

Hearing that a fresh outburst of civil war had taken place, Naik-Muhammad-Khán ordered a royal salute to be fired from the city walls as a token that a new Amír had been chosen, and that authority had been re-established. He went out, too, himself to the cavalry soldiers, who scattered in every direction as soon as he appeared.

He also sent criers through the city with orders that they were to ride through all the streets and bazaars, and announce that supreme authority had been re-established in the country, and that now all pillagers and rioters who were caught would be at once executed.

Meanwhile I had begun to prepare to leave the place. Seeing my 16 *yák-dáns* Mosin-Khán disapprovingly shook his head.

“Leave these here, Doctor-Sáhib,” he said, “and we will send them to you afterwards quite safely.” “How can I leave them here?” I returned, “seeing that they contain everything that is necessary to me.”

“The things you can take with you,” reiterated Mosin-Khán. “I only speak of the *yak-dáns*.”

“Why should I leave the boxes, and where then am I to put the things?” cried I, disagreeing with the proposition made. “You must leave the boxes, because in most people that we meet the suspicion will be aroused that you are carrying treasure. The things you can put in ordinary sacks or *khorejums*,” was Mosin-Khán’s answer.

Muhammad-Din-Khán here coincided with the views expressed by Mosin-Khán.

“Do you advise this of yourselves, or did Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán tell you to convey it to me?” I enquired.

“No; the Sirdár hasn’t said a word about it; we speak for ourselves” was their answer.

“Well, under these circumstances, I consider it inconvenient to leave the *yak-dáns* here,” said I in conclusion of the conversation.

I nevertheless commissioned Muhammad-Din-Khán to procure the required number of sacks and of *khorejums* so as to be prepared for all eventualities.

But I resolved not to leave the boxes at Mazár-i-Sharif without a guarantee from Naik-Muhammad-Khán.

The Commander of the Afghán guard now came to me with a long story about the occurrences of the previous night. Of course, he did not forget [he would not have been a pure Heráti if he had] to boast and to sing the praises of his own exploits in the service of the “Doctor-Sáhib.” As it was evident that he was seeking for a reward at my hands, I resolved to give him something in remembrance of me, and irrespective of his share of the sum which had been made over to his mutinous soldiers. Upon this Mosin-Khán and Mirza-Muhammad-Din-Khán did not lose the opportunity of saying something on their own behalf. I of course recognised that they had done me an undoubted service, but I refrained on this occasion from rewarding them for what they had done. I therefore only gave Muhammad-Din-Khán some ounces of essence of iodine, of which I had previously given him a supply for the cure of his muscular rheumatism; and to Mosin-Khán I gave a small quantity of quinine.

At 6 P.M. Sirdár Muhammad-Tair-Khán, Háshim-Khán’s youngest brother, came to see me. His conversation was opened with some comforting information to the effect that Sirdár Naik-Muhammad had used every endeavour so as to insure our reaching the Afghán frontier in safety.

“He has,” he said, “appointed for your escort the most trusted of his adherents men who will not betray you on any account. It is now the general wish on the part of the several members of the Amir’s family that you should be escorted from here safely and with honour.”

He then offered me, in the name of the deceased Amír, gifts, or, to speak more correctly, fees for my attendance on Shir-Ali. These fees took the form of two Kashmir shawls and of two bags of silver. On my refusing to accept them, the Sirdár insisted on my doing so.

At length, the matter was compromised by my taking the shawls, but by my refusing altogether to take the money.

I told the Sirdár of the advice given to me by Mosin-Khán about exchanging the *yák-dáns* for *khorjums*, and he agreed with the counsel which had been offered me, saying "it would certainly be dangerous to take such a large number of boxes."

Our conversation was then continued for some time, after which the Sirdár arose, shook me by the hand, expressed himself warmly with regard to his good wishes for our journey, and then left the room.

Immediately afterwards I sent Mirza-Muhammad-Din-Khán for the sacks, and made the final preparations for the road.

CHAPTER IX.

DEPARTURE FROM MAZÁR-I-SHARIF.

Waiting for *khoryjums*—Mirza-Muhammad-Din-Khán—Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh, my future correspondent—Safety of the medicines and loss of the pack-transport—Indisposition to lose one's head in Afghánistán—Arrival of Sirdar Naik-Muhammad-Khán—The undesirable travelling companion—Mosin-Khán's sensitiveness—News from the Anglo-Afghán theatre of war—The yaboo which fell—Passing through the city—Taking leave of the Sirdár—Dread of raiders—Atmospheric disturbances—A sandstorm—What's to be done?—Mosin-Khán and the Uzbaks—At Siáh-Gird—Two days without food—Crossing the desert—The Bukhárán envoys earch for me—On the bank of the Amu—Taking leave of Mosin-Khán—Retrospective glance at our past in Afghánistán—On this side of the Amu.

ON the evening of that memorable day on which I had experienced such strong sensations, *i.e.*, on the 10th (22nd) February, the hands of the watch pointed to 8 o'clock, and neither *khoryjums* nor sacks had been brought. At length Mirza-Muhammad-Din-Khán came to say that he could get neither the one nor the other. What, then, was to be done? Nevertheless, I could not but thank him for all his former and present attention, and for his various services towards us. I therefore gave him as a token of acknowledgment a silver watch which he took away in triumph, but at the same time with evident confusion.

"I thank you, Doctor-*Sáhib*, very much for your gift," he said with agitation, "but I must add that if I have shewn you and your fellow-countrymen any sort of service, it is not because I expected from you any kind of reward. You have been our dear guests, and my duty has been to take care that your stay with us should be as comfortable as possible."

I must confess that I was somewhat abashed by what had fallen from the lips of the respected *Mirza*. The fact was that we, during the whole of the time we had passed at Mazár-i-Sharif, had, as a rule, treated this man in an unceremonious fashion, and had looked on him as a servant. He had, in short, heard from us the expression of our wishes only in the form of orders, such as, "Bring this," "Go there," "See that the horses have sufficient to eat, and that the men have enough food," "See that the bath water is hot," "See that the stable litter is removed from the court-yard," &c. None of us had ever thought of his feelings, or had noticed his assiduous attention. I now only learnt how much this excellent man had really done for us in a disinterested way. He had shewn us the greatest kindness of all in being the first to go to the *Lúndáb* to point out to him the danger to be apprehended by our remaining longer at Mazár-i-Sharif, and he had asked that we should be allowed to depart from the place as quickly as possible. He had been the most active person in coming to terms with our night plunderers, and it was he who had taken my letter to the *Lúndáb*, and that too at a time when pillage and anarchy were at their greatest height in the city. He had busied himself about getting *khoryjums* for us; and if he had not procured them, it signified that they were really nowhere to be

had. I am ready to forgive the Wazir for having left us such a useful *Mujo-Domo*, but I hold that the Wazir was to blame in that we had treated his kinsman, Muhammad-Diu-Khán, so badly, because we, having entertained such unfavourable opinions of the Wazir, had come to look upon his tall, stooping, and always muffled up kinsman in a similar light. I now very much regretted that I had made a mistake.

I then rewarded Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh, who had so often put before us such excellent *pilans* and such surpassing *kabábs*. Notwithstanding that on the 10th (22nd) February all the shops in the city were closed, he had contrived to prepare for us an excellent *pilan*, which at any other time we should have recognised as of first rate quality, but which, under the particular circumstances, we left almost untouched.

I gave Muhammad-Tásh two silken *khalats* and a silver beaker, and he was very pleased with his presents. In token of his appreciation, he offered to communicate to me from time to time, all that passed in the *Chahár-Wiláyat* after our departure from Afghánistán. I, of course, accepted this offer with satisfaction, and we made the following arrangement with regard to the method of our correspondence. He was to put his letters to me in a cover addressed to the *Bek* of Shirábád, who would forward the inner cover either to myself or to Zamaan-Bek. The *Bek* of Shirábád would thus perform the office of commissioner between Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh and myself. If all this could be managed, the results would be good; for thus we should, after our departure from Afghánistán, receive trustworthy information regarding events in Afghán-Turkistán, and we should thus, too, have it in our power to work our relations with the Afghán government not through official personages only, if it were decided to continue to receive communications of the kind at Táshkand after events had become more developed.*

I was still without *khoryjums*, and so we had to throw away the *yák-dáns*, and a good quantity of their contents. I made the following arrangements for loading some of the things in a pair of *khoryjums* with which I had previously provided myself. The dispensary, or rather such portion of it as was indispensable, was packed in one of the government *khoryjums*, and the greater portion of the other medicines had to be thrown away. All the quinine was, of course, taken, and likewise the surgical instruments. It was a pity to have to throw away one's own things, such as books, medicine chest, &c.; but what was to be done? The Afghán authorities had stated that it would be dangerous to travel with *yák-dáns*. But all at once the veil fell from my eyes. Why not make *khoryjums* out of the palliasses and the felts? This could be done in a few minutes. In that case nearly everything could be saved. All therefore

* Mirza-Muhammad-Tásh very faithfully carried out his promise, for during 1879 he wrote me several letters. As arranged between us, he sent his communications to the *Bek* of Shirábád in the full assurance, no doubt, that I should receive them in due course. But the double-faced *Bek* forwarded the covers addressed to me at Bukhára to the Amir, and this too on several occasions. Moreover, the *Bek* did not content himself with intercepting letters addressed to me. After having so dealt with three or four letters, he sent word to Ghulám-Haidar-Khán, the *Naib* of Mazár-i-Sharif, regarding the correspondence that was going on between Muhammad-Tásh and myself. The result of this information was that Muhammad-Tásh was thrown into prison and his property was confiscated. But when he managed to get free, he once more found an opportunity of showing his devotion to the Russians.—*Author*.

that could be packed in them was so packed. The dispensary remained intact in the *yák-dáns*, but all the spare crockery and kitchen utensils, all the bandaging materials, and the cumbersome furniture had to be left behind. So too were the tents. With great regret had I to leave behind me the collection which I had made of native medical books. In the sorting out and stowing away of the various articles much time was taken up. Now we had altogether only three pairs of *yák-dáns*, and this number was far from being as dangerous as eight pairs.

It was by this time past 9 P.M., and the reader will readily understand with what impatience I awaited the arrival of Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán and his promised escort. He had stated that he would himself see us safely beyond the limits of the city, and he had also said that he would let us know when we could start, so that I had not yet begun to load the baggage animals. "The expectation of death is worse than death itself," said some Arab poet; and another has said that "suspense scorches man worse than fire itself."

About 10 o'clock, however, Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán came, and with him was the brother of the *Kamnáb*, Muhammad-Hassan-Khán; but I do not remember his name. They were accompanied by several other persons, who were quite unknown to me even by sight.

Some moments afterwards there entered my room my old acquaintance Muhammad-Sháh-Khán (*Sári-Ján*). I then learnt that he had been directed to accompany me to the Amu-Daria.

I must admit that it was not altogether "to my taste" that this man should have been appointed as my guide. I never much fancied him, but now his crafty expression of countenance produced on me a positively disagreeable impression. Besides which I had with him some old scores. I therefore much wished to avoid travelling with him in some way or another, but in all instances it does not do, and it is even dangerous to put one's wishes into practice.

As he entered the room, his greedy eye was cast on the 16 boxes that were standing like a wall. I looked at him, and nodded my head to him as to an old acquaintance. He smiled, but his smile appeared to me to indicate treachery. Wishing to gain over this dangerous man (and events corroborated this opinion of him) to my own ends, I began to praise before Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán, *Sári-Ján's* services to me on a former occasion.

"It is very agreeable to me," said I, "to find that Muhammad-Sháh-Khán should have been included amongst the number of my companions on the road, for he is an old acquaintance of mine."

This praise of *Sári-Ján* touched *Mosin-Khán's* pride, for he remarked with an air of offended dignity: "I too shall accompany you to the Amu-Daria, and I am an older acquaintance of yours than *Sári-Ján* is."

"Good, upright *Mosin-Khán*. If thou only knew the real worth of my praise of *Sári-Ján* thou would'st not display such envy of him" was my inward soliloquy.

"Of course," I answered: "You, *Mosin-Khán*, are an older and better acquaintance of mine, and you know how much I value your friendship, and what you have done for me; but still I cannot be silent regarding *Sári-Ján's* good deeds on my behalf."

Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán here enquired if we were ready to start, upon which I answered that we had been awaiting intimation from him to the effect that we could begin to load the pack-animals. The loading now began, and the Sirdár sent mounted men in the direction of the city to ascertain whether the line of our route was sufficiently safe to traverse. He then informed me that we should be escorted to the Amu-Daria chiefly by Mosin-Khán's people, but also by certain of the most devoted of his own horse and foot-men, amongst the number of whom would be some men recruited from the local Uzbek population.

This announcement greatly surprised me, for it meant that the Sirdár was going to make his guests over to the protection of the members of a subject and persecuted tribe. It meant, too, that Uzbaks were esteemed as a surer support of Afghán authority in the *Chahár-Wiláyat* than the Afghán troops themselves. It further meant that the Commander-in-Chief of all the Afghán forces in the *Chahár-Wiláyat* was about to have recourse to those very Uzbaks whom the Afgháns so despise, and from whom the Afghán authorities had until so recently done their utmost to keep us. Later on it will be seen what priceless service those very Uzbaks rendered to me. But for them, in all probability, we should not have escaped destruction in the sandy waste on the occasion of our being overtaken by a sand-storm. But of this more hereafter.

It was a long time before the loading of the pack-animals was finished, and before the horsemen sent by the Sirdár towards the city returned. In the meanwhile our conversation with Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán did not get on well. I still had so imperfect a knowledge of the Persian language as to be unable to maintain an unaided conversation with the Sirdár; and Zamaan-Bek was never very talkative. Nevertheless, I exchanged with Naik-Muhammad a few sentences, which I think are sufficiently important to warrant my inserting their purport here. Amongst other things, the Sirdár asked me whether I was going to St. Petersburg? I replied that, after my return to Táshkand, I should very probably do so. Zamaan-Bek here explained to him that it was my intention to proceed to St. Petersburg for the purpose of perfecting myself in the medical sciences. Upon this, Sirdár Naik-Muhammad turned to me with the request that I would bear witness before the Russian Emperor of the friendship which Afghánistán would always nourish towards Russia, and that Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán desired nothing more than to continue the friendly relations with the Russian Government which his father had begun. He then asked me to convey to the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán how much he and the present Afghán Government hoped that the future relations between Russia and Afghánistán would be friendly. He concluded by begging that I would not attach too great an importance to the occurrences of the night of pillage.

"If," said the Sirdár, "you and your people did not, at a given time, enjoy complete safety on Afghán soil, it is only because there was for a brief period an interruption in the administration of the country, and in consequence of this there arose political disorders." He begged me to convey his *salaam* to the members of the Afghán

Mission at Táshkand, but he did not give me any letters for them. I then asked him if there was no news from either Táshkand or Kábul?

Naik-Muhammad's answer was, "From Táshkand there is no news, but from Kábul a letter has to-day been received from Sirdár Yakúb-Khán, in which he reports to the Amír-Sáhib* that the English have withdrawn from the Shutur-gardan Pass, and have retired on Jáji; but that here they have met with a defeat, since they have left several rifles in our hands. On the Jalálábád line, too, things are not going quite well with them; and in fact, generally speaking, they are losing many men and a large number of transport animals."

I at the time doubted the success of the Afgháns and the defeat of the English, but subsequently it appeared that all that the Sirdár had communicated to me was perfectly correct.

During the breaks in our conversation, Naik-Muhammad frequently and in a very low tone spoke with Mosin-Khán. Once I caught the words "Turk Rasala," and I noticed that, at the mention of these words, Mosin-Khán very energetically shook his head. After this Naik-Muhammad very inopportunistly entered into a conversation regarding General Stolaitoff's relations towards Mosin-Khán. Thus he related how angry the General had been with him at Siáh-Gird, and how he had threatened to write to the Amír-Sáhib regarding his inexact performance of his duty.

"What inexact performance of my duty?" said Mosin-Khán. "During the whole journey, I waited on the general like a simple soldier and not as an officer. The General constantly rode my horses. At night, in order that I might the better look after him, I lay outside the door of his tent, and this I did during the whole march. But at Siáh-Gird I did not pass the night at all, because I remained behind at Mazár-i-Sharif in order to attend to various private and necessary affairs. The General afterwards, and in forgetfulness of all my services, complained about me to the Amír."

It was very disagreeable to me that Mosin-Khán should have begun his story, and at such an inconvenient time. But, of course, I could not stop him, and so must hear him to the end. It was worse, too, when in the telling of it, he should constantly turn towards me with various questions and appeals for corroboration, and invitations to give my afterwards, opinion. I breathed more freely when his narrative passed on to more neutral ground.

It was now 11 p.m., and the night was dark. At length the horsemen who had been sent out towards the city returned, and the loading of the baggage animals had come to an end. We now all passed out of the court-yard, and Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán, wishing us a prosperous journey, road on ahead. After I had exchanged the usual salutations with the Cossacks, I said that we had before us a march not unattended with danger; and I reminded them that they were cool and cautious, and that I felt sure they would attentively listen to any orders that might be given them.

Turning to the non-commissioned officer, I said: "If during our march we should have to fight, I know that thou wilt perform the duty like a man."

* At this time news had not reached Kábul of Shir-Ali's death, and therefore Yakúb-Khán still reported to his father events that took place on the Anglo-Afghán frontier.—*Author.*

"I hear, sir," was the reply.

After we had all mounted our horses, and were preparing to ride out on to the high road, Mirza-Muhammad-Din came up to say that we had forgotten a *yáboo* in the inner court-yard. I called up the *caravan-báshi*, Nassir-Khán, and ordered him to bring out the animal which had been overlooked. He went immediately, and in a few moments returned, leading the animal, which was without a halter. The explanation of this circumstance was, that on his going back to the central court-yard, and trying to lead out therefrom the animal, two or three Afgháns of my late guard endeavoured to prevent his doing so, stating that I had given the *yáboo* to them. Nassir-Khán refused to believe this statement, and persisted in his efforts to lead the animal away, upon which the Afgháns set upon and began to beat him. He then, with a stroke of his knife, cut off the animal's halter, and dealt it at the same time a sharp blow with his whip. The *yáboo* hereupon rushed out of the court-yard, and galloped in our direction, followed by Nassir-Khán.

Soon after leaving our quarters, the road turned off to the right into a lane which was so narrow, that two horsemen riding abreast completely blocked the passage. We had hardly got into this lane, when a pack fell off, and had to be readjusted. In doing this, the drivers neglected to look after their own horses. Here it must be observed that all the pack as well as the riding horses were stallions, for in Central Asia it is not usual to castrate stallions. Being left to themselves, therefore, these rampageous and overfed beasts immediately began to fight. Two of them, after lashing out in every direction for about 10 minutes, threw their packs, and began to bite at each other. It was necessary, of course, to quiet the brutes in some way or another. Meanwhile, the extreme narrowness of the lane rendered this a very difficult operation. It was, moreover, as dark as the tomb. The shrill neighing of the horses, and the shouts of the drivers, resounded in the night air; and this, too, at a time and under circumstances in which the greatest quiet and caution were necessary! The *Luináb's* house was not a thousand paces off, and here there were from 200 to 300 tattered Afghán soldiers, most of whom were always hanging about. The uproar that had arisen might excite their curiosity and attract them to the spot. And then who knows what would happen? Jumbled up in a narrow lane, amidst a lot of fighting horses and fallen packs, we could neither move forward nor backward. Any plunderers might thus fire from the walls of the enclosures and houses at their option. Where had Sári-Jan gone at this moment? Seeing that he had disappeared, I ordered three Cossacks to hasten and render assistance to the drivers in their efforts to collect the loads and catch the fighting horses; but they could not make their way at all, because the two rampageous animals completely blocked the road. At length, with the united efforts of the Ural Cossacks and of the *Jigits* and drivers, the matter was arranged, the loads were again put up, and we continued our journey.

At every turn in the road a torch was stuck into the ground, and around it sat or stood groups of Uzbaks clutching their bludgeons. At almost every 100 or 200 paces were stuck up similar torches, round which sat or squatted small groups of Uzbaks, who also for the most part held staves of various kinds.

The road along which we were now riding was very tortuous and apparently deserted. It lay through the Uzbek quarters of the city, and its direction, judging by the ever altering position of the Polar Star, seemed to be constantly changing, leading now east, then north, and even bearing west.

After a ride of half an hour, and after numerous halts to readjust the packs, we came out into the high road, which leads to the Kábul gates of the city. Here Mosin-Khán advised me to order the Cossacks to carry their carbines in their hands, because this portion of the road was full of people, whilst at a distance of 2 *verst*s ($1\frac{1}{3}$ miles) beyond the gates was the camp of a Kábul cavalry regiment. At length we passed out of the city altogether, and immediately our route bore due north. We had scarcely got $\frac{1}{2}$ *verst* ($\frac{1}{3}$ mile) from the city gates when another pack fell to the ground. It was adjusted and readjusted during the next $\frac{1}{2}$ *verst* ($\frac{1}{3}$ mile), when it fell once more. This made me angry, because, before setting out, I had given Nassir-Khán special orders to load the animals as securely as possible, looking to the dangerous character of our night journey. But now the loads began to drop at nearly every step, causing us to make almost momentary halts. It then became apparent that certain of the loads were disproportionately large, and that in the rear two spare pack horses were being led. It was provoking, but there was now no help for it. Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán, who had been riding all this time in front of us, now drew up, and patiently waited for the pack-animals to file past.

At 5 *verst*s ($3\frac{1}{3}$ miles) from the city walls the Sirdár took final leave of us, and having wished us a prosperous journey, returned with his retinue to Mazár-i-Sharif.

Then, escorted by Mosin-Khán's horsemen and a small number of Uzbaks, we turned due west. Sári-Ján, who from the moment of our leaving our quarters at Mazár-i-Sharif had disappeared, was still absent, and so I hastened to enquire of Mosin-Khán where he was?

"Sári-Ján is a great rogue," answered Mosin-Khán, "and on my return to Mazár-i-Sharif I will pay him out in my own way."

He was so enraged at Sári-Ján's behaviour on this occasion that he used a much more vigorous expression than I have noted here.

"This worthless person has probably gone to Takhtapul," continued Mosin-Khán.

Sári-Ján's disappearance and Mosin-Khán's answer made me very pensive, for the former might collect at Takhtapul a band of hair-brained ruffians of the same kidney as himself, and start in pursuit of us in order to gain some plunder. Although we were now in the open country, and could deal more effectually with raiders than inside the four walls of a mud enclosure and in the centre of a populous city, still it would be uncertain how the matter might end if it came to fighting; for, whilst we could only muster 12 breech-loaders, those attacking us might number several hundreds of other weapons. It would not, therefore, do to brave it out, and so it was necessary to move with all expedition. Mosin-Khán constantly called out to the drivers and Uzbaks *Oiku, Oiku! Haida! Haidin!* (Go on! Go on! quicken the pace!) Even the pack-animals went at a trot, whilst my "long-eared philosopher" stepped out gaily. As soon as ever the animals began to slacken

their pace, Mosin-Khán would again call out "Haidin, &c." Thus we advanced for an hour together.

We had by this time reached the open steppe country, and had struck the well-beaten Pátta-Guzár road, which bears due north. The distance from Mazár-i-Sharif was approximately 15 *vershs* (10 miles), and so we here somewhat slackened the pace, so as to allow the poor animals to take a little rest. It was now 12 P.M., and the constellation of the Little Bear had already assumed a perfectly horizontal position. The tract now lay over a salt and sandy steppe. There reigned an unusual stillness in the air, for nothing was stirring in any direction. All at once there arose from the west such a piercing blast that even my fur-coat was penetrated by it. This blast suddenly increased in intensity, until my left side, arm, and leg became benumbed from the action of this icy cold. In a few minutes the same wind suddenly died away, giving place to a current of air from the east. This wind was sultry and seemed to scorch my body, which had so recently been benumbed with the cold. After becoming almost suffocating, this wind too died away in a few minutes, and the atmosphere again became still. Up to that moment I had never seen any similar atmospheric phenomenon, for almost at one and the same time there blew from two opposite quarters winds of such a vastly different temperature. I could not comprehend what this atmospheric contest portended. Half an hour after this we rode on in silence.

Meanwhile the western horizon gradually began to get enveloped in a mist, which rapidly covered the greater portion of the heavens. There arose, too, a fresh westerly breeze; but this was far from being as cold as that which had blown $\frac{3}{4}$ hours before. This wind gradually increased in force, and the mist towards the west became denser and denser. It very soon became apparent that what I had supposed was mist was really very fine particles of sand borne along by the wind. As I was looking at the cloud, Zamaan-Bek put forward the idea that the sand was advancing in our direction, and the suggestion was too accurately justified, for the sand columns became denser and denser until they obscured the entire horizon. Whilst the stars in the zenith were but dimly discernible, the Polar Star was no longer visible.

By this time we were getting into deeper and deeper sand. The wind, too, kept on increasing in force, and in half an hour's time a regular sand-storm was raging. A violent hurricane now swept over an entire sea of sand, the force of the wind being such as to loosen the caps on our heads. We could not distinguish anything five paces off; indeed, in order to see at all, one could only take momentary glances, because of the salt particles of sand that kept driving into our eyes. With these particles, small stones were also lifted by the wind.

To continue our journey in such weather was almost impossible, for we might easily get off the track and entirely lose our way. Were we to get separated, we might get lost altogether, because the darkness was so terrible as to make it almost impossible to distinguish anything at all. It is needless to say that the pack-animals were soon moving along in the most irregular fashion, some being in front, others, lagging behind, although I had given strict orders to the drivers not to get separated from each other, but to keep as close to one another as they possibly

could. We could only ascertain each other's position by the sound of the voice ; and even then the roar of the tempest, like that of the raging sea, almost drowned our shouts.

I now proposed to Mosin-Khán that we should halt, and, having hurried to unload the packs, that we should form of them and of the baggage animals a sort of square, wherein which we could await the end, or at any rate the lulling, of the storm.

"God be with you! What are you saying," exclaimed Mosin-Khán. "We should rather take advantage of such a blessing, for it is evident that God is helping us. If we are pursued, such pursuit will now be arrested by this storm, and indeed it may be altogether abandoned. We should not, however, halt where we are, but rather continue our journey, and that too as fast as we possibly can."

"Listen, Mosin-Khán," I returned. "Do you seriously speak of our being pursued by a band of marauding soldiers? If so, I do not know that it would be worse than this storm!"

"Eh, Doctor-Sáhib? You do not know our people. This is Afghánistán! I myself am an Afghán, and yet I must tell you the truth about my own countrymen. I therefore say to you, 'Don't think of remaining in the middle of the stage, but continue moving unceasingly. Siáh-Gird is near at hand, and we can rest there.'"

There was nothing, therefore, to be done, but to ride along, or rather let our animals grope their own way. I accordingly left the baggage animals in the sole charge of Mosin-Khán, for I positively could not see where they were. My sole solicitude was to endeavour to keep all the Cossacks together, so that none of us should lose our way or stray alone into the desert. I now rode immediately behind Mosin-Khán, and after me followed the Cossacks. I even thought as a last resource of passing a cord through the hands of all the horsemen.

At length riding became simply unbearable, for the particles of salty sand penetrated almost everywhere. Our eyes were sprinkled over with it ; our nostrils were blocked up with it ; it gritted in our teeth ; it parched our throats, and made our voices hoarse and weak ; it dried and cracked our lips, and excited a most tormenting thirst. If, indeed, this storm had gone on for two or three hours longer, I do not know how it would have fared with all of us.

It was now the winter season, but what would a traveller have to endure during such a storm (locally called *tabbat*) during the summer, with the temperature at over 140° in the shade? To complete the sum of our disagreeables, Cossack Sharoff lost my wallets, in which I had 200 roubles worth of Bukháran *tangas*, some of my surgical instruments, my private diary, a portion of my journal, and, what was more important than all, some private papers, amongst which was my doctor's diploma. It need hardly be said that the loss of my wallets, therefore, mortified me deeply. But what was to be done? The Cossack who caused me this inconvenience looked very sheepish, and mumbled something in a frightened tone about the strap having broken from which the wallets hung that he was carrying. It was evident, however, that the wallets must have become detached on one of the occasions in which the Cossack had had to dismount for the purpose of either adjusting a load or of holding a horse.

On hearing of my misfortune, Mosin-Khán arranged to send several Uzbek horsemen back to search for the wallets, directing them to follow the track which we had made. But how could such traces be found when clouds of sand had been constantly covering up the road? The deposit, indeed, might have effaced, not only our tracks, but have covered up the wallets as well. Nevertheless, the Uzbaks at once went back, groping their way through the desert with the aid of their penetrating eyes.

Meanwhile, we continued to move on, slowly indeed, and with long and frequent halts. The Uzbaks who acted as guides behaved like men; and although the darkness was almost impenetrable, they never once missed their way. As for Mosin-Khán, I do not know what to say of him? In all the obscurity which prevailed, he seemed to see and distinguish everything around. All at once he stopped, cried out to us to stop also, and disappeared in the mist. It was only sometimes that his shrill voice would be borne on the wind, *Oh Sartip! Oh Bimbáshi!** Or I would hear him call out to Nassir-Khán *Kúja rafta-ed! Inja baana!* Then he would suddenly appear beside me, shouting out that such and such a load had fallen, or such and such a driver had lost his way, and telling us all to wait for his call. After this he would again disappear in the mist that was enshrouding the entire surface of the sandy waste.

Here was a member of a good Afghán family himself raising a fallen load, putting a pack upon a horse, and then leading the animal like a simple driver. During this particular night Mosin-Khán thoroughly evinced the nobleness and courage of his nature, and for his services during this night I shall be eternally indebted to him. Indeed, such services as he had rendered during the previous two or three days are only called forth by self-sacrifice such as he evinced.

The tempest abated by degrees, but it was long before it died away altogether. It accompanied us right up to Siáh-Gird itself, which we reached at 6 A.M., having thus covered in 7 hours 30 *verst*s (20 miles) of ground. Rest was now needed, for both men and animals were almost dead from exhaustion. We had scarcely found quarters in a half-ruined serai, when, after unloading the baggage animals, we at once lay down to sleep without having partaken of a single bit of food or drunk even one drop of water.

My head had scarcely touched my saddle, which I had placed for a pillow, when I immediately dropped off to sleep, just as though I were dead; and yet so great was my fatigue, that I woke up again after sleeping for exactly one hour.

When I got up I saw my indefatigable fellow-traveller, Mosin-Khán, stretched out and giving forth a nasal chorus in no way inferior to the intonations of a worthy deacon of our orthodox Church. Zamaan-Bek, too, was asleep in a sitting posture with his back resting against the mud wall of the serai. Before him stood a cup of poured-out tea, and beside him was a tea-pot with tea in it that was still warm. It was evident that his fatigue was so great that he had not been able to drink off his tea before he dropped off into a deep sleep. I greedily threw myself on the tea and gulped off three cups; one after the other. After this I went out into the court-yard; and as my eyes were swollen and slightly

* *Sartip* corresponds to the rank of Colonel; *Bimbáshi* to that of Major.—*Author*.

inflamed in consequence of irritation caused by the contact with salt sand, I went in search of what water I could find.

By this time day had broken, and the storm had altogether died away; but leaden-grey clouds were still darkening the sky.

I called out to the Cossacks to water the horses, but there was not even a handful procurable to bathe out our inflamed eyes.* Returning to the serai, I aroused both Zamaan-Bek and Mosin-Khán.

Before we left Siáh-Gird there came to us a Bukháran, who had been sent by Abdul-Gafar *Pervanáchi*, the Beg of Kitáb, with letters and tobacco which had been despatched from Kitáb by the members of the Russian Mission returning from Afghánistán. Soon after this, we once more mounted our horses and set out on our journey.

Our route first of all lay by the ruins of Siáh-Gird, which stretched for a distance of 3 *versts* (2 miles). The steppe here is not very sandy, and the soil is fairly hard. But we had scarcely got 5 *versts* (3½ miles) beyond this parched-up oasis, called Siáh-Gird, when the desolate picture of the death-like sandy desert came before our eyes in all its hideous nakedness and poverty.

The further we advanced, the area of the desert became wider and the sands deeper. The horses' legs sank deeper and deeper into the drift sand, and through this kind of desert waste we went from 8 A.M. till 4 P.M. About half-way between Siáh-Gird and the Amu-Daria the sand hills (*barkháns*) in places reach a height of several feet, and their cone and oval-shaped tops are dotted over here and there with growths of *saksaul*. The soil in such places has the character of a desiccated sea bed. Salt marshes are of very frequent occurrence, or, to speak more correctly, this part of the desert is one vast salt-marsh, and here and there may be seen lying about small white shells.

In spite of the heaviness of the track, we rode very quickly, and the pack-horses kept up very well. Mosin-Khán arranged to send in advance a small party of Uzbek horsemen, and directed that a similar party should come on behind as a rear-guard. Every sand-hill, whether high or low, which we passed was personally examined by Mosin-Khán in his anxiety to make sure that no predatory band of robbers lay lurking in any adjoining nullah. Half-way across the desert we were met by the *Mirza-Báshi* of the Beg of Shirábád. He had been sent to Mazár-i-Sharif for the express purpose of ascertaining whether the reports regarding recent events there, which had reached Shirábád, were correct or not.

At length we came to the left bank of the Amu. On the occasion of our summer passage through this locality, we here saw a very dense forest growth; but at the present time the trees were bare and leafless. At this point (Pátta-Guzár) the Amu is not wide, but it is deep, and its waters are turbid both in the summer and winter seasons.

When he met us in the desert, the messenger of the Beg of Shirábád told me, amongst other things, that he had only heard on the Afghán bank of the river of Shir-Ali's death, and of the great disorders which had broken out at Mazár-i-Sharif. And so when he arrived at Siáh-

* The tea, which had appeased my appetite, was made with a supply of water which Mosin-Khán always carried with him.—*Author*.

Gird he felt in great difficulty as to how and where he should see me. To ride in Bukhárán costume he considered inexpedient, as he apprehended violence on the part of the Afgháns, who, it is known, hate the Bukhárans. He, therefore, decided to start for Mazár-i-Sharif attired in the garb of a humble pilgrim. But when he learnt that we had arrived at Mazár-i-Sharif, he was of course greatly overjoyed at the circumstance, as he now need not go as far as that place, and he would thus avoid the undertaking of an unpleasant pilgrimage.

As soon as we reached the bank of the Amu, the baggage animals were unloaded. There was only one ferry-boat fastened to the Afghán bank of the river, and so I wished to send over first of all to the Bukhárán bank some of the horses and all the loads, and I then proposed to cross myself on the returning two boats (for there was another on the Bukhárán bank of the river) with the Cossacks, servants, and the remainder of the horses. But Mosin-Khán was persistent with his advice that I should not delay an instant in crossing myself with the rest of our party, after which I could send back the boats for the loads and horses. I disputed the matter with him for some time, but he continued to press me to follow his advice. He then whispered to me: "On this bank there are 200 Afghán soldiers. Who knows what intentions they may have with regard to you? It may be that they will make themselves disagreeable to you. We should thank God that a great danger was averted from you last night. Why then court another?"

More out of respect to Mosin-Khán than in appreciation of his argument, I complied with his request. In taking leave of him, I wished to give him a Berdan rifle as a keepsake. But it became necessary that I should tell him certain things about the dangers which, rumour said, awaited him on his return to Mazár-i-Sharif. I subsequently proposed that he should accompany me to the Bukhárán bank of the river. And to this suggestion he agreed. But the commander of the Afghán post prevented his going, and said that he had not the necessary permission from the Afghán authorities to cross the river and therefore he would not allow him to go. I guessed the reason of this. But Zamaan-Beg, who apparently wished to cut the conversation short, observed to the commander of the Afghán guard that he was probably joking. It turned out, however, that he was doing nothing of the kind. Mosin-Khán at first began to laugh at the prohibition of the Afghán commander observing that he was not afraid of "this donkey nor of ten like him." He subsequently commenced to attack to the question of his crossing over to the Bukhárán bank various conditions and questions such as: "If the Doctor-*Sáhib* thinks it necessary," or, "if it is very expedient," &c. I saw that they would certainly prevent his crossing over with me, in which case the matter might reach the stage of a collision between Mosin-Khán and the commander of the Afghán guard. I therefore did not adhere to my proposition.

Before the very eyes of the avaricious Afghán soldiers I did not like to give Mosin-Khán a rifle, because, thought I, the Afghán commander, seeing that strength lay on his side, might take it from him. Moreover, Mosin-Khán would first of all have had to learn the use of it, and this teaching would have taken up some time. I did not, however, wish to waste a minute needlessly, for the soil of the *Chahár-Wiláyat* seemed to

be all salt and bitterness! As I placed one foot in the boat, Mosin-Khán said to me: "We will see; perhaps I may come to you from another ferry." Then we took a cordial farewell of one another.

"*Khuda-háfiz-i-shuma! Ráh-i-shuma hamwar bakhair,*" said Mosin-Khán with a trembling voice, his eyes becoming moist. "Thanks be to God that you have escaped what appeared to be an unavoidable and mortal danger. Nowadays such a bad time has set in that the life of each of us hangs on a hair. Farewell, farewell!"

If, during our summer journey to Afghánistán, I had sometimes thought Mosin-Khán's was a very rugged character and without a particle of fire, that he was sometimes rude, now after these three memorable days I felt for him only unlimited respect and almost brotherly love. I now, too, recognised that here at any rate was a man honest in the highest degree, and—what for an Afghán was the more rare—in no way avaricious.* It is worthy of remark that General Stolaitoff was the first of us to understand and to appraise at its proper value the sterling qualities of this man, and to take full advantage of them.

As soon as we had taken our seats in the boat, Mosin-Khán begged me to give his *salaam* to Sirdár Shir-Ali-Khán; but to the other members of the Afghán Mission to Táshkaud he sent no message at all.

I wished, before parting, to give some money to Mosin-Khán's people, who had laboured so hard for me; but as the Afghán soldiers of the frontier post were standing looking at us, I decided not to do so, lest these robbers might do some violence to us on account of our having money with us. I at the same time very much wished that Mosin-Khán had come into the boat with us to the Bukháran bank of the river; but what was to be done?

When we had pushed out some feet from the Afghán bank of the river, Mosin-Khán asked me to send him some tea from the Bukháran bank, as he had forgotten to bring any with him. He stood gazing at us for a long time, and shouting out various good wishes, and waving his plumed helmet with both hands.

Farewell! farewell! priceless fellow-traveller, may God be with you! was my last wish on his behalf!

I cannot say that I was very sorry to leave Afghánistán, since I was only carrying away with me disagreeable reminiscences of the days which I had passed amongst the Afgháns. These, in fact, had been my several positions. On reaching Kábul I had on my hands the Amír's heir and he, six hours after my visit to him, died, having been in all probability poisoned by his enemies. I could do nothing to help him, although the last hopes of a father for his dying and beloved son were turned towards me. Again when I revisited Mazár-i-Sharif, and had begun to treat the Amír for the disease for which I had been especially summoned, and this disease had

* When he left Afghánistán, General Stolaitoff gave Mosin-Khán Rs. 150 wherewith to buy for him various articles of local manufacture. Mosin-Khán carried out all his instructions in the most exact manner, sending off everything with General Razgónoff. During General Stolaitoff's journey from Afghánistán, a good horse of his fell sick. This animal he left with Mosin-Khán, intending to receive it back when he returned to Afghánistán. But the General did not return. Mosin-Khán treated and cured the horse during the five months the animal was in his charge, and when General Razgónoff left Afghánistán, he made the animal over to him for delivery to General Stolaitoff, refusing to accept anything for its keep and treatment.—*Author.*

by degrees yielded to my remedies, he all at once sickened with a terrible complaint, the undoubted results of rash treatment on the part of his native physicians in the case of a comparatively simple disorder. In consequence of the ignorant treatment adopted by the same native physicians, this disease too became complicated, changed its character, and reached its ultimate development. It then became incurable. I was now called in and conjured by every living thing on earth to heal a dangerous illness. The patient placed himself unreservedly in my hands, and declared that henceforth all my advice should be religiously adhered to. I was then made a very god, and yet in my own eyes I felt at such a moment humbled, because, after all, I was only a man like unto themselves; but had I been ever so skilful a physician, human treatment had now become powerless against this disease. Not wishing to occupy a false position, I took the precaution of giving them to understand that hope in the cure of the disease was now weak, or at least doubtful, especially if it should be greatly aggravated. To this they replied, "There is no occasion for the disease to become aggravated; a simple ailment any man can cure, even though he be not a physician, but to heal a difficult disease is the real task of a doctor." What could I advance against such an argument? I would not a second time go through all this moral torture! Finally, my self-pride—the pride of a doctor—had also to be considered. A mob does not discriminate, and so, not to cure a given disease, signifies to be at fault.

Our boat swiftly descended the stream. The day was overcast, and the water of the river looked as though it were composed of molten lead. The boatmen plied their poles vigorously instead of using oars, and on this occasion the boat was not dragged by swimming horses, as is usually the case.

We soon reached the Bukhárán bank of the Amu-Daria, and then the barrier of a mighty river became the limit that divided two adjoining Central Asian States. Once on the Bukhárán side, we, Russians, although in the country of bad laws, had nothing to expect but hospitality and forethought. Scarcely in any other uncivilised country does the Russian traveller find himself so secure as he does in Bukhárán territory. Indeed, he feels himself to be quite at home, and it is not a mere vain expression that the Bukhárans use when they say that "Russians and Bukhárans are brothers," "*Iki daulat bir daulat* (the two States are one)."

As soon, therefore, as we had stepped out of the boat, the usual Bukhárán hospitality came into play. A *Mirza-Báshi* immediately sent to the neighbouring village of Pátta-Guzár to get ready for us quarters and a breakfast. In expectation of the second boat-load, with the horses and drivers, Zamaan-Bek had disembarked on a sand-bank, which stood out like a cape from the Bukhárán bank of the river, and had ordered tea to be got ready. I can truly say that this tea seemed to me to have much more flavour than champagne would have had at any other time. When a man has scarcely eaten or drunk anything for 48 hours, several cups of tea and some slices of roast mutton with stale bread constitute a very appetising meal.

The taking of the things out of the boats and the loading of the pack animals occupied a little time. The village of Pátta-Guzár is

distant from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 *versts* (1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles) from the place of debarkation, but it was not long before we found ourselves under the hospitable roofs of Bukhárán *yurtas*.

As soon as we had all assembled on the Bukhárán bank of the river, the Cossacks removed their hats, made the sign of the Cross, and bowed themselves lowly to Mother Earth.

Farewell Afghánistán, or rather *au revoir* ! Don't cherish evil memories of us.

Let us now pass in thought to the town we had so recently quitted, and let us see what took place there after our departure.

When we took leave of Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán, we thought that he had ridden straight back to Mazár-i-Sharif, but he had really only gone a certain distance in the direction of the city, and had then turned after us, keeping some distance behind. And so, unperceived by us, he had accompanied us almost as far as the village of Siáh-Gird. Now why had he done this ? Because he dreaded that we should be pursued by Afghán cavalry. The disappearance of Sári-Ján, the commander of "the four hundred," was interpreted not only by Mosin-Khán, but by Naik-Muhammad Khán as well, to mean that he contemplated evil against us. Takhtapul, where his command was, is distant only 8 *versts* ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles) from Mazár-i-Sharif. Consequently pursuit on the part of his 400 horsemen might have been very easily accomplished, and he could have over-taken us in the steppe before we reached Siáh-Gird. And so Naik-Muhammad-Khán decided to see us as far as this village, and to be back at Mazár-i-Sharif before morning broke.

The day after our departure from Mazár-i-Sharif, *i. e.*, on the 11th (23rd) February, several *pallans* (battalions) surrounded the quarters which we had occupied, and expected serious opposition on our part; but they were extremely surprised at learning that the place was now empty.

"If you had remained till now," wrote Naik-Muhammad-Khán, "I could not have guaranteed that you would not have been exposed to violence, for the troops were very much excited by the reports that were current in the city to the effect that all the late Amír's treasure had passed into the hands of the Russians."

Finding that we had gone, the Afghán soldiers decided upon plundering the favourite wife of Shir-Ali and her family, for they connected our accomplished departure with the proposed flight of this lady and her family.

"If the Russian doctor has gone, the treasure has been removed. Now the speedy departure of the Amír's family is to be expected. But this cannot be allowed; we cannot permit the Amír's wife to leave Afghánistán. Let us plunder her."

This was the general talk amongst the troops. What information guided them, or why they mixed me up with the intrigues of the former *regente*, I do not know, and I cannot conjecture.

In spite of my intimacy with the late Amír, I always endeavoured to hold aloof from politics; and with Shir-Ali's wife I had neither interview nor communication of any sort or kind.

In order to save the late Amír's family from pillage and to pacify the soldiery, Naik-Muhammad-Khán had recourse to the following

stratagem. To a certain regiment he sent one of his men with the information that on that very night a certain other regiment intended to attack it. To the other regiment he sent a similar message. The Herát troops he thus caused to be apprehensive of the Kábulis, and the Kábulis of the Herátis. Thus all the soldiery remained in their own quarters, each fearing an attack from a regiment of another class. They remained for some days in this condition, and by that time the first orders of Yakúb-Khán, the new Amír of Afghánistán, had been promulgated. After that, although isolated cases of pillage still went on, the general bloodshed, which is evidently quite unavoidable where there are such heterogeneous elements, as in the case of the composition of Afghán regiments, was not continued.

The day after our departure from Mazár-i-Sharif, Mosin-Khán returned to the city. He had safely escaped from the dangers which had awaited him. In order that the reader may clearly understand why great dangers threatened Mosin-Khán at Mazár-i-Sharif, I need only say that he was one of the adherents of the *Luináb*, Khush-Dil-Khán, who, with Faiz-Muhammad-Khán, continued to remain in prison until released by order of Yakúb-Khán. After this Ghulám-Haidar-Khán was appointed *Luináb* or, to speak more correctly, *Najib*, and he continued to be the ruler of Afghán-Turkistán until Abdul-Rahmán-Khán was proclaimed Amir of Afghánistán.

Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán and Mosin-Khán, in return for the services rendered to me on the 9th (21st), 10th (22nd), and 11th (23rd) February, received respectively from the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán a silver vase and a gold watch with the inscription "In remembrance of the 10th (22nd) February 1879 from General Kaufmann."

CHAPTER X.

FROM THE AMU-DARIA TO THE TOWN OF BUKHÁRA.

Halt at Pátta-Guzár—Correspondence with the Beg of Shirábád and with Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán—At Shirábád—Visit to the Beg—His presence of mind—My ideas on the subject of my journey to Bukhára—Report to Táshkand—The Beg's rudeness—I go to Bukhára—Again at the "Iron Gates"—Chashma-i-Hafizán—Mountain gorge of Tangi-Harám—Kara-Sátch—I am again the guest of the Beg of Guzár—At Kárshi—Kulsán—Rabát Kakir—A rainy march—Inaccuracy of the General Staff Map—Buzáchi—A guard—Abdulla-Khán, the builder—Comfort on the steppe—Character of the steppe—The mountain ridge of Máma-Jargáti—A salt-covered tract—Meeting with Bukháran officials—Kokhand, a suburb of Bukhára.

I RESOLVED to make a halt at Pátta-Guzár because it was positively necessary to do so, since both men and animals were extremely fatigued. The former had not slept properly for three nights in succession, whilst the latter had covered 90 *versts* (60 miles) over a sandy locality in 15 hours of almost unbroken movement, and had been without food during a period of 72 hours.

Whilst halted here, I wished to send reports to Táshkand regarding the events which had recently occurred in Afghán Turkistán, but I could not do so. Fatigue told on me and I slept almost through 24 hours. Under my directions Zamaan-Bek wrote a letter to the Beg of Shirábád informing him that it was our intention to pass through his capital. He also wrote a short letter to the Beg of Kitáb. A longer epistle was then sent to Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán. In this we thanked him for the services and protection he had afforded us during the troubled period of our last days at Mazár-i-Sharif. In the same letter I informed him of the loss of my saddle-bags, and I requested him to do all he could to have them restored to me, telling him that the medicines which the wallets contained were required for the people with me (in the wallets amongst other medicines was a whole drachm of belladonna). I then went on to very favourably bring to his notice the services rendered by Mösín-Khán. Pray God that this recommendation proved of use!

On the evening of the same day there rode into Pátta-Guzár two Afghán horsemen who had been especially sent by the temporary government at Mazár-i-Sharif to the Afghán Mission at Táshkand with information regarding recent events in Afghán Turkistán.

The next day we went on to the village of Angor, where we halted for the night. On the third day we reached Shirábád. Immediately after we had entered Bukháran territory bad weather set in, and for three days in succession very heavy rain fell with a strong westerly wind. Thus the road between Angor and Shirábád was turned into one vast pool of mud, in which our jaded horses slipped about, splashing up the dirty water at every step they took. At a point 5 *versts* (3½ miles) from Shirábád the Beg's brother and his *Mirakhur* met us. They were attended by a suite of 20 men. After conveying to me a welcome on the part of

the Beg, the brother wished to know when we were going to visit the Beg, *i.e.*, whether we would go directly after reaching Shirábád, or some time after our arrival in the city? I hereupon expressed my wish to pay the usual visit after a certain amount of rest. But the Beg's brother urged that the visit should be paid immediately after our arrival in the city.

"General Razgónoff had," he said, "gone straight to visit the Beg, and the Doctor-Turá should do so also."

I, of course, did not explain to the Bukháran that the general had exhibited a want of tact, but I held to what I had said. I also took advantage of the opportunity afforded me of informing the Beg's brother that it was in no way in accord with Russian manners to drag a guest to a visit straight from the road, when covered with dust and mud, and tired out, after a long and difficult journey, and that, therefore, any such wish on the part of the Beg appeared to me to be very strange, the more so as he no doubt considered himself acquainted with Russian customs, and, perhaps, he had for that very reason been appointed Beg of Shirábád, a city through which of late years many Russians had begun to pass.

We had scarcely reached the city when the rain began to descend in torrents. *Yurtas* had been prepared for our accommodation, and I very much dreaded that the heavy rain would soak through the felt, but not a drop found its way inside.

About 3 P.M. we started off to see the Beg in his "Bird's Nest." A more appropriate name for his fortified castle cannot, it seems to me, be applied. In the third chapter of the 1st volume of the present work, the reader will find a description of it, and, therefore, I need not further enlarge on the subject. After riding up to the top of the hill on which the fort stands, we passed through three gates. At the fourth, beyond which stands the Beg's residence, politeness and respect for the occupant, required that we should dismount from our horses and proceed onwards on foot. I was assisted to alight from the saddle by a dozen hands before I could get down by myself.

At the threshold, Abdul-Khalil, the Beg of the province of Shirábád, met us. He was attired in a fur-coat covered with a silken material of local manufacture. His ruddy and very handsome face, fringed by a thick, grey beard and possessed of a pair of cunning restless eyes, was lit up with a broad and cheery grin. His head was enveloped with a huge white turban. A protruding stomach, a somewhat artless expression of countenance, a firm shake of the hand all betokened a man of contented mind. With a polite gesture he invited us to go inside, and would on no account enter the room before me. The same kind of ceremony was observed as we took our places at the table. After the usual exchange of compliments, joy was expressed on the part of the Beg that we should have been fated to meet again in health. In phrases of this description half an hour was taken up, for I had given Zamaan-Bek full freedom to break a lance with the Beg on the field of friendship and of compliment, whilst I occupied myself in looking at those present and in drinking tea. The Beg did not omit to express to me his satisfaction that we had succeeded in safely avoiding dangers and even violence and insult on the part of the Afgháns,

for, in his opinion, such might easily have been our fate, because the present condition of affairs in Afghánistán was very unsatisfactory. The disturbances and dissensions which had taken place at Mazár-i-Sharif, during our last days there, might have served especially as the means of inciting evil-disposed persons to plan mischief against us, since all Afgháns are thieves and robbers, and here I again heard the old song of the mutual dislike between Bukhárans and Afgháns. To all such expressions of opinion, I replied that, not only in Afghánistán but also in Bukhára and every Asiatic State, on a change of rulers, whether this arose from the death or deposition of the reigning sovereign, political disorders always ensued, and that although the same had occurred on the present occasion at Mazár-i-Sharif, they had not affected us Russians in the least. "If any chance unpleasantness had occurred to us," I said to the Beg, "the same might happen to any traveller proceeding along a highway which was frequented by robbers. It should, however, be observed that Russia's name is so well known in Central Asia, and enjoys such respect in the most distant corners of the country, that no one dares to openly insult her representatives."

It was intelligible that I should have no sort of desire to be frank with this apparently artless Beg (how cunning he subsequently proved himself to be!). I had the less reason to enter into an exchange of confidences because I knew all about the habits of Bukháran Begg, and that anything they might hear of or from Russians was duly communicated to the Amír of Bukhára.

After this the Beg led the conversation up to the subject of the illness of Shir-Ali-Khán. There was no necessity for me to enter into particulars, and so I briefly told him the history of that illness. I then availed myself of the opportunity to make myself acquainted with his views regarding my journey to Bukhára, to treat the Amír his master.

"In consequence of an invitation from the *Janáb-Ali* I must go to Bukhára," said I to the Beg, "but I do not know what rules or customs exist in this respect amongst Bukhárans? It is not, in my opinion, altogether fit that I should proceed from the place of mourning and of sorrowful occurrences (*i.e.*, from Shir-Ali's tomb) (I here took advantage of the usual floweriness of language in vogue amongst natives of Central Asia) to the abode of rejoicing and of merry-making where there is no trace of death (*i.e.*, in the house of the Amír of Bukhára)."

"The Doctor-*Turá* should not be disquieted about this," answered the Beg, for he has left all his sorrows beyond the Daria (*i.e.*, the Amu-Daria)."

Then, as always happens, a very animated conversation came abruptly to an end, until, at length, the only topic left was that of the weather. I now observed to the Beg that, in all probability, in God's roll, I and my fellow travellers did not occupy anything like so honoured place as Aide-de-Camp Bulátsel or General Razgónoff, for, during their journey, they had enjoyed beautifully fine weather, whilst directly we started such misfortune had overtaken us that the rain wetted us through, and we had to go through mud up to the horses' knees.

Hereupon the Beg proved so full of resource that even the disadvantageous circumstances of our journey furnished him with a theme for compliments. "You know," he said, "that our prosperity depends on our harvests, and the character of the harvests on the amount of rain that falls. When, therefore, there is rain, there is corn, and when rain fails us we become poor and are threatened with a famine. You brought it with you and thereby brought us prosperity. Up to the date of your arrival there was no rain at all. It is clear then that you occupy in God's roll a more honourable place than anybody else."

I was struck with this fertility of speech and with his logic, and I attentively examined his countenance, which now seemed to me to be far from appearing so simple as I had at first supposed. After this we took leave of him and returned to our *yurtas*. I acknowledge that it was only after long wavering that I decided to go to Bukhára, for the circumstances under which I was going to treat the Amír were of a very delicate kind. My late patient, the Amír of Afghánistán, had recently died in my hands. This fact was in itself sufficient to explain the awkwardness and, if you will, the inopportuneness of my going to Bukhára. Ill-natured people, who constitute the greater portion not only of Central Asian but also of the European public, do not and cannot ascertain whether any given disease is or is not curable. They can only observe results. "The patient is dead," they say, "*ergo* the doctor in attendance is not skilful." Others say outright "the doctor killed his patient." The Amír of Bukhára is in no way above the general level of intelligence to which any inhabitant of Asia arises, so that, very possibly, he would not listen to any advice of mine; he would not take my powders, nor swallow one of my pills, nor drink a single spoonful of my mixtures. In such a case what then would be the use of my going to Bukhára, in order to put my myself in a ridiculous position? A doctor without practice is like a priest without a parish, a regimental commander without a regiment, and a sovereign without subjects.

And yet I could not but go to Bukhára, since the formal order which I had received from General Kaufmann was as clear as day and as binding on me as any other orders of my government would be. The instructions could only be set aside by the person who had issued them, or by my immediate superior, General Razgónoff.

Soon after our return from paying a visit to the Beg of Shirábád, there came in an express messenger from Mazár-i-Sharif who handed me several letters. These were from Sámarkand, and they had been sent to Mazár-i-Sharif, and not having found me there were sent back and thus overtook me at Shirábád. Amongst them was one from General Razgónoff, dated village of Koinár, 4th (16th) February. Amongst other things, the messenger told me that the disturbances at Mazár-i-Sharif had somewhat quieted down, but that the *Luináb*, Khush-Dil-Khán, and Sirdár Faiz-Muhammad-Khán were still in confinement.

Having decided to go to Bukhára, I thought it my duty to send reports to Táshkand and so, in a letter to General Razgónoff, I gave a detailed account of the progress of the extraordinary events which had taken place

during the last days of my stay at Mazár-i-Sharif. I also sent to Dr. I. P. Suvoroff, Military Medical Inspector of the Turkistán Province, a report explaining more or less fully the history of the Amir's illness. I was in such a hurry that I did not take copies of these communications.

It now only remains to mention that the Beg of Shirábád had hastened to report to the Amír of Bukhára that we had safely arrived in his city.

The next day, before we left Shirábád, the Beg sent us the usual offerings with which Bukhárans are in the habit of so wearying Russians who may be travelling through their country. He had not, however, apparently any intention of coming to pay us a return visit, and so Zamaan-Bek took the trouble of explaining to his brother the inopportune-ness of this conduct, and he gave him to understand that the Beg, who was always boasting about his knowledge of Russian customs, should know that it was necessary to pay a return visit. Half an hour afterwards, therefore, the Beg arrived with a large suite. We then received him very coldly, meeting him only at the door of our *yurtas*.

On the 16th (28th) February we halted at Sir-Áb. The following day we intended only to march from Sir-Ab to Shor-Áb, but the *Aksakál* of the former place told us that at Shor-Áb we should not be able to procure fodder for our horses. We had thus to make a long march to the village of Chashma-i-Hafizán. I would willingly have turned towards Kara-Khoyal, in the direction of Sámarkand, but what could we do? *À propos* of provisions, the local *Aksakál* very seriously asked me whether he should at once collect forage for the Russian troops or not? I was very much surprised at the question, but I subsequently learnt that during the previous summer when our troops were massed at Jám and were ready to cross the Bukháran frontier, the Bukháran authorities had arranged, through the village Elders and *Aksakáls*, to collect forage for them and to store provisions along the route they were to follow. I, of course, could say nothing definite in reply to the question of the *Aksakál*.

To-day, 17th February (1st March) 1879, I passed through the "Iron Gates" for the fourth time. The gorge had, of course, the same mournful appearance that it always presents. But on this occasion there was nothing whatever to take away from the harsh impression which these wild, bare, cleft masses of rock, heaped up one on the other, produce on the traveller. The clumps of almond and pistachio nut trees, which in the summer season so picturesquely add the shade of their bright green to the sombre stone giants, were now enveloped in hoar-frost. Some of them, indeed, tempted by the very warm weather of the previous five or ten days, had prematurely put on their spring colouring, but these looked the more sorrowful on account of the return of bad and wintry weather.

As we rode out of Sir-Áb, there were 3° of frost, and the rain and snow, which had fallen the evening before, was covered with a regular glazed frost, over which the horses constantly slipped and stumbled, the more so as the ice-bound mountain tracks had detached their badly-fitted shoes. After riding a distance of from 6 to 7 *verstas* (4 to

4½ miles), I was obliged to have my horse reshod by the road-side, otherwise the animal would have either broken his leg or I my neck. The whole trouble arose from my having given the order at Shirábád that all the horses were to be shod, since we had before us a mountain road in the winter season, but the shoeing was carried out by the *Jigits* very indifferently. Indeed, an examination during this march showed that many of the horses had not been shod at all. The men in fault therefore met with the punishment which they had deserved.

We had only got about 10 *versts* (6¾ miles) from Sir-Áb, when a thick fog enshrouded the neighbouring heights, and as it gradually thickened a light rain began to fall. This continued for about half an hour, after which the fog again somewhat cleared off; but by the time we had issued from the "Iron Gates" and had begun to rise to the Ak-Rabát pass, the fog became so thick once more that we could not distinguish anything a few paces ahead, whilst on the mountain plateau of Ak-Rabát there blew a strong and piercing wind. After a further ride of 7½ hours we reached the halting-ground. Here a cold wretched hut, with a fire kindled on its earthen floor, seemed to us hungry travellers a more comfortable refuge than the best hostelry in the world. Immediately we had sat down near the fire and had drunk off a large cupful of hot tea, fatigue seemed to take its hand from off us.

On the morning of the 18th February (2nd March) with the thermometer registering 4 degrees of frost, we got up very early, as we always did, and rode out of the "Spring of the Songsters," as the name of the village, called Chashma-i-Hafizán," may be translated. Along our route we frequently came across mountain streams and torrent beds, all of which were ice-bound. The route gradually descended in a north-westerly direction, so that beyond the Ak-Dagán pass the mountains fell to the level of not very sharply defined hillocks. From the pass just named begins the valley of Tangi-Harán, which has the appearance of a bright looking sward, flanked by tent-shaped hillocks. In the valley itself there was no snow, but the tops of the hillocks were covered with a very thick layer of light snow of dazzling brightness. In riding to the group of winter huts which bear the name of Tangi-Harán, we saw freshly ploughed-up fields that had not yet been sown over. Here the weather was quite genial.

The next day, *i.e.*, 19th February (3rd March) we started off again by a route which, as far as Kush-Lush, runs along the Kichi-Uru-Daria stream. At Kush-Lush the stream just named is joined by the Kátta-Uru-Daria. From Kush-Lush to Guzár we rode along the Guzár-Daria stream. At Guzár I made a halt.

For some days, through laziness, I had not written up my journal. It may be that this idleness took possession of me, because I was now riding through familiar places, and of which I have already made mention in the first volume of my present work. Nevertheless, let us look back, for it may be that I shall be able to find something to record.

Guzár (Gut-zár) signifies "grief itself," but this grief exists only in the traditions of the inhabitants. The name given to the town was derived from the story that in old times there was in this neighbourhood a large forest, and in this forest there were many wild boars (Guzár

means literally a sucking pig), which did much harm to the crops of the people living round about. Now there are no traces of a forest, except that the town lies buried amongst green gardens, whilst pigs live only in the traditions of the people, who, however, in their mode of life are very little removed from the animal after which their town is called.

However this may be, in the town of Guzár, with its mud-built huts and thick gardens, there are said to be more than 10,000 inhabitants. With the Beg of Guzár, Akram-Khán, son of the Amír of Bukhára, the reader has become sufficiently acquainted from a perusal of the third chapter of the 1st volume of this work, and doubtless he has not forgotten what answer General Stolaitoff gave him. After that, *viz.*, during the summer of 1878, Akram-Khán was at Sámarkand, in the capacity of head of a Bukháran Mission sent by the Amír to General Kaufmann. The fact was that at the particular time of which I am speaking, Sámarkand was the head-quarters of the Jám detachment, which went through what is widely known as the "Diarrhœa Campaign."* The results of Tura-Ján's visit to the Russian head-quarters was that he became "civilised," and so, on the occasion of my visit to him, I had not to squat down on my heels. At the *Dastar-Khán* there were plates, spoons, forks and *tutti quanti*, and the tea was poured out in nice crystal glasses. It appears that Tura-Ján himself was not indisposed to give his guests wine, but the *Makhram-Báshî* and the *Kúzi*, who sat on either side of him, greatly agitated him with their reproachful looks. Akram-Khán appeared to me to be neither a more intelligent nor a more foolish man than he was in the summer. This means in other words that he was as shallow as ever.

From Guzár we made two marches to the town of Kárshi. Here, of course, we had to pay a visit to the Beg, and to receive from him the customary gifts. I then presented his youngest son with a revolver, which he carried off in triumph, and to his eldest son I gave two bottles of Atkinson's perfumes.

I listened to singers and musicians, and looked on at the performances of dancing boys (*batchas*), &c., &c.

During my visit to Mullah-Khán-Bii, Beg of Kárshi, he very maliciously laughed at our "friend," the Beg of Shirábád. The fact was that the latter, though younger, had received during the winter the rank of *Pervanáchi*, which is higher than that borne by the Beg of Kárshi. Of all the malicious sneering, at the expense of the *Pervanáchi* of Shirábád, the only important piece of information was that our "friend," on receipt of the first tidings of disorder at Mazár-i-Sharif, had hastened to report to the Amír of Bukhára that those members of the Russian Mission, who had been left behind, had been robbed of everything, and had only just escaped being killed.

I halted at Kárshi as I was not quite well.

To-day, 24th February (8th March), we rode out of Kárshi, and halted for the night at the village of Kuhsán, 25 *vershs* (16½ miles), to the

* The troops quartered at Jám suffered greatly the whole time from diarrhœa. The doctors with the detachment variously assigned the causes of this unfortunate epidemic. It was stated, however, that the victualling arrangements of the troops were exceedingly bad.—*Author.*

north-west of Kárshi. From the town of Kárshi, and throughout the whole of this day's march, we traversed a very thickly populated country. Along both sides of the road there stretch very large villages in which there must be several hundreds and even thousands of huts.

The village of Kuhsán, for example, has 2,000 houses and a good bazaar with shops. It was apparent, however, that the inhabitants of these villages do not feed themselves without great labour. The people are for the most part agriculturists, whilst their fields are very small and the owners are in constant dread, lest their holdings will be swallowed up by the adjoining sandy waste. Indeed, it becomes perfectly strange to see how all the veriest patches of ground that are suitable for cultivation are carefully tilled, when side by side lie the waves and breakers of a veritable sea of sand.

Kakir, 26th February (10th March).—Kakir is not a *kishlák* (i.e., a village) as the latest map of Central Asia, issued by the General Staff, represents; it is not even a group of winter huts, but a *rabát* or serai, wherein travellers can find shelter and a night's lodging. In the great deserts of Central Asia such *rabáts* are very frequent and constitute a real blessing to travellers, being built almost throughout the caravan trade-routes which cross the desert in all directions. Where, however, there is no water, no serai or *rabát* exists; but how can one carry a supply in the desert? Each *rabát* usually has attached to it, therefore, a stone reservoir into which the rain water flows. In order, too, that the supply may be preserved from rapid evaporation, which under the rays of an almost vertical and scorching sun it would very soon do, the cistern or *Sardáb*, as it is locally called, is furnished with a stone cupola. Thus the erection of such *rabáts* are usually due to the initiative of charitable persons, possessed either of authority or affluence. Central Asian rulers, wishing to acquire popularity, have built *rabáts*, in various parts of the desert. The individual who constructed more of these than anybody else was Abdullah-Khán, the famous ruler of Bukhára, who lived about 300 years ago (1538-1597 A.D.). Very naturally, therefore, almost every *rabát* which now exists is ascribed to this sovereign. But the *rabát* at Kakir was built by a philanthropic private individual, a certain Zakaria, *Dastar-Khánchi*, who lived 200 years ago. It is due to this fact that this man's name is handed down from generation to generation, whilst that of the sovereign, at whose court Zakaria held the post of *Dastar-Khánchi*, has been forgotten.

From the halting-ground of Khwája-Mubarak we rose as usual, and also during the entire march to Kakir, a distance of 3 *tásh* or 25 *versts* (16½ miles), rain falling the whole time. The son of the Bek of Kárshi, the *Mirakhur* Abdul-Aziz, was very happy in such rainy weather; and as he pleasantly regarded us said that, under such circumstances, he would willingly accompany us to Táshkand itself. When he took leave of us at Kakir, there was no end to his good wishes.

During the whole of this day's march, we rode over a level and soft road whereon the sand was not very deep, but a sandy plain stretched beyond the limits of the eye's vision for many hundreds of square

vershs. Around there was not a blade of grass nor a sign of life; death alone seemed to reign on all sides and sands, sandy salt-marshes (*Solouchaks*), low sand-hills (*Barkháns*), devoid even of such hardy growth as the crooked *saksaul*, accompanied us throughout the march.

We were met at Kakir by a deputation specially sent from Bukhára for that purpose. The head of the deputation was the *Karaul-Beg*, Abdurrahmán-Mirza, who informed me that he had been expecting me at the *rabát* for the previous three days.

Before me was a very large square enclosure with walls of burnt brick rising to a height of $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and with towers at the four corners. On the east side, the enclosure was entered by gates in the Arabic style without tiles. Inside the gates and running along three sides of the interior of the enclosure were three wide and lofty corridors covered over with huge stone cupolas. Along the outer walls of the corridors was stabling accommodation sufficient for 80 horses. A very narrow passage, under the arch of one of the corridors, led to a square covered-in space, in the centre of the *rabát*. This inner enclosure was paved with brick tiles and was kept very clean. On its western side three doors opened into three dwelling places. The centre of these, a square room with a Gothic vaulted roof, had been prepared for my reception. The walls of the room were very cleanly stuccoed, and the brick floor was spread over with carpets and coverlets. The room was in fact very comfortable. The traveller ensconced in this refuge would be safe from any storm, and he might consider himself beyond the reach both of bad weather and of steppe robbers. The walls of the *rabát* were so thick, that neither the bullet of a nomad's match-lock nor that of the Berdan rifle could penetrate them. Tea and the *dastar-khán* so promptly set before us enabled us to laugh at the storm which was raging outside. Certainly these *rabáts* constitute a great blessing to travellers. The *Karaul-Beg* turned out to be a very talkative individual. He told me that he had but recently come from Tászkand together with Rahmat-Ullah, the *Mirakhur*, and that they had met on the road, at Kuyúk-Mazár, *Yesaul* Bulátsel and Topographer Benderski who were returning from Bukhára; that the Governor-General of Russian Turkistán had made all his preparations for going to St. Petersburg, and was only waiting for a telegram from the Russian Minister of War, but since he had not received permission to go he was obliged to remain at Tászkand; that the Amír of Bukhára was at his country house, 8 *vershs* ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles) distant from Bukhára; that he had heard of my illness, &c., &c.

As soon as the rain had stopped I went outside, and then saw that side by side with our serai was another round structure also built of baked brick. The huge cupola of this structure towered to a height of nearly 60 feet above the surrounding sandy waste and so enabled travellers to know, whilst they were yet far off, that a refuge here awaited them. The interior of the building was approached by a door on its western side. On entering I found that the level of the water was reached by a flight of stone steps. The interior presented the appearance of a vast well from 100 to 140 feet in diameter. The reservoir was not on this occasion filled with surface water, but its

supply was brought from a distance. Usually, however, the rain-water is drained into the reservoir, but as during the previous winter there had been scarcely any rain at all, a supply had been diverted by means of a canal leading from the Kashka-Daria river. The same river also feeds the *sirdáb* or reservoir at the village of Khwája-Mubárak which lies half-way between Kuhsán and Kakir. The *Karaul-Beg* informed me that there were 30 steps leading down to the bottom of the well, and as the depth of each step is not less than one foot, this means that the depth of the water in the reservoir is about 28 feet. In the cupola and in the side-walls small apertures have been left for purposes of ventilation.

As I was traversing this particular locality for the first time, I naturally paid more attention to it than I should have otherwise done. In doing so, I could not but notice several inaccuracies on the Map of Central Asia issued in the year 1876, and corrected in 1878 by the General Staff. Thus several villages are not shewn at all, whilst others are noted which do not exist. For example, the villages of Daritcha, Baigun, and others are not marked, whilst Muzurg and Buzurg, which are dried up reservoirs, are noted as villages. Thus it is well that the Topographer Benderski should have come this way, for now these omissions and mistakes will be rectified.

When I, after my inspection of the *sirdáb*, had returned to my own quarters, the *Karaul-Beg* told me that the Amír of Bukhára had written to his *Mirakhur*, whilst he was at Táshkand, to tell him to ask the Governor-General that the same medicine with which I had provided him when I was at Shaar might be sent to him; that the Governor-General had taken a long time to reply to the request made, perhaps because there was no more of the same medicine to be had, and that for this reason he had written to tell me to go to Bukhára on my way back from Afghánistán, &c., &c.

Karaul, 24th February (8th March).—Here the same desert strikes the eye as on the preceding stages. During this day's march, however, the sands sometimes give place to patches of clayey schist; in such localities the track is level as a table. The distance between Kakir and Karaul is reckoned to be about 20 *verst*s (13½ miles). *En route* we passed two other ruined *rabáts*. One of these Buzáchi, which lies at a distance of 4 *verst*s (2½ miles) to the north-west of Kakir must have been of very striking dimensions, for its massive portal still rises high above the level of the steppe, and its walls cover a large area. Within are numerous dwelling places, or rather the ruins of such, and each is covered in with a light and pretty but ruined cupola. The stucco on the walls and on the ogive cupolas is still in a good state of preservation. On certain parts of the walls there have been traced inscriptions, monograms, chronograms, and various specimens of road literature. The whole building has been constructed of handsome burnt brick. At some little distance from the *rabát* rise the cupolas of two reservoirs. One of these is silted up with sand, which has been blown by successive storms up to the very walls of the building. The other, although in a good state of preservation and still free from sand, does not contain a single drop of water. This *rabát*, according to popular tradition, was built by Abdullah-Khán, *Khakan* (i.e., Supreme Sovereign) of Bukhára. Consequently it must be

more than 300 years old. At the sight of such buildings the thought involuntarily enters the head, how great must have been the Bukhárans of old days, and how they would have eclipsed the Bukhárans of to-day, who not only could not of themselves inaugurate such grandiose and useful buildings, but who are not even able to keep them in their pristine condition. I am now in a building of the kind though the *Karaul-rabát* is scarcely on so large a scale as the one just spoken of.

Let the reader picture to himself a square, each side of which measures approximately 700 feet, and that each wall rises to a height of about 20 feet, with towers at the same distance from each other. In the centre of one of the walls rises a portal to a height of about 56 feet, its edges being covered with tiles of various colours, the greater part of which, however, have fallen out. Not far from the gate is the usual reservoir, and here too are various squalid shops whereat all necessaries can be purchased. Thus, for example, a *centaine* of lucerne can be bought for 2 *roubles*, whereas at Tashkand such cheapness is not thought of, except towards the end of February and in July.

As you enter the quadrangle, you are simply struck with its huge proportions. Along the sides of all four walls is a vast corridor with windows from 10 to 14 feet above the ground. Both along the outer and the inner walls of this corridor there are stalls for horses and cattle, and I am not exaggerating when I say that 300 horses could here be picketed. The corridor itself encircles a considerable space, inside of which there are more stalls. And here too are numerous dwelling places, all of which have either flat or vaulted roofs, and some of them are double-storied.

Here too the walls have been traced over with scribbling of all kinds. Some of my Cossacks could not withstand the temptation of writing their own names in a corner as well as a short history of their journeying. This building, too, is ascribed to the same great builder of Bukhara of the middle ages, *viz.*, Abdullah-Khán. In order to give an idea of the great labour which must have been expended in the construction of these stone towns (for every building constitutes an entire town), I will only say that for many hundreds of *verssts* round there stretches a bare, sandy desert, and consequently bricks and cement and every other kind of building material must have had to be brought from a great distance, probably from Bukhára itself; that provisions for the labourers, to say nothing of the labourers themselves, had also to come from Bukhára. How much time, how much labour, then, and material must have been expended in one such building? And yet such structures were scattered with the bountiful hand of the great *Khakán* almost by the side of every caravan route of Central Asia.

To-day I breakfasted in a thoroughly European style. Everything had been sent from Bukhára by order of, and through the friendliness of, the Amir. Thus the breakfast was served on English crockery and china; the knives and the forks were from Henckel at Solingen, the spoons were of Russian manufacture, the table linen was from Vladimir. Melons were served up at desert, and it certainly was very agreeable to taste fresh melons at the end of February in a bare and sandy waste whereon water, fit to drink, is not always to be had.

The *Karaul-Beg* to-day warned me that breakfast the next morning would be at *Khokand*, a stage which is distant 1 *tásh* (10 *versts* = 6½ miles) from *Bukhára* and that there a *Toksába*, with a detachment of troops, who had been sent expressly for the purpose by the *Amír*, would meet me.

Khokand, 28th February (12th March).—At length the weary desert, through which we had been riding for several days past, came to an end, and in place of sand we now went through deep mud,—mud so deep that I thought that all the horses would dislocate their legs in slipping about for two good hours in a sea of deep and sticky slush.

The distance between *Karaul** and *Khokand* is reckoned at 4 *tásh*, i.e., about 50 *versts* (33½ miles), for the *Bukháran tásh* is not less than 10 *versts* (6½ miles). Three *tásh* lie through the desert and the fourth *tásh* through inconceivable mud. Two *versts* (1½ miles) from *Karaul* we rose to a flat and sandy plateau. Here the surface of the ground was strewn all over with lumps of quartz. All around is a shroud of a dirty yellow sand whereon the eye finds nothing to light, every square *verst* being as similar to its neighbour as one drop of water resembles another. The whole track is whitened with the bones of fallen animals, and in all directions rise up the low sand hillocks of a limitless ocean of sand. An indescribable feeling of sadness is produced by this desert waste. And yet this is only a very small area, a narrow gulf of the great sandy ocean of *Turán*. To a European it is unintelligible how any human being can exist in such a waste for the space of an entire lifetime, and yet to the semi-barbarous *Turkumán* it is very little inferior to *Paradise*, for it is to him the most attractive country in the world.†

A sloping sandy descent brought us to the foot of a very sharply cut ridge of limestone formation. Here too there were lumps of alabaster. The road crosses this ridge by a low pass, which rises some 200 or 300 feet above the level of the surrounding plain. At the very foot of the ridge lie the ruins of a *rabát* called *Máma-Jargáti*. On the General Staff Map these ruins are marked as a village. Now I do not know what sources of information were made use of in the compilation of this map, but it was very much out as regards my present line of route, and it appears to me that this locality has been delineated from information found in *Burnes'* work. At the ruins of *Máma-Jargáti* there is not a drop of water.

From the top of a low pass there opened out a landscape more varied than that which it had been our lot to gaze upon since we had left *Kárshi*. To the west glistened the large salt lake called *Shor-Kul*. To the north-west and north were indistinctly visible the dark masses of the gardens and suburbs of *Bukhára*.

As soon as we had descended from the ridge spoken of, we seemed literally to sink into a salt quagmire. Here our track lay over a tongue of land between two salt lakes, and, therefore, the locality was very

* This *rabát* (*serai*) bears this name, because there is always stationed in it a party of *Bukháran* horsemen for the protection of travellers from *Turkumán* robbers and other steppe pilferers. — *Author*.

† Specially as the said *Turkumán* has probably seen no others. — *W. E. G.*

marshy, for in all directions lay pools of a yellowish salt water. Some of these had dried up leaving a thick crust of salt. In some of these pools I found crystal cubes side by side with needle and slab-shaped pieces of briny salt. Even the surface mud was encrusted with a white deposit of this mineral, and certain patches of ground were covered with such a thick layer that the locality seemed as though it were enveloped in a covering of recently fallen snow.

On my asking the *Karaul-Beg* whether the people of the country obtained their salt from these salt lakes, I received a negative answer, for it seems that the salt supply of the city of Bukhára is obtained from salt mines in another part of the country.

At a distance of 3 *versts* (2 miles) from the foot of the ridge, the salt deposits became less and the first villages appeared, in truth very squalid, and further on were some stunted corn-fields. But the mud did not come to an end; in fact it was here even still thicker and so our poor horses constantly stumbled and threatened their riders with momentary falls.

Here, at the roadside, rose up a high hill (*Kurgán*) the sides and top of which are thickly covered with grave-stones. Just at this moment there filed past us a long string of camels laden with Bukháran cotton. Some yards further on there now appeared people dressed in *khaláts* of varied colour, hereupon the *Karaul-Beg* informed me that these were the *Toksába* and *Shigavul* with their suite, who had come out to meet me. This meant that the halting-ground was close by; we accordingly rode forward towards the group that was awaiting us, and exchanged greetings with its members. It seemed that both these officials, of whom one was the *Toksába*, a sort of Field-Marshal commanding the entire garrison of Bukhára, and the other was the *Shigavul*, a sort of Minister of Foreign Affairs, had come out the previous day from Bukhára to Khokand for the express purpose of meeting us. We then all rode together to the halting place, where, of course, were repeated the usual salutations and inquiries as to the state of each others health. The good wishes of the Amír, who had heard of my indisposition and who had sent expressly to know how I was, were then conveyed to me. I need hardly add that this delicate attention on the part of His Highness was very flattering to me.

On the evening of this day, the *Mirakhur*, Rahmat-Ullah, came to me. This truly loquacious individual immediately began a lively conversation, in the course of which he told me, and inquired about, various subjects; how, for instance, that he had been to Tashkand and lived there, about our stay in Afghánistán, about the illness of Shir-Ali-Khán, about recent events in Afghánistán, and about the disorders which had occurred at Mazár-i-Sharif, about the military operations of the Afgháns against the English, &c., &c. He wished to know the strength of the Afghánarmy, because when the *Kamnáb*, Muhammad-Hassan-Khán, was at Tashkand, he had told him that Afghánistán could put into the field 100 battalions of infantry, and that their armament was better than that of the English, &c., &c. Neither was the *Mirakhur* silent on the subject of my visit to Bukhára, telling me, for the hundredth time, the history of the medicine which I had given the Amir at Shaar. In conclusion, he announced that, perhaps, on the morrow, or even later, he would again set

out for Táshkand. It seemed to me an awkward question to ask him why he was again going to Táshkand; but when I inquired whether he was going to stay there long, he answered that would depend on General Kaufmann. At length he took his leave, wishing us good rest from our difficult journey and making us over to the care of the *Toksába* and of the *Shigavul*. He then started off to go to the Amír in order to tell His Highness in what state of health he had found us.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE TOWN OF BUKHÁRA.

Entry into the town of Bukhára—A Jew—Our quarters—Letter from Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán—Maksud's story—Espionage of "our kind, dear friend," the Beg of Shirabád—The prattle of Rahmat-Ullah, *Mirakhur*—A native spectacle—A *virtuoso* on the *Kamáncha*—Visit to the Amír of Bukhára—Unexpected termination of the audience. The guest of the *Kush-Begi*—Bogdanoff's cigarettes—The Amír's presents—The citadel of Bukhára—My surgical patients—Yakúboff the Jew—Fresh news about Afghánistán—Drive through the town—Search for dervishes—The *Kalandar-Khána*—In the bazaar of Bukhára—Mixed types—The *Madrissa* of Mir-Aráb—A colossal minaret—In a native "university"—A huge student—The discontented professor—Course of teaching in the *Madrissa*—Bird's-eye-view of the town of Bukhára—Vendors display their wares—Rate of exchange for Russian money at Bukhára—Again in the Bazaar—Dervishes—Our ordinary *tamasha*—Journey to the tomb of Khwája Baha-Ed-Din—Again on the roof of the *Madrissa*—Unexpected scandal, occasioned by the beautiful half of the Bukhárán population—Evening saunter in a garden—Visit of Muhammad-Sharif-Bii, Governor of Bukhára—First spring festival at Bukhára—The popular promenade—A guest at the house of the Governor of Bukhára—News from Afghánistán—Bukhárán hospitality becomes inconvenient—Farewell audience of the Amír of Bukhára.

YESTERDAY at 8 A.M. we left Khokand, which is not a separate village, as shown on the General Staff Map, but a suburb of Bukhára. The *Toksába* and the *Shigavul* accompanied us. Our route, right up to the city walls, lay through a thickly populated and over-built locality. No traces of salt were now visible, but the mud was very deep. Houses and various buildings alternated with small fields, covered with the greenest corn, and on all sides there were trees in full blossom, such as apricots, *aluchas* and *alvobukháras*. Along the street, which we traversed, there reigned the usual medley and patriarchal character of scene. Certain portions of the road were completely blocked by laden asses and camels, whilst backwards and forwards sauntered and jostled a large *Khalát*-wearing crowd. People stopped and workmen paused in their work and with gaping mouths slowly accompanied us with curious gaze. Certain persons too, who were of a more inquisitive turn of mind, followed at our heels and chattered in a loud tone of voice about something which I could not understand. Our route lay past two or three very ordinary-looking *Masjids* and several small *Madrissas*, whilst near the city gates we passed by a very vast cemetery filled with vaults and tombs.

Before us now rose up a wall of beaten clay some 30 feet in height. The entrance gates (at the south-east) and also the two towers on either side of the gates are made of burnt brick. From Khokand to these gates the distance is reckoned to be 10 *vershs* ($6\frac{3}{4}$ miles). After passing through them, we at once entered a crowded and narrow street, shut in on both sides by mud walls and two-storied houses. Two riders abreast could only just make their way along. Fortunately there were no carts (*arbas*) in this street, but we encountered loaded camels, which not only darkened the passage, but made it difficult for us to squeeze past them.

Further on we passed several handsome *Madriissas*, built of burnt brick, and we then reached the first shops of the bazaar, under the vaulted roof of which we made our way along. I was very much struck with the large number of Jews we met on the road; there could scarcely have been fewer of them than of other natives. After issuing from the pierced cupola-shaped roof of the bazaar, our further route lay past two remarkably handsome mosques, and we then came to the quarters appointed for our reception, having traversed about 6 *versts* (4 miles) of the city. The quarters, or so-called "palace," are, of course, of the same mud-built order as obtain almost everywhere in Central Asia. It is nothing out of the common; so I need not describe it here. Only one of its rooms has any pretensions to European style, and that one is fitted with a fire-place and glazed windows. Its furniture consisted of a fair table and four Vienna chairs, the backs and seats of which had been very fairly upholstered by natives with striped velvet.

We reached our so-called "palace" at 10 A.M., and here the most complete chaos reigned, for nothing had been got ready for the reception of "the dear guests." The rooms had not been put in order, the courtyard had only just been swept out, and the furniture dusted whilst the dust stood like an immovable pillar in the atmosphere around. However, a numerous crowd of Bukhárán domestics rapidly brought everything to the required degree of order, and soon the usual *dastar-khán* and breakfast were served up. After the lapse of some little time, the Bukhárán officials, who had accompanied me, took their leave and went off to the Amír with their report. I appointed 4 P.M. on the 2nd (14th) March as the time and date for my visit to the Amír.

Within two hours of the time of our arrival at our quarters in the city of Bukhára, a messenger from the *Bek* of Shirábád brought me a letter from Sirdár Naik-Muhammad-Khán at Mazár-i-Sharif. This letter was dated 13th Rab-i-Al-Awal [(22nd February) 6th March]. The following is the text of the letter as translated from the Persian.

"To my excellent, noble and amiable friend, Doctor Yavórski."
 "After friendly welcome and good wishes, I inform you that I received your friendly letter by the hand of the servant of the Governor of Shirábád, and I was very much rejoiced to hear of your safe arrival at that place.

"As regards your loss of 1,000 *tangas*, silver articles, and various poisonous drugs, we have not up till now, and in spite of all human exertions, been able to find them, and consequently I have allowed the people to come back who were sent from here.

"If the things should be found at any future time, I will at once send them to you. Here everything is going on well and all is quiet amongst the people and the troops. I wish you all that is for the best."

The back of the letter bore a seal mark stamped "Naik-Muhammad." It was, of course, very great kindness on the part of this Sirdár to tell me of the search which had been made, with the object of finding my things; and as I did not wish to remain in his debt, I instructed Zamaan-Bek to write a short and polite letter to him, in answer to his obliging communication. After this, the

jigit, Maksud, who had been in General Razgónoff's service, during his stay in Afghánistán, came to me. He said that the Afghán Mission had met with a hearty reception at Sámarkand, and had received a salute of 21 guns; that the Mission had spent two days in the city and had then gone on to Táshkand in post carriages. On my asking Maksud why he had left General Razgónoff's service, when the General had wished to take him to Táshkand, he replied that he had only temporarily left his service, and that he had every intention of going to him again; that he had come to Bukhára at the request of his sister, who had sent him three letters, in which she had given the Bukhárán bazaar rumours, which were to the effect that all the Russians left in Afghánistán had been killed by the Afgháns, and that with them their servants had also perished; that Maksud should go to her without fail, and so assure her of his own safety. He at the same time told me that he had left Sámarkand 22 days previously, and that he had heard nothing of us; but that when he reached Bukhára, he had learnt that the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán was dead, and that all the Russians who had been left at Mazár-i-Sharif had been killed. It was also rumoured that I and my companions had been surrounded by Afghán soldiers, and that though we had at 1st kept them off for three days, our ammunition had failed us, and that then the Afgháns had seized and killed us. Others, on the other hand, stated that we had not been killed, but that we had been robbed of everything, and then allowed to go in any direction. I was greatly surprised at hearing from Maksud a story of this kind, and I could not understand from what source these rumours proceeded. But to-day my insufferable but irresponsible *caravan-báshi* told me that in the suburbs of Khokand the *Shigarul's* people had asked him how we had been released, and how we had got away from Mazár-i-Sharif, if the Afgháns had shut us up in prison? To these questions Nassir-Khán had replied that, on the contrary, the highest Afghán officials had conducted us with honour out of the city, and that he thought it strange how such idle rumours had been bruited about. Whereupon the *Shigarul's* people remarked that they knew all from the Shirábád Bek's reports to the Amír. This meant that the source of all these rumours and tittle-tattle was once more ascertained.

Still justice must be done to our "friend" who had written such sweet letters to myself and to the other members of the Russian Mission, for he had excellently and methodically carried out his delicate duty of acting as a spy on the whole of us. It now became clear what his frequent despatch of letters to the Mission meant, and what his motive was for sending so repeatedly sweetmeats, fruit, and various other articles. All these were mere plausible excuses for enabling him to more conveniently spy out what we were doing. This alone I do not know whether he was a spy on his own account from a passion or love for the science, or whether he did so by the Amír's orders? Probably the latter supposition is the more correct. Further, it is clear why he sent the Bukhárán envoy, Ishán-Khwája, to the *Luináb* with his congratulations; and to myself it was now as apparent as God's day that Bukhára had not departed from her traditions, and was still on the look out for any plausible pretext for constantly spying on her neighbours.

Yesterday evening that experienced humbug and favourite of the Amír, the *Mirakhur* Rahmat Ullah, again came to us, and once more questioned me much about Afghánistán, about her military strength, and as to whether General Stolaitoff or General Razgónoff received the most attention when they were in Afghánistán; how the Afgháns received the members of the Russian Mission; how they escorted and treated them &c., &c. He told me that there was a rumour at Táshkand that General Stolaitoff had received from Shir-Ali-Khán 13,000 *tangas*. On this point Zamaan-Bek corrected the *Mirakhur* by saying that General Stolaitoff had actually received from the Afghán Amír a present in money, but that the amount was 11,000 rupees, not 13,000 *tangas*;* that he had not at first wished to accept the money, but seeing that the Afgháns would be offended if he refused, he was obliged to do so. Then the *Mirakhur* stated that it was also reported at Táshkand that General Razgónoff had done all he could to induce the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán to go to Russia, and that the Amír's desire to go to St. Petersburg was attributed to General Razgónoff's influence over him. He then informed us that the *Kush-Begi* had received information from Táshkand to the effect that the members of the Afghán Mission would return to Afghánistán within two or three days of the date on which the letter was written, and that they would be accompanied as far as the Amu-Daria by several Russian officials, &c., &c. At last he took his leave, wishing us good-night, and again saying that, perhaps, he would be going to Táshkand some days before we ourselves started for the same place. Why was he going there?

I ordered all our horses to be re-shod, and I hoped that during the several days which I resolved to pass at Bukhára, they would, to some extent, get rested. I had some idea, too, of substituting carts for all my pack-transport, since the road between Bukhára and Sámarkand is throughout fit for wheeled transport.

4th (16th) March.—On the 2nd (14th) instant, I did not visit the Amír, as this date fell on a Friday; and amongst the Bukhárans it is customary for the whole of the city population to assemble on that day at the Great Masjid (*Mechet-i-Kalión*) to pray. The Amír has always to be present on these occasions. The time for my audience had been arranged for 4 p.m., or the period of the *Namáz-i-Digar*. In consequence, however, of what has been stated above, the Amír could not receive me.

About 4 o'clock the *Mirakhur* came to me with a request from the Amír that I would excuse him, since he was not able to receive me at the time which had been appointed. He then immediately entered into a friendly conversation, but one of his remarks somewhat disturbed my equanimity. He let drop the observation that I had probably written down an account of all the places which I had visited, and that I had done very well in so acting, because I should thus give satisfaction to myself as well as to my friends and acquaintances.

This remark, I say, disconcerted me, since neither to him nor to any other native had I communicated the information that I had taken notes. I therefore could not understand whence he had become aware of the existence of my journal.

* The nominal value of the *tanga* is 20 *Kopecks* (about 6d.); that of the rupee is about 60 *Kopecks* (about 1s. 6d.).—*Author*.

The *Mirakhur* then went away, saying that he would come the next day [3rd (15th) March] for me, and that we would go to the Amír together. As he passed out of the room, he asked me why we had not been to see the *tamásha** on the previous day. To this question I replied that we had not gone, 1stly, because we were very fatigued after our journey and wished to take rest; and 2ndly, but chiefly because we had not yet seen the Amír's face, and we therefore thought it unbecoming to give ourselves up to enjoyment without having seen the chief of the State. The *Mirakhur* was evidently struck with this answer, and remarked that the Amír had supposed we had not gone to see the *tamásha*, because we were dissatisfied about something or other in connection with our reception, or with his hospitality, &c.; but that he now entertained the hope that his "dear guests" would not despise his attempts to amuse them, though he was aware, of course, that such amusements could not compare with Russian displays of all kinds.

The same evening, when the candles (from Hubbard's factory at Yekaterinburg) were brought in, dancers and musicians again made their appearance. To refuse to witness the native ballet and to hear the native musicians after the *Mirakhur's* remarks would have been awkward.

[Doctor Yavórski here enters upon a description of the kind of spectacle put before guests in the city of Bukhára. A spectacle which does not appear to differ much from uninteresting *tamáshas* prepared for the delectation of Europeans by their native hosts in this country.]

(Text resumed.)

About 10. A.M. on the 3rd (15th) March, the *Shigavul*, Sufi-Bii, came to invite us to go with him to the Amír. After we had all assembled, he looked at his watch and asked us to wait yet another five minutes; otherwise "we should be at the Amír's palace before the time appointed." When, therefore, the five minutes had elapsed, we mounted our horses and started off. Our route lay first of all through a portion of the bazaar, after which we came out into a large open space, at the far end of which rose up a hillock encircled with high castellated mud walls. Straight in front of us were very high and wide gateways built of burnt brick. On this hill, with its double line of walls, stands the palace of the Amír of Bukhára.

As soon as we had passed out on to the open space, and had come in sight of the gates, the Bukhárán officials with us, *viz.*, the *Shigavul*, the *Karaul-Bek*, and others, dismounted from their horses, informing me at the same time, that Bukhárans made a habit of dismounting at this spot; but that we, Russians, might do as we pleased. On reaching the gates, I too dismounted and passed through on foot. I have heard that certain Russians (officers or officials) who have been to Bukhára, and who have visited the Amír, would on no account dismount at the gates, but insisted on riding through them, and that their doing so was very displeasing to the Bukhárans. Such Russians considered it derogatory to comply with the request made to them. But why they should have

* A Bukhárán *tamásha* consists of dancing, singing, playing on various musical instruments, the performances of clowns, a doll's theatre, various juggling tricks, and animal baiting. — *Author*.

thought this concession beneath them I cannot understand, since the observation of the requirements of politeness can scarcely be held to be derogatory, especially in a country wherein everything depends on politeness and the rules of decorum. In Bukhára, as in Central Asia, generally a guest always passes on foot through the gateway of his entertainer's house. In the particular cases of which I speak, the host was the Amír of Bukhára, who, besides ordinary politeness, might look for a certain amount of the respect which is his due. Persons, therefore, who have ridden through his gates have broken through the customary and uniformly obligatory rules of politeness. Such a procedure would resemble the case of a man riding into the room of one of his acquaintances; and I will go further. I regard the Bukháran custom of dismounting before the gates of their citadel, in which have lived their line of sovereigns for a thousand years past, in the light of the Russian habit of passing through the famous "Red Gates" of the Kremlin at Moscow with uncovered head. Imagine the indecorum of that foreigner who, after he had been warned of the custom, would not remove his hat on passing through those gates.

At the gateway of the Amír's palace, I noticed several mortars without their carriages, and over the gateway a clock. There were no sentries at the gates. The walls here are more than 35 feet thick. After we had passed through the gates, we were met by the *Mirakhur*, *Ulaichi*, *Inak*, and certain other courtiers. We had now to ascend over a narrow but well paved pathway, and then to traverse two or three narrow and tortuous lanes before we found ourselves in the court-yard of the Amír's palace, which proved to be an ordinary but very large building. After passing two or three terraces, up to which led narrow, stair-cases with three or four steps and no balustrade, we ascended to a terrace, passed through two or three rooms, and found ourselves in the presence of the Ruler of the Faithful. The Amír was sitting on a very inferior sort of chair in the centre of the room. I thought that he would have received me in the throne-room; but in this I was mistaken. As I entered the Amír smiled, and his good-looking face, shaded by a strongly grizzled beard, put on an affable expression. Without rising from his chair, he put out his hand for me to shake, and then with a gesture pointed to the chairs which had been prepared for Zamaan-Bek and myself. We then sat down, and the usual conversation ensued, the subjects being the ordinary compliments and exchange of good wishes. When I started off to go to the audience, I supposed that it would be prolonged, and I imagined that the Amír would begin to ask me about the sojourn of the members of the Russian Mission in Afghánistán, and about the latest events at Mazár-i-Sharif; but my expectation was not fulfilled. The fact was that, after a conversation of a few minutes' duration, we had exhausted the whole stock of compliments and good wishes, and silence ensued. The Amír was on this occasion very pensive. I reckoned on Zamaan-Bek's coming to my assistance, but he obstinately held his tongue. There thus ensued an awkward and dead silence. I wished to renew for the tenth time the flow of all kinds of good wishes; but at this juncture Zamaan-Bek made a movement as though he wished to get up, and then the Amír gave the sign that the audience had come to an end.

After this we had to go and pay a visit to the *Khush-Begi*, or Bukhárán Chancellor. The person holding this office is the highest official in the Khánate of Bukhára, but his is not the highest rank in the ladder of the Bukhárán administration.

Above him is the *Khush-Begi-Atálik*, and above him again the *Mirza*; but there are no individuals with these two ranks at present in the Khánate of Bukhára. In former days, when the sovereignty of Bukhára did not represent "only a simple sound" as now, but when it was a mighty power, the dominions of which extended from Osh (Ush) to the Aral Sea, and from the Ural to the Hindu-Kush, the Trans-Amu provinces were administered by a Bukhárán lord-lieutenant with the dignity of Atálik.*

The *Khush-Begi* † also lives in the citadel, his residence being a few paces off that of the Amír. The *Khush-Begi's* quarters are, perhaps, still more unsightly than is the Amír's palace. He met us some paces away from the staircase leading to his house, and he proved to be a grey-haired, insignificant, humpbacked, old man, with a countenance in no way remarkable. He was dressed in a *Khalát* made of a beautiful Kashmir shawl; on his head was bound a turban of the finest Indian muslin wrapped round in innumerable folds. Interwoven with it were spangles and other ornaments. He courteously invited us to enter his apartments and to partake of Bukhárán hospitality. But it was evident that we had come to visit him earlier than we should have done, for the *dastar-khán* was not yet served, and nothing seemed to be in its place. At length there appeared the usual Bukhárán sweetmeats, sugared pastry, crystallised fruits, and sugar in loaves, and also refined. The table was then laid with a variety and abundance of dishes skilfully prepared and calculated to satisfy a more fastidious stomach in respect of gastronomic delicacies than mine. We took our seats and chatted, friendly remarks and reciprocal compliments passing between the *Khush-Begi* and myself. The *Mirakhur*, who had accompanied me to the *Khush-Begi's* house, soon went back to the Amír; but he again came back to me to say that the Amír was extremely pleased that we had passed through his gates on foot, and that as a mark of his gratitude he begged us to ride out on leaving the fort. Hereupon the *Mirakhur* shewed me from the window two led horses covered with brocaded *jhoods* and with bridles studded with turquoises; and he then informed me that the Amír, as a mark of his good-will and friendship, wished to present Zamaan-Bek and myself each with a horse. He afterwards drew my attention to a heap of *Khaláts* which the Amír had sent for ourselves and for our followers. The horse sent for my acceptance was a Turkumán *Argamak* of great height, with broad chest and flashing eye; but the animal was maneless, and its tail was very thin. Its coat was of a glossy coffee colour, and it looked superb as it caracoled past the windows.

After the repast was over, which had been put before us, our conversation had for its theme the reciprocal relations between Russia

* Yakúb-Bek, the founder of the Khánate of Kúshgúr, was at one time in the service of the Khán of Khokhand with the dignity of Atálik.—*Author*.

† From *Khush* or *Kosh*, a house whence is derived the word *Khoshevoi* or *Ataman* of Cossacks.—*Author*.

and Bukhára, which had been so long of a friendly kind, and which with each year became still more intimate. On this subject mention was made of the deceased Weinberg, of whom both the *Kush-Begi* and the *Mirakhur* spoke most favourably, regretting his untimely death. "They expressed the hope that it might please God that such a man should be found for the post of diplomatic agent"; for, said they Weinberg did much good for Bukhára; the Bukhárans believed his word, for he always kept it. Perceiving that Zamaan-Bek had made for himself a roll of paper preparatory to smoking, the *Khush-Begi* took out some keys from the girdle of his *Khalát*, handed them to his house-keeper, and ordered him to bring some cigarettes; and in a few seconds Zamaan-Bek was inhaling the aromatic smoke of a cigarette from Bogdanoff's factory. Some short time after this we took our leave of the *Khush-Begi*, who accompanied us to his very gates, and thereby shewed us very great honour.

They now brought us the horses which the Amír had given us, and invited us to mount. My Turkumán was very spirited, snorted and reared up as soon as I attempted to put my foot into the stirrup, and seemed generally very restive. To ride on him, therefore, seemed an operation of some danger, the more so as the turquoise-studded bridle did not appear to be at all trustworthy, and in the event of its breaking my triumphal progress would terminate very disastrously. In spite of this, I bravely jumped on the steed, pressed his round flanks with my legs, stretched the bridle in order to try it, and violently pulled the animal on to his hind legs. After this I rode quietly out of the gates.

Although the view which I obtained of the Kremlin of Bukhára was but a superficial one, I could not but perceive that in its general features it very much resembled the Moscow Kremlin, if we leave out of consideration the newest buildings in the latter city.

6th (18th) March.—I could not manage to write up my journal every day, because for two whole days I did nothing but ride about the city, endeavouring to make myself as much acquainted with it as possible. I saw very much of interest, and even that was not only new to me myself, but also to my readers. I will therefore endeavour to describe in detail all that I saw and heard. I established a free dispensary for sick natives, and, to do justice to the Bukhárans, they did not delay to pay visits to the Russian doctor, nor did they apparently despise Russian "Káfir" medicine.

[*Dr. Yavórski here enters into a description of the diseases and treatment of two of his cases whilst at Bukhára, one being that of a Jew suffering from partial spinal paralysis; the other that of a Bukháran with a complaint which he calls hamiplegia sinistra. The other diseases which he treated comprised ordinary syphilis, rishtha (filria medinensis), various skin complaints, aneurism of arteria femoralis, &c., &c.*]

(Text resumed.)

I was much interested in the condition of the Bukháran trade mart, and so I asked Yakúboff* to prepare a list of goods on sale with the

* A Jew who spoke Russian well, having been to Moscow and to the Nijni-Novgorod fair.—*Author.*

prices opposite each, as I wished to ascertain the comparative demand for Russian, English, and French manufactures respectively. Yakúboff promised to bring me this list, declaring at the same time that Russian goods sold well, and that in quality they surpassed those of Western Europe. The cheapest but the worst manufactures in the Bukhárán market are English. The best silken materials are French, and this statement was confirmed by the *Karaul-Begi*.

The 10th (22nd) March came, but Yakúboff did not appear, and I am afraid that he had no intention of so doing, probably thinking that I was collecting the particular information for Tâshkand merchants, whose competition he dreaded.

Meanwhile I received fresh news from Afghánistán, the information being derived from a letter received from Mazár-i-Sharif by Afghán merchants trading at Bukhára. Amongst other items were the following:—Sirdárs Muhammad-Ibrahim Khán and Ahmad-Ali-Khán, the son and grand-son, respectively, of the late Amír Shir-Ali, having fled from Mazár-i-Sharif to Bámián, received a letter from Yakúb-Khán at Kábul. In this letter Yakúb-Khán reproached them for having left Mazár-i-Sharif at such a critical time, when they should have remained there and taken the administration of the country into their own hands, instead of allowing it to pass into those of his infant son, Muhammad-Isa-Khán. He, therefore, begged the fugitives to go back, and with the aid of his “adherents and of all honest persons” to administer the affairs of the country. Muhammad-Ibrahim-Khán and Ahmad Ali-Khán accordingly listened to Yakúb-Khán’s advice, and on their return to Mazár-i-Sharif began to conduct the affairs of the country in the name of Yakúb-Khán and of his son Muhammad-Isa-Khán. Their first act was to slay the former *Luináb*,* and also Sirdar Faiz-Muhammad-Khán; and then everything quieted down at Mazár-i-Sharif. In the same letter it was stated that one of the most influential persons in Afghánistán, Asmat-Ullah-Khán, son of Aziz-Khán, who had fled not long before Shir-Ali’s death to Kohistán, received an invitation from Yakúb-Khán to return to Kábul, and to serve him as he had served his father. One of the most respected Afghán Mullahs also urged Asmat-Ullah-Khán to return to Kábul and to serve his country against their common foe, the English. Asmat-Ullah consented, and his arrival at Kábul was expected from day to day.

A certain priest by name Sáhib-Zádah collected at Kuram† an Afghán levy, and having attacked the English at Kushi,‡ defeated them and took nine of their guns. After Asmat-Ullah had joined him, Yakúb-Khán made up his mind to renew hostile operations against the English.

I will now pass to a description of the town of Bukhára.

On the 4th (16th) March, Zamaan-Bek and I, accompanied by an escort of six Cossacks, the *Karaul-Begi*, and a numerous suite of Bukhárans, started off to see all the objects of interest in the city. At first our route lay through the bazaar, the streets of which are so narrow that not more than two horsemen can ride abreast. Sometimes

* An incorrect piece of news, see later on in the narrative.—W. E. G.

† The geography is somewhat confused, in addition to the false statement about the guns—W. E. G.

a cart meeting us would completely obstruct the road, rendering it necessary for us to turn up a side street. The goods placed on tables, hung up by strings and heaped on the ground, caught the eye on all sides. It would be superfluous to attempt to enumerate the various articles, and I will only say, therefore, that specimens of everything which Central Asia produces, and which comes from other countries, were there; Russian and Western European wares being side by side with those of the local market. We now passed through the so-called "Red Gates." Under stone arches, crowned by a vast cupola at every point of junction of the several streets, I saw money-changers with heaps of silver and copper coin on rudely constructed tables. Our route now lay past shops with various metal-wares, and further on by heaps of potters' work. We rode through the closed-in streets of the bazaar almost up to the city walls.

I wished very much to see the Bukhárán dervishes, or, as they are locally called, *Kalandars*. We therefore rode out to one of the city suburbs where stands the *Kalandar-Khána*, or "asylum for dervishes." At some hundreds of yards from the city walls there is a mud building not very dirty, although one cannot describe it as clean. Around it for a distance of at least one square *verst* are tombs and vaults thickly crowded together. Under the walls of the *Kalandar-Khána* rose up a pole, from the top of which hung a bundle of wool and hair—a sign that here is the tomb of some saintly personage. Being acquainted with types of dervishes from the drawings and descriptions of the famous artist V. Vereshtshagin, I expected to see something truly original, although the *Karaul-Begi* had warned me that I should see nothing peculiar "except men drunk with opium." I did not, however, see even them.

We entered the precincts of the mud building, and here were only two dervishes, ordinary old men who differed in no way from other mortals. The other inmates of this asylum were at the given time in all probability absent in the bazaar, seeking alms. Dissatisfied with what I had seen, I went behind a low wall which partitioned off this cell from the one adjoining, and I then saw sitting under a tree an old man who was warming himself in the sun and chewing something. On going up to him I saw before me a lean figure with a pale yellow coloured countenance and sunken eyes, which seemed as though they were glazed and motionless. Here, thought I, is at last an opium-eater caught in the very act! But a piece of *chupatti* which the old man held in his hand, and a portion of which he was evidently munching in his toothless jaws, dispelled all my illusions. As we approached, the old man opened his half-closed eyes and gazed at us with a bleared expression. He then besought our alms, and began to say something of which none of us, even Zamaan-Bek, could understand a single word. Hereupon my ubiquitous but irresponsible *caravan-báshi*, Nassir-Khan, approached the dervish, and the matter then became explained. The unfortunate old man was a native of India, and he was speaking Hindustáni; and it turned out that Nassir-Khán could talk his language too. I gave the old mendicant a few *tangas*, and hastened to get out of this den of wretchedness, both physical and moral. We then mounted our horses, and turned their heads towards the city.

After having ridden some little distance into the interior of the city, we once more found ourselves in the bazaar, up the centre street of which we passed. And now what a varied and stirring sight met my eyes. Types of all the races of Central Asia were here side by side. There a native Bukhárán, with his finely-cut features and his trade-like physiognomy, alongside of the Hindu money-changer, who gazes with greedy eyes even on his own money. This being with an oval face and coarse hard features, with a red blotch on his forehead, and high cone-shaped *pagri*, looks as though his moral conscience had not yet been aroused by anything. He, in fact, exists for money, and not money for him. The broad open physiognomy of the Sámarkandian, with his stock of silken webs, presents a sharp contrast to the appearance of the trading-Jew, with his drawn-out and pallid face, as though hewn out of marble, but enlivened by sharp sly eyes. The high cheek-boned, flat-nosed, plate-shaped-faced inhabitant of the Kirghiz steppe, with his narrow eyelids, covering eyes that slant inwards, idly saunters from one shop to another, until he jostles against the robber of the Turanian steppe, the Turkumán, whose coin-shaped features, darkened by a short but very thick beard, bear an expression that neither indicates any peculiar fierceness, nor for that matter any softness at all. His small grey and more often hazel eyes, betokening cunning, glare out from beneath his capacious lambswool *papakha*, which is well pressed on to his head. He sells nothing, but neither is he a purchaser of aught. Here comes a tall, broad shouldered Afghán, whose swarthy features, black glistening eyes, long and bushy beard, and long uncombed and shaggy hair at once denote his nationality. His occupation will be either that of a money-changer or trader in Indian tea, or sometimes a seller of turquoises, *lapis-lazuli*, &c., &c. Here is the long, lean, and hairy countenance of the Persian. A high lambswool hat pressed on to the nape of his neck, a long and slightly hooked nose set on a lively cast of countenance, red-tipped finger nails, at once tell you to what country he belongs. He is sure to be a vendor either of fruit or of silken material. Alongside of him you will see a very compact figure of middle height, with very mobile and expressive features, lit up with large hazel and sometimes black glistening eyes, indicating the native of Pesháwar. Here, too, you will also see the Kazán Tatar and the Astrakhán Kálmak, and occasionally the lemon-yellow-coloured Chinaman, or even the wild son of the Caucasian mountains. Representatives of all these peoples either jostle each other in the narrow half-lit streets, or sit demurely behind their shop fronts.*

We rode for a long time underneath the roofs and arches of the bazaar, and all at once came out into the clear light of day in the neighbourhood of a very large building; and then within the limits of a small square there rose up before our eyes a truly grandiose picture, for we were now at the threshold of one of those buildings which have made Bukhára famous, and which have given the city world-wide renown for its tile adornments.

* To Bukhára there are yearly brought from European Russia from 25,000 to 30,000 camel-loads of various goods; from India there come 12,000 camel-loads; from Persia and Khurássán 3,000 camel-loads. In the Bukhárán market foreign produce is classed in respect of quality as follows:—First French, then Russian, and last of all English.—*Author*.

Before us towered a building constructed of burnt brick of very striking proportions.

The principal façade of the building is ornamented with a huge portal that rises to a height of several feet above the walls of the building. The sharp outlines of its arches, the lightness and elegance of their summits, the brilliant designs of their variegated tiles present a truly original and striking spectacle. This building is the famous *Madrissa* called the Mir-Aráb. This huge and splendid structure loses very much from the circumstance that it stands in a very confined space. A more open locality would enable one the more clearly to describe its merits, although I cannot refrain from the observation that the houses and bazaars which surround it on all sides—and these in the majority of cases are wretched hovels—do much to assist the *Madrissa* of Mir-Aráb in producing a greater impression on the spectator by reason of the stronger contrast.

Before the entrance to the *Madrissa*, there is a raised plinth paved with burnt brick tiles; and this plinth is approached by a broad flight of steps, which are very much out of repair, and are further obstructed by heaps of raw cotton and goods of various kinds. On ascending the raised plinth, we found ourselves under the lofty dome of the portal, and through this we passed into the inner court-yard of the *Madrissa*.

This court-yard is in the form of a square, and is surrounded on all sides by the walls of the building, and by the dwelling-rooms of the students of the *Madrissa*. The rooms are built in two storeys, those on the ground floor being for the professors *mudarrissi*, those on the upper floor for the students. The walls of the building are 70 feet high, the height of the portal and of the prayer niches, with their arches that run along the sides of the building, being over 100 feet. From the remains of the tiles which cover the façades of all the niches and of the arches, the designs representing garlands, bouquets, and various flowers, one can to a certain extent judge of the former excellence of the ornamentation. The arches over the niches and the domes of the latter are likewise covered with beautiful tiles of varied patterns, which have preserved a surprising freshness of colour. The flowers which are made of minute and very delicate mosaic look like real ones. On the arches over the niches have been laid tiles traced with verses of the Kurán in Arabic letters. It was the more sad to contemplate this stupendous relic of the past glory of Bukhára in that not one of the arches or of the niches had completely preserved its floral tracing, and wherever these bare patches appeared, the Bukhárans of to-day had endeavoured to repair the damage with a coarse dressing of alabaster and mud. This kind of treatment calls forth in the mind of the spectator a still more sorrowful impression than the bare patches would do if left untouched. I repeatedly asked intelligent Bukhárans why they did not put new tiles in the place of those which had fallen, and I received a reply to the effect that now-a-days no one can make tiles of the same description. It should be stated that the *Madrissa* of Mir-Aráb was built 357 years ago. I wished to go out on to the roof of the building (the roofs of buildings in Bukhára, as throughout Central Asia, generally are made in the form of a terrace, and serve for the inhabitants of each particular place

as a promenade, and a spot where they can obtain rest from their work), but I received a refusal. This refusal was explained by the circumstance that the locality around the *Madrissa* was built over, and that the adjoining houses were occupied by the families of the city people and by members of the priesthood, and that from the roof of the *Madrissa* everything might be seen that was going on in the neighbouring courtyards, and even in the interior of the dwelling-houses. Whilst this explanation was being offered to me, I noticed two or three students lying on the roof of the building and poking their heads through the low parapet for the purpose of gazing at us. Accordingly I did not fail to draw the attention of the worthy grey-bearded rector of this Musulmán University to the circumstance. I observed that whilst "Káfirs" could not go up on to the roof, "faithful" students could. Whereupon the garrulous rector made some joke in reply to my remark, called out to the students to at once stop looking down through the chinks in the parapet, and then proposed to me that I should go and inspect the cells of the students and of the professors; but I declined this honour, because I had just minutely examined those of the *Madrissa* of Mullah Muhammad-Sharif, which I will describe further on. After lamenting over the desolation and destruction of this not particularly old temple of science, and having taken a last look at its sky-blue cupola, so boldly standing out against the sky-line and crowned with a large nest of storks, I returned by the road by which I had come to the square outside.

Beside the *Madrissa* of Mir-Aráb, there is a colossal minaret, which rises to a height of at least 175 feet above the level of the ground below. As in all probability an excellent view of the city of Bukhára was to be obtained from its summit, I very much wished to ascend it; but the door leading up was said to be locked, and the custodian was, it was stated, not to be found. I could guess that the door was *not* locked, and that the custodian, if such a person really existed, had *not* gone anywhere at all, but that the same cause, as I have previously indicated, *viz.*, the dread lest a "Káfir" should from the top of the minaret cast an incautious glance on the "holy of holies" of a Musulmán, his harem, had closed the door, and had led to the gratuitous falsehood that the custodian was not forthcoming. Subsequently the *Mirakhur* confirmed this supposition of mine by saying that even the *muezzin* (*azánchi*) only went out on Friday to the top of this minaret to summon the "faithful" to prayer, and that the women in the neighbouring houses hid themselves on those occasions, and did not enter their courtyards at all. On the same date I enjoyed a view of the city of Bukhára from the roof of the *Madrissa* of the Mullah Muhammad-Sharif, to the description of which I will now pass. I saw this *Madrissa* before my visit to that of the Mir-Aráb, and it then produced on me a strong impression; but after I had seen the latter building that impression completely wore off.

The *Madrissa* of Mullah Muhammad-Sharif was built 80 years ago by a rich merchant during the reign of the Amír, Mir-Haidar-Khán, who was famous for his devotion to the creed of the *Sayads*, or saintly class. What especially struck me about the *Madrissa* of Mullah Muhammad-Sharif was the mosaic setting on the dome over the

portal. The arches, which are of Moorish design, are edged with small tiles of varied pattern. The originality of the picture simply does not lend itself to description. Equally good, too, is the frame-work of the portal, which is inlaid with very delicate tiles of various colours.

As we rode into the court-yard of this *Madrissa*, out of a room facing the entrance door there came out an old man, and said something in a not very soft tone as it seemed to me. I supposed that the worthy professor, for so it turned out he was, was not over-pleased with us for breaking into his solitude; in fact I thought that he was upbraiding us (he spoke in Turki and not in Persian, and I therefore did not understand him). But all at once his tone changed, and it then proved that he was addressing to us a speech of welcome. The probable explanation of such a metamorphosis was that at first he had not perceived the *Karaul-Beg* who was accompanying us, and he therefore did not particularly wish to have anything to say to us; and that the subsequent change in his tone arose because his old but still piercing eyes caught sight of our official patron, the *Karaul-Beg*, amidst the crowd around.

However this may be, when I expressed a wish to look at the building, he obligingly proposed that I should go into his cell; and having thrown back the reed *portiere* which closed the entrance to his abode, he politely motioned to us to go on in front.

It was a small room, the floor of which was covered with carpets; the walls being plastered, and the cornices traced over with floral designs. It was evident that everything was well and neatly kept. In the centre of the room, underneath a wadded cover, was the *mangal*, or earthen pan with wood ashes; and around, in picturesque disorder, lay old black books in leathern bindings. The room was lighted by a stone grating high up in the wall. This then comprised the very comfortable cabinet of the Mussulmán professor; for, of course, it contained no furniture, since an Asiatic does not require any. To the left of the entrance, and at some paces distant from the door, squatted a tall student, who was bending over an open book which lay on a cloth spread out on his knees. The book was a copy of the Kurán, and the student informed us that, under the professor's guidance, he was reading a translation of its contents in the Turki language. The student's type of countenance, his pronunciation, and certain other indications induced me to think that he was not a native of Bukhára, but a new-comer, and probably either a Kazán Tatar, or a native of the Orenburg steppe. On my asking him whence he came, he replied that he was from beyond Táshkand, from the Government of Kara-Kuz. When I remarked that there was no such Government; and that perhaps he meant to say the Karakaralin district, he correctly repeated the name. In the course of his further utterances we caught the words "Irtist" (probably Irtish) "army corps commander," "*gubernia* (government)," "Diwán," "*Yárim-Pálsháh*," &c., in which Zamaan-Bek could see no sense at all. The student then spoke of his poverty and asked us for alms, whereupon his preceptor became displeased, and in our presence administered a rebuke to him. He was silent for a moment, but was evidently not dismayed by his reprimand, for in a short time he

said that, as he had asked us for alms, he would be abashed in the presence of those standing around if we did not give him something. In order, therefore, to release the poor fellow from an awkward situation, I gave him some *tangas*, and Zamaan-Bek did the same.

Then the worthy professor, who was evidently dissatisfied with his post, began to tell us of his burdensome situation, and how that the *Kush-Begi* was constantly persecuting him; how that he had formerly been one of the city *Kázis*, and how that he had been deprived of that post through the *Kush-Begi's* intrigues. He, therefore, besought us to intercede for him with the *Kázi-Kabán*, or supreme judge, and with the Amír. The *Karaul-Beg* made a note of his name accordingly. After this I looked at the quarters occupied by the students. These are mere confined chambers, not more than seven square feet. In each of these cells, which are without any furniture and even a bed, are located one, two, and even three students, who are usually poor individuals, who have come to Bukhára, the "cupola of Islám," from all ends of the Musalmán world. The cells are built on no plan, and are without symmetry. In some cases they lead out by doors into a common corridor; in others, a long winding passage, which and now ascends almost to the roof of the building, now descends to the lower story, leads you into one common room. The solitary chambers are usually allotted to those students who display a special propensity towards a contemplative mode of life. Some of the chambers lead out by windows into the street, but most of them open out into a court-yard.

Students who come for training to this *Madrissa* have to chose the faculty, so to speak, with which they desire to occupy themselves. Of course the word "faculty" is too high-sounding an epithet to apply to the sections of science pursued in native "universities," and so, if I employ this expression, it is solely for the sake of convenience, and to render myself more intelligible to those of my readers who are unacquainted with Central Asia. Students* are taught in a *Madrissa* free of charge, and they go there after they have been examined by the *Mudarrissis*.

They then attend as many lectures as they please. After entering a *Madrissa* (without any documents as to personal identity), and having taken possession of a cell, the student receives a certain amount for his maintenance from the *Madrissa*. The fact is, that the establishment of a *Madrissa* is not permitted by the native authorities unless the founder supplies also funds for its maintenance as well as for the support of its professors and students. The capital required for this is usually contained in land, the rent of which is applied to the wants of the *Madrissa*. Such land bears the name of "wakuf." In this way both the professors and the students on joining a *Madrissa* are secured from actual want. There are, too, certain very rich *Madrissas* which can give to their professors a very adequate competency; but in the poorer institutions of the same class both the tutors and the pupils are very badly off. The duties of rector of a *Madrissa* lie chiefly on the material side of the business; thus he supervises the collection of the *wakuf* rents, the issue of the professors' stipends, and the allowances

* Their native name is *Talib-ul-Ilm*, which signifies "a thirster after knowledge," i.e. *shayird*, or disciple.—*Author*.

to the students. He is, in short, rather an inspector of a state institution than a rector, and is more suitably described by his native name of *Mutawalli*. The *Mutawallis* of a rich *Madrissa* are appointed by Kháns and Amírs, and are usually the kinsmen of the founder of the institution.

I have stated above that a student, when he joins a *Madrissa*, selects the department of science which he wishes to enter. Such departments are sub-divided into lower, middle, and higher, and there are students who may be at a *Madrissa* for 20 or even 40 years, and yet cannot pass through all three classes of Mussulmán knowledge. There are others, of course, who surmount the complete course, but the majority of students are content with the lowest class, *viz.*, rhetoric and grammar. In the middle class philosophy, dialectics, and metaphysics are taught, and in the highest the curriculum consists of Divinity and the Spiritual and Civil Law, *i.e.*, the *Shariat*.

Of the method of teaching in a *Madrissa* nothing much can be said, the entire system being permeated with middle age scholastics, coloured by a strain of Mussulmán fatalism. Sciences, in the true sense of the word, are not taught, but dogmatic fallacies, teeming with fables, stories, and often with ridiculous notions, constitute the system of education. Of the existence of real science no suspicion exists, but a belief in astrology obtains, and search is still made for the "philosopher's stone."

Students in their acquirement of the sciences enjoy perfect freedom, for they can hear what professor they please, and they may stay at the *Madrissa* as long as it suits them, *i.e.*, either for a few days or for several years. The search after science usually goes on according to one uniform standard; then the *Shagird* learns off by heart certain parts of his book, and the professor explains to him all the difficult passages. Sometimes it so happens that a capable pupil takes the place of a teacher. Generally speaking, a teacher remains at a *Madrissa* for the term of his natural life. In some cases he goes from one institution of the kind to another, and he may sometimes perform the duties of a city *Kázi* in addition to his own.

After examining the interior of the building, I ascended by a very tortuous staircase to the roof, whence I could with one glance take in the whole of the immense city which lay before me. About a verst ($\frac{3}{4}$ mile) to the north-east rises up the cupola of the *Madrissa* of Mir-Aráb to which no other building approaches in height. Opposite to it is seen the *Mechet-i-Kalían* (or the Great Masjid), whilst another great minaret raises aloft its turban-shaped head. Almost in the centre of the city appears the dark mass of the Amír's palace. Beyond it to the north-west glistens in the sun the stream of the Zaráfshán river.

On this date I examined several other interesting buildings, and I rowed out on to the famous *liáb-i-khaur* (or the pond) dug out by Diwan-Beg, which, however, I did not find nearly so attractive an excursion as Vámbéry appears to have done. After that we once more rode through the bazaar, and so returned home. Our trip had lasted about five hours. It was now 12 P.M., and time to go to rest, although I had not yet written down all that I ought to have done.

It was necessary, however, to note down the following information from Afghánistán, which Nassir-Khán had received through his local Afghán acquaintances.

Muhammad-Yakúb-Khán had sent for to Kábul, the troops quartered at Herát, and when the Kábul correspondent of the merchants wrote, these troops had reached Girishk. Muhammad-Ibrahim-Khán, after leaving Ahmad-Ali-Khán and Muhammad-Isa-Khán at Mazár-i-Sharif, had himself started for Kábul on a summons being sent to him by Yakúb-Khán, and he had taken with him nearly all the troops which were at Takhtapul and Mazár-i-Sharif. He had also ordered to accompany him the two regiments which comprised the garrison of Tásh-Kurgán. It was stated that a levy of women had been formed at Kábul, numbering 6,000, for battle with the English, with whom Yakúb-Khán had resolved to continue the war to the last extremity. All this information was communicated as a great secret to Nassir-Khán by the Afghán merchants trading at Bukhára, and only because, as they said, he was himself an Afghán."

7th (19th) March.—I now began to feel weary of a further stay at Bukhára, more especially as there was nothing particular for me to do there now; and therefore to sit still with folded hands was not at all to my taste. The honour had been paid to the Amír of sending a Russian doctor to treat him; and as he was now well, it was time for me to be off. I should here state that at any other time I should with great satisfaction have availed myself of the hospitality of the reigning sovereign, but under present circumstances I could not, without detriment to my own service, remain any longer at Bukhára. It was, moreover, necessary that I should hasten back to Táshkand in order to make a circumstantial report to the head of the administration regarding recent events in Afghán-Turkistán. I therefore intimated to the *Kash-Begi* my wishes, and after some time I received from him an answer to say that he would communicate them to the Amír. The *Karaul-Beg* then observed that in all probability *Jauáb-Ali* would wish to keep us two or three days longer, as on the 9th (21st) March would begin the festival celebrating the advent of the spring season, and that, perhaps, it might seem fit to the Amír to offer us some amusement by enabling us to witness the various local merry-makings and the fair, which would be opened especially for the occasion.

"You will be pleased not to show displeasure at such detention," said the *Karaul-Beg* to us; "for when the members of our Mission were at Táshkand, they too remained for Russian fête-days (this meant *let for tut*).

I, of course, answered that it would be agreeable to us to see all that he had mentioned; but unfortunately we must hasten back to Táshkand.

Yesterday I inaugurated a sort of bazaar at our quarters, to which they brought various carpets (Turkumán and Khurássán), dressed lambskins, and various silken stuffs. The carpets were very good, especially the Turkumán; for although they are not so bright as those of Khurássán make, they are extremely durable both in respect of web and colouring. Some of them looked like real velvet, although they were only made out of camels' hair. Khurássán carpets have no sale at

Bukhára, and, speaking generally, their reputation has gone. It is said at Bukhára that their colouring possesses the same defect as that of the English manufactures, *viz.*, that it soon fades. Nevertheless, the prices asked for Khurássán carpets is still very high. Thus for one carpet measuring over 12 by 8 feet, they were asking 400 *tangas*, or more than 100 *roubles* in credit notes at the current rate of exchange. It should be stated, however, that this was the best specimen displayed, the workmanship being very fine and soft, both as to quality of wool and to grouping of design and colouring. But the vendors themselves stated that certain colours fly and fade, especially light blue. For a Turkumán carpet measuring 14 by 6 feet they asked 190 *tangas*, or more than 50 *roubles* in credit notes. The choice of Kara-Kul lambskins was very limited, and the specimens shewn were of very inferior quality. The *Karaul-Beg* said on this subject that it was not now the time to buy lambskins, as they were not fresh ones, but only the remnants over from the previous year. Nevertheless the price asked for them was very high; thus for one little skin of a grey colour they asked 30 *tangas*, or about 9 *roubles* at the current rate of exchange. On this subject I consider it opposite to here call attention to the rate of exchange of our paper *rouble*, which at Bukhára is far from being at a high standard. Thus for 100 *roubles* worth of Bukháran silver, one has to pay 145 and even 150 paper *roubles*; in other words, the paper *rouble* is only worth from 67 to 69 *kopecks* instead of 100; and in all probability its value is sometimes even lower, for when I was at Guzár I heard from a Jew, whose name is already known to the reader, that there they would only give for 100 paper *roubles* 50 *roubles* worth of silver *tangas*, *i.e.*, the paper *rouble* was valued at 50 silver *kopecks* only. I had hoped to receive from the Jew, Yakúboff, a return of the state of the local market, and I had intended to extract from it information relating to the rate of exchange of Russian money in the Bukháran market. But I waited in vain for Yakúboff to make his appearance, and so to-day I arranged to send my ever ready *caraván-báshi*, Nassir-Khán, to the bazaar to collect for me the necessary information. If he should succeed in this exchange business, as he has hitherto succeeded in the Afghán question, I would remit his fine, and would forget his former irregularities in the "horse transaction."

I will now continue the account of my rides through the city of Bukhára.

In riding through the bazaar on the 4th (16th) March, after we had inspected the various buildings, we passed several dervishes standing in a circle underneath the arches of one of the bazaar cross-roads, and singing out some sort of barbarous melody. A certain sort of sepulchral tone of the refrain caught the ear of all of us, for it was plaintive and full of sounds of despair and of abnegation of all things mortal; whilst from every raising and modulation of the voices there seemed to be breathed forth a strong feeling of fanaticism. One of the dervishes specially attracted my attention by his strange dress. He was a tall, emaciated fellow, not very old, with a wild and somewhat dazed expression of face. A high hat, with all sorts of colouring, still further betokened that its wearer was an idiot. A collection of rags, to which as an article of dress it would be impossible to give any kind of name,

covered his dirty, bronze-coloured body. But I noticed that he had neither the classic cups hanging to his girdle, nor the other characteristic appurtenances which Vereshtshágin depicts. In fact, the greater portion of the dervishes whom I met in the bazaar in no way differed from the vagabond mendicants to be seen in European Russia, and had nothing original about them; for almost all of them will collect wherever there happen to be hot *chupattis* or a savoury *pilau*.

I met several Tatars whose traditional trade with Bukhára has been from time immemorial in soap. On my asking them whether they came from Kazán, they said they did.

On returning to our own quarters, I wished to escape from the buzz and noise, and from all the bustle and dust of the bazaar, and also to breathe a fresh and pure atmosphere. I therefore went into the garden attached to our quarters, which covered an area of several acres, and to the west extended right up to the city wall. Here I really found good air, for the garden was planted over with fruit trees, all of which were in full bloom at the time. Apricot, peach, *alucha*, Bukhárán plum, and cherry trees all seemed to be emulating each other in the putting on of new colouring, whilst across the bright, azure-coloured heaven there was not a single cloud.

The gardener (*chár-bágh*), an old man of about 70, met me bringing some sort of grass, which he at once began to praise, saying that the *Kush-Begi* himself was constantly in the habit of eating it at his dinner. On tasting it, I found that it was *parei*, which in the orchards and gardens of Bukhára is grown as a vegetable. I ate this first specimen of advancing spring with satisfaction. From that day the aged gardener brought us daily several bunches for our table.

On the evening of the 7th (19th), they brought once more, for our amusement, dancers, musicians and singers.

[*Dr. Yarovski's endless description of this sort of recreation is omitted from the pages of the English text.*]

(*Text resumed.*)

On the 5th (17th) March I visited Mazár-i-Sharif, the tomb of the greatest of the Bukhárán saints. Indeed, the Bukhárans assert that, after Mecca and Medina, this tomb is held throughout the Mussulmán world to be more sacred than any other. A pilgrimage thrice performed to this spot is considered to be equal to a journey to the *kaaba* or tomb of the Prophet (Muhammad). The Amírs of Bukhára have to make a point of going there once a year for the purpose of performing a pilgrimage. In former days too "pious" Amrs used to go the whole way on foot from Bukhára to this spot, about 10 *verst*s (6½ miles). Now, however, the Amír performs the pilgrimage on an ass's back.

Mazár-i-Sharif is nothing else than the tomb of a famous local saint, Khwája Baha-ed-Din, who died in the year 1388 A. D. He was the founder of the Central Asian order of Mussulmán monks or dervishes called *Nakshbandis*. His name is famous throughout Central Asia, and is mentioned with the greatest respect; moreover his followers are to be found in almost every city in Asia which is peopled by Muhammadans.

I was afraid lest I, "an unbeliever," would not be permitted to visit the tomb of this saint but; the Amír obligingly acceded to my request.

Accordingly, at 10 A.M., we mounted our horses and started off. We had scarcely gone 2 *versts* ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles) beyond the city walls when crumbling sands began; nevertheless, the canals (*ariks*), which at this season contained no water, marked a green line of vegetation, whilst the mulberry trees seemed to stand up out of the hillocks and sand dunes like so many stakes. To the left (east) of the road were here and there seen strips of green corn; and indeed wherever the nature of the soil admitted of it, there were miniature fields sown over with winter corn. On either side of the road stretched unsightly hovels, which in some cases were half buried in the sand. We rode past two or three very inferior mosques and *Madrissas*, and it was apparent that here the local inhabitants were carrying on a desperate struggle with the waste that was advancing upon them. It is only by the careful maintenance of a system of irrigation canals that this part of the country can be saved from complete destruction by the ever-widening stretches of drift sand. After the track had followed a sandy zone for a distance of from 4 to 5 *versts* ($2\frac{2}{3}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles), the soil began to get better, and now more substantial-looking buildings and denser gardens came in sight, whilst in the canals there was flowing water. The nearer we approached the site of the saint's tomb, the more people appeared in the streets.

At length, out of a dark and as yet scarcely green depression* there rose up the cupola of the saint's tomb. We dismounted at a *caravanserai* some paces distant from the tomb, and here a repast had been prepared for us. After drinking some tea and taking a short rest, we started off to inspect the tomb itself.

At first Zamaan-Bek entered the tomb in company with the *Karaul-Bek*. It was now noon, and so Zamaan-Bek desired to say the *namáz-pishin* (or the Mussulmán noon-day prayer) at the saint's resting place, and I was not disposed to interfere with his devout disposition by my presence. Before we had set out, Zamaan-Bek had expressed a wish to perform the pilgrimage in a *khalát* and native headdress, and I had endeavoured to dissuade him from carrying out any such intention by representing the unfitness of such a masquerade in the case of an official of the Russian Government, the more so as there was no direct law in the Kurán which made it compulsory to wear a *khalát* under such circumstances. Zamaan-Bek agreed with my view of the matter, but with evident disinclination, for, on setting out, he took with him a *khalát*; but I do not know whether he put it on or not when he entered the precincts of the saint's tomb. When he returned from his pilgrimage, there followed after a large crowd of boys of all sizes, who called out loudly their demands for alms; and if they had not feared the *Karaul-Bek's* stick, they would probably not have observed much ceremony towards him in spite of his "orthodoxy."

* During the spring season in Central Asia, the gardens present an original sight, for all the trees are covered with blossom as though sprinkled over with snow, and not a green leaf has yet appeared. It is only when the blossom begins to fall that leaves make their appearance.—*Author*.

In a quarter of an hour's time I started off to see the resting place of Khawája Baha-ed-Din. A swarm of youthful mendicants pressed round me on all sides. The tomb and mausoleum stand at the far end of a vast court-yard. After entering the gates in the wall encircling the court-yard, and after passing a number of old and young women who asked our alms, we proceeded by a very wide stone pavement. On the one side ran a wall, and on the other a low building constructed of some kind of grey stone. After following the pavement for a distance of about 200 paces, we reached the portal of the tomb itself. In an arch there hangs a sort of lustre or candelabrum. After passing through more gates, I found myself in a small square court-yard smoothly paved with dressed stone. Straight in front of me rose up the tomb itself, which is cut out of some rough stone. At its foot is fastened a pole, from the top of which hangs a tuft of hair or wool. Alongside of this on another pole is fastened a green standard, below which is a heap of sheep's horns. Along three sides of this inner court runs a gallery raised on pillars. From the flooring of the gallery, which is richly ornamented with very small mosaics, hang several lamps, all of which are kept constantly alight. The sides of the gallery are very plain, and are neatly stuccoed, although they bear traces of recent tile ornamentation. The mosaics on the flooring of the gallery are in an excellent state of preservation, and a gold setting glistens in parts of them. This mausoleum was raised a long time after the saint's death, *viz.*, in 1490, during the reign of Abdul-Aziz-Khán, fourth sovereign of the dynasty of the Shaibánids.

As I entered the inner court, I noticed before the tomb a group of worshippers, and amongst them two or three grey-beards. Judging by their silent and contemplative attitude, it might be supposed that they were mentally reciting a prayer, although the hour of the *namáz-pishin* had gone by. I wished to look more closely at the tomb, but the group of people around it positively barred my curiosity. I, moreover, read in the eyes of one of the grey-beards a look of disgust and disquiet at the presence, on this sacred spot, of a "káfir" with six Cossacks behind him, carrying their carbines over their shoulders.

After passing out of the precincts of the tomb, our route lay by a monastery (*Khanki*), to which a *Madrissa* is attached. It is a simple building of burnt brick, two storied, and without any tile ornamentation. It is evidently a more modern structure than the tomb.

The pious worshippers of Baha-ed-Din relate many marvellous things concerning him. Thus they say that he had the gift of prophesy. But, as is always the case, such statements are greatly at variance with the truth. I will adduce one such story as an example. The saintly *Khawája*, who lived all the year round at Bukhára, was said to know everything that went on throughout the world. Thus, when Osmán took Constantinople, this holy man informed the people of Bukhára of the fact the same day. How far the story may be believed can be seen from the circumstance that Baha-ed-Din died in 1388, whilst Constantirole was not taken by the Turks until some time afterwards. But the pious worshippers of the saint are strangers to historical criticism and to any kind of scepticism, and will never believe anybody who takes the trouble to point out the incorrectness of their traditions. They say

also of Baha-ed-Din that, foreseeing that his ashes would receive a certain amount of honour from future generations of the faithful, he once for all laid down the rate of payment to be offered by pilgrims to his tomb. He, therefore, ordained that such offerings should not exceed 7 *tangas* from one person, and that they should not fall below that sum. But the liberal hand of a pilgrim is not hindered by any such fixed rate, and so in the shrine there is always a sum considerably in excess of what was stipulated by the saint in his life time as leviable from each person. The local Mullahs, however, interpret the sainted Khwája's wishes to mean that his rate had reference to his tomb only, and that each offering that amounts to more than 7 *tangas* is to be applied to the use of those of other saints.

By the time we had returned to our halting place, it was past 2 P.M., and the weather had altogether changed; the heavens were overcast, and a high wind had begun to whirl about the sand. After partaking of breakfast, we returned to Bukhára.

8th (20th) March.—Today Nassir-Khán came to me with fresh news, which a *Jigit*, in the service of an official of the Kátta-Kurgán district, had brought into Bukhára some days previously. The *Jigit*, as an acquaintance and comrade of Nassir-Khán's, had told him the following. About a month previously Abdul-Rahmán, who was living at Sámarkand, had sent Abdulla-Ján, one of his trustworthy servants, to the Amír of Bukhára to ask him to give up to his master (Abdul-Rahmán) the 500 Afgháns soldiers who were in his (the Amír's) service. But that soon after Abdulla-Ján had reached Bukhára, the Amír had received a letter from General Ivánoff, Governor of Sámarkand. It was not known what General Ivánoff wrote to the Amír, but, after the receipt of his letter, Abdulla-Ján was arrested. The *Jigit* who imparted this information to Nassir-Khán had been sent by his chief to Bukhára to obtain information of various kinds, and also to ascertain what had happened to Abdulla-Ján.

Up to this time I had not received from the Amír any information regarding my departure from Bukhára, and so I spoke seriously to the *Karaul-Beg* on the subject.

"I do not know," said I, "why the Amír, in return for the kindness shewn him, should have requited us by an objectless detention at Bukhára. I suspect that he has not been made acquainted with my wishes."

To this remark the *Karaul-Beg* replied that he had communicated my wishes to the *Kush-Begi*, whose duty it was to report them to the Amír, and that he, the *Karaul-Beg*, could not say whether he had done so or not.

"In such a case," I continued, "be so good as to inform the *Kush-Begi* that he is greatly mistaken if he supposes that hospitality shewn to me against my own wishes can be pleasing to me."

After this conversation, I once more started off to take a look at the city, and I again went to the *Madriassa* of Mullah Muhammad-Sharif, with which the reader, as well as I myself, have already been made acquainted.

[There being nothing of interest to record on the occasion of this second visit, the greater portion of this part of Doctor Yavórski's narrative has been omitted.]

(Text resumed.)

From the roof of this building I could judge of the dimensions of the inner walls of Bukhára. These walls describe an ellipsis of which the longer arc measures from 5 to 6 *versts* ($3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles), and bears north-east and south-west; the shorter arc measuring from 3 to 4 *versts* (2 to $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles). The whole of this area is thickly built over, there being scarcely any vegetables inside the walls. On the east side of the city are the *Madrissa* of Mir-Aráb and the *Mechet-i-Kalián* (or Great Masjid). The bazaar, too, inclines towards this direction. But it may be said that the city of Bukhára is nothing else than one vast bazaar. If, however, Bukhára within the walls is almost devoid of vegetation, presenting a surface of nothing but greyish yellow roofs, then Bukhára without the walls is buried in a dense mass of gardens.

Today some Afghán merchants brought me some Nishapur turquoises to look at. For two stones, each with a diameter of from 3 to 4 *lines*, and for four others with a diameter of from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ *lines*, they asked 300 *tangas*, or about 87 *roubles* (about 87 rupees). The turquoises were undoubtedly good ones, but the prices asked for them were excessive. The merchants, who were Lohánis, corroborated the news from Afghánistán which Nassir-Khán had brought me.

9th (21st) March.—This morning the *Karaul-Beg* came to us very late, and contrary to his usual custom. He then told us that he had seen the *Mi. akhur* preparing to start for Táshkand, and he had, therefore supposed that the *Mirakhur* was going with us. After saying this, he went on to tell us that to-day we would certainly be informed as to when we could leave Bukhára, since the Amír had long been aware of my wishes. But I waited the whole day long, and the evening brought with it no intimation of the kind.

The extraordinarily warm weather and the pure fragrant air of the garden induced Zamaan-Bek and myself to leave our dreary and chilly quarters (notwithstanding its fire-place) and transfer ourselves to the garden, where I ordered carpets to be spread out on the terrace and tea to be served.

[The rest of this day's narrative has been omitted from the translation, as it contains nothing whatever of the slightest interest. It may be observed, however, that the name of the Bukháran servant who was appointed to look after Dr. Favórski's wants was *Rasulverdi*.]

10th (22nd) March.—This morning, after the usual salutations, the *Karaul-Beg* informed us that Muhammad-Sharif-Bii, governor of the city of Bukhára, and son of the *Kush-Begi*, was coming to pay us a visit. Although it was very early to receive visitors, the *Bii* had not to wait a minute in the ante room since we were already dressed. I therefore met him in our reception room, and had not gone out into the court-yard, as I should have done in conformity with local custom.

In this way I wished to give him to understand that I was not especially pleased with Bukháran hospitality.

On entering the room, the *Bii* exchanged salutations with us, and began to excuse himself for not having visited us before; for, said he, "I ought to have done so immediately after your arrival at Bukhára."

"I beg that you will not be angry with me on this account, but I must do what the *Janáb-Ali* requires," he mumbled in a confused manner.

He then besought us not to feel weary, as in all probability the Amír would on the morrow send us word about our departure from Bukhára. He went on to say that Rahmat-Ullah, *Mirakhur*, was quite ready to go, and that we should probably go together.

To this I replied that, of course, this would afford me much satisfaction.

"As regards your request that we should not feel weary here," I continued, "such a feeling arises from the indefinite nature of our position, and also from the want of any serious occupation. My wish to hasten back to Táshkand must be clear to you, since you have yourself just spoken of the demands of the State service; and the same service is summoning us to Táshkand, because it is necessary for me to make certain reports to the head of the Russian administration in Turkistán. Meanwhile, we are delayed here without any intelligible cause, and in all probability the Governor-General will not be pleased at our protracted stay at Bukhára." Upon this the *Bii* said that the Amír earnestly begged that I would stop yet a little longer; and he added: "With respect to your apprehension lest the *Yarim-Pádisháh*" (literally "half-sovereign," a title given by the natives of Central Asia to the Governor-General of Russian-Turkistán) "should be displeased by your delaying at Bukhára, the Amír will send the *Mirakhur* with a letter to him, explaining the cause of your detention, and taking all the blame on himself. On this account, therefore, please be easy in your mind."

A very monotonous conversation then ensued between us, and I cannot understand why the *Bii* had come to visit us at all, for it seemed as though he too only awaited a favourable opportunity to bring his drawn-out visit to an end. Fortunately, and to our mutual satisfaction, a *Mirza* came in at this period and handed a paper to the *Bii*, who, having perused it, raised it to his eyes, and then after a pause said that he would come and see us again, when he hoped to be able to pay us a much longer visit than he had already done. He added that "State" service called him to the performance of his immediate duties, upon which he rose from his chair and took his leave.

To-day, as yesterday, a festival is going on here. Every year the spring season at Bukhára is celebrated with rejoicing, which lasts for several days, one year for a longer period, another year for a less, as the Amír directs; sometimes such a celebration will continue for a whole month. During this season of rejoicing all the shops in the bazaar are closed, and a fair is held on the *Rijistán* or open space in front of the Amír's palace. Here assemble almost the whole of the inhabitants of the city, rich and poor, high and low, small and great. The merchants and traders bring hither their wares and display them in booths, especially run up for the occasion. Jugglers and *bal'chas* amuse the people, who enjoy themselves, buy and eat, though they do not get drunk; enormous quantities of green tea are, however, consumed.

Having heard about this fair from the *Karaul-Beg*, I formed a desire to go and look on at the popular assembly, and so a report was immediately sent off to the *Kush-Begi* regarding my wishes.

Whilst the *Karaul-Beg* was sending off this communication to the *Kush-Begi*, Nassir-Khán brought me from a merchant the promised return about Bukhárán trade. The very large sheet was written all over with Persian characters and some special sort of signs. But there was now no time to read it, and so I deferred doing so until I reached Táshkand.

About noon the *Karaul-Beg* returned to our quarters with another man, who apparently was also a *Karaul-Beg*; for our own man showed a reluctance to sit down when I invited them both to be seated. The new-comer informed me that the Amír was pleased to allow us to go to the fair, and that the *Bii* hoped that, after we had seen the sights, we would go to his house and partake of such as he had to offer us.

We were quite prepared to set out, our horses were ready saddled, and the Cossacks were mounted, when the weather seemed to be so very unpropitious. Nevertheless the *Karaul-Beg* advised us to issue forth, assuring us that the storm would soon be over. We accordingly started off. On the road two or three heavy drops of rain fell, but it was soon over, the wind fell and the clouds were borne away in different directions; and by the time we had reached the *Bii's* house, even the dust, which the wind had raised, had disappeared as though there had been none at all.

The *Bii's* house is beside the *Rigistón*, and almost at the very gates of the Amír's palace. But before we went to it, we rode through the improvised fair, where there were people in thousands, and yet there was no crowding. Everybody, whether rambling about or sitting, or walking up and down, or trading, was clad in his best apparel. There in a corner between two rows of booths was a crowd standing round a *batcha*, who was sitting within a close circle of his admirers with an air of importance and the carriage of a ruling prince. He was pouring out tea and handing cupuls to certain of those about him. Now to receive a cup of tea from the hands of a *batcha* is considered at Bukhára to be the height of distinction and good-fortune. Such a recipient will at once rise in the opinion of the crowd, and will pride himself accordingly. At this particular moment the *batcha* had bestowed his attentions on an old man of 70. The boy's slight, soft hand was stretched out, and the old man slowly and reverently took the cup, and then made the *batcha* a very low bow.

It need hardly be said but that our cavalcade, consisting of two "Urus Turás," nine Cossacks, and several *Jigits*, drew very general attention. On the faces of many of the people there were smiles; on those of all curiosity, but on none did I perceive a single black look; nor did any fanatic mutter between his teeth the word *Káfir*! Without boasting I can say that I have done more than any one of the Russians who have visited Bukhára to make this city acquainted with the "Urus," for in my frequent rides in the city and beyond it, always attended by an escort of Cossacks, I have enabled almost all the local inhabitants to see, if only once, the face of an "Urus." Now the street

boys, whenever we make our appearance, loudly cry out, as to their oldest acquaintances, "Salaam-Alaikum."*

Bii Muhammad-Sharif met us in the court-yard of his house, and invited us to enter the room in which a table had been spread with viands. The dining-room was a large, bright, and well-plastered room. Round a large and rudely-constructed table were placed Vienna chairs with arms of different patterns. The floor was spread over with handsome Khurássán and Turkumán carpets of large size. On one of the bare walls hung a Réaumur thermometer, and in a corner, near the entrance door, was a large iron-clamped box which was evidently of Russian workmanship, and was bought in all probability at the Nijni-Novgorod fair. Through the wide unglazed windows could be seen a portion of the overhanging wall of the citadel rising to a height of from 50 to 56 feet.

Our repast was preceded by the usual and apparently unavoidable compliments and courtesies which obtain throughout Central Asia. The *Bii* again asked us to excuse him for not having been to visit us before. He went on to say that he had heard we were dull and displeased with something or another, but that on the next day the time fixed for our departure would be made known. As I had heard from Nassir-Khán on the previous day of the return of the members of the Afghán Mission from Táshkand, and of its arrival at Shahr-i-Sabz, and as I wished to verify the information, I enquired of the *Bii* if he knew anything about it? To this question he replied that, although he had his own correspondent at Shahr-i-Sabz, he had not received any such information. He added, however, that popular rumour—what is this popular rumour in Central Asia? It positively renders the telegraph wire useless—current on the previous Friday [*i.e.*, 2nd (14th) March] mentioned that the members of the Afghán Mission had left Sámarkand accompanied by a certain colonel and by General Ibrahimoff's brother. Our conversation then passed on to another topic. We spoke about Shir-Ali-Khán, and, of course, about his death, &c., &c. The *Bii* referred to Shir-Ali's relations with the Amír of Bukhára. For example, he related how that when Bulátsel was at Bukhára, he informed certain Bukháran officials that a letter would be received from Shir-Ali in a few days' time, conveying the intimation that the Afghán Amír would pass through Bukháran territory. But three or four days passed, and no such letter was received. Some six days later on, a letter came from the Amír Shir-Ali Khán to the Amír of Bukhára, to say that in consequence of his bad leg he had to put off his journey to Táshkand. After this again a report was received at Bukhára from the *Bek* of Shirábád, stating that the members of the Russian Mission, accompanied by four Afghán officials, had passed through his city. It then became known for certain at Bukhára that the Afghán Amír would remain at Mazár-i-Sharif. The Beg of Shirábád had also reported that "the people had two ideas about the causes which had hindered the Amír from going to Táshkand; some said that the Amír had put off his

* Bukháran Muhammadans, even of the lower class, appear to be more polite to Europeans than are the half-Hinduised Mussulmans of this country who would never dream of using the word "Alaikum" to any but one of the "Faithful," and who very rarely even say "Salaam" to an European.—*Translator*.

journey on account of illness; others affirmed that the troops at Mazár-i-Sharif had opposed his going." Our conversation then touched upon local diseases, on the Táshkand Agricultural Exhibition, &c. Our visit to the *Bii* lasted over two hours.

As we were riding towards the *Bii's* house, we met, at a few paces distance from our quarters, an Afghán who had been amongst the escort which had safe-guarded the members of the Russian Mission on their progress towards Kábul and back to Táshkand. I immediately ordered one of the *Jigils* accompanying us to invite the Afghán to our quarters and to there look after him, inquiring at the same time about everything relating to Afghánistán. When we returned to our quarters the Afghán had left, but Nassir-Khán told me about him, and also what he had said. An Afghán Mission was now at Bukhára, and the said Afghán was attached to its escort. The entire *personnel* of this Mission comprised 30 persons, and they received from the Amír of Bukhára a daily maintenance allowance of 200 *tángas*. The Afghán, when we saw him, was going to buy barley in the bazaar, and therefore could not remain long at our quarters.

11th (23rd) March.—It seemed that *Bii* Muhammad-Sharif had told an untruth when he assured us that on the morrow we should certainly be informed regarding our departure from Bukhára, for I waited in vain the whole of to-day, and not only did not receive the required information, but no message came from the Amír at all. When the evening set in, I began to speak to the *Karaul-Beg* on the subject, and he said that the Amír had probably not given any orders on the subject to-day, because he had gone on a pilgrimage to Baha-ed-Din's tomb, whence he would proceed to his country residence at Chahár-Bágh, where he would in all probability give us a farewell audience.

In all this I only saw the wish to detain me at Bukhára for several days. But I could in no way understand why the Amír thought it necessary to keep me against my wish and without the slightest gain to himself. Was it that he desired to send me with the *Mirakhur*, and that he was not yet ready to start? But then the *Mirakhur* could go as well alone. Lastly, the Amír knew that I was in a hurry to get back to Táshkand. What then did he want of me now? I will say openly that he was inviting unfriendliness on my part. I did not at all desire to have recourse to the last extremity and leave Bukhára without paying a farewell visit to the Amír; and yet if there were any more delay, I would not hesitate to do so.

The Afghán, whom we had seen the previous day, again came to Nassir-Khán, and told him that the members of the Afghán Mission to Bukhára were remaining here in the most complete ignorance as to what was going on in Afghánistán. They had despatched to Mazár-i-Sharif three messengers, of whom not one had returned. Fifteen days before they had received from Táshkand news to the effect that the members of the Afghán Mission to Turkistán had reached the Russian head-quarters and had been received with all possible honour.

12th (24th) March.—As no tidings had come from the Amír to-day, and as the *Karaul-Beg* was not to be seen, about 11 o'clock I gave orders for preparations to be made for our departure, for it seemed that the

Bukhárans had now lost all ideas regarding the law of hospitality ; at any rate I could not understand what they were doing. I, therefore, decided upon sending to the *Kush-Begi* a message to say, that if by this evening, I should not receive a definite answer from the Amír, then early the next morning I should start without waiting for the honour of seeing His Highness.

To-day the same Afghán again came to us and said, that on this date the members of the Afghán Mission to Bukhára had received a letter from Mazár-i-Sharif, which communicated the information that the English had been defeated in the Kuram Valley ; that several of their battalions had been routed ; and that the Afgháns had captured 7 guns. That the English troops at Jalálábád had been cut off from Pesháwar. That Nauroz-Khán, Yakúb-Khán's uncle and a son of the Akhund of Swát were harassing the English by making constant attacks on them. That, generally speaking, the English had a very insecure hold of the positions they had occupied. That they had despatched to Yakúb-Khán a Mission with offers of peace, promising to live in friendship with the Afgháns as they did formerly. That Yakúb-Khán had replied to the effect that owing to the hostile operations of the English he had already suffered much tribulation ; that because of them he had been imprisoned for some years ; that he had not yet been freed from moral suffering, as it was owing to them that his countrymen had regarded him as a traitor to his native land. That therefore he, Yakúb-Khán, now wished to show the Afgháns that he was a faithful and trustworthy son of their common land. Consequently he would not put down his arms so long as he had a single soldier, or as long as one Englishman remained in Afghánistán, and that with God's help he hoped to free his country from its invasion by an enemy, and, if not, so let it be. The same Afghán then informed us that Ghulám-Haidar-Khán of Wardak had been appointed *Inináb* of the *Chahár-Wiláyat*, and that the former *Inináb*, Khush-Dil-Khán, and Sirdár Faiz-Mulammed-Khán had not been killed, but were still alive and in prison. That the messenger, who had brought this letter to the members of the Afghán Mission to Táshkand, had reported having met at Sir-áb those of the returning Afghán Mission from Táshkand, that two Russian officials were with it, and that he (the speaker) had a letter for the returning Mission.

Whilst I was occupied in dressing the wound of an Afghán, who had been accidentally shot by the discharge of a revolver of small calibre, Zamaan-Bek engaged in conversation with one of the men who had brought the wounded Afghán to me. This man appeared to be the superior of the wounded man ; and he confirmed the information which we had received about there being in the service of the Amír of Bukhára 500 Afgháns, who had formerly served under Abdul-Rahmán, whose service they had exchanged for that of the Amír, when their former master had withdrawn to Sámarkand. The same Afghán further communicated certain information regarding occurrences in Afghánistán. This information was of the freshest, as he was quoting a letter received that very noon by Afghán merchants, trading at Bukhára, from their Kábul correspondents. It confirmed the news regarding the defeat of the English in the Kuram Valley, and also about the pitiable state of the English troops at Jalálábád. It said, too, that Nauroz-Khán, Yakúb-Khán's uncle, on

hearing of Shir-Ali-Khán's death and of the selection of his nephew as Amír, wrote to the English to say that he would no longer give them his support, and that he required them to evacuate the positions which they had occupied along the course of the Kábul-Daria, and that if they refused he threatened to close all ingress to and exit from the Khaibar Pass. That the English had, of course, refused to evacuate their positions, and that, therefore, they were now subjected to constant attacks on the part of the mountaineers. That after this the English had sent to Yakúb-Khán a Mission with ten *lakhs* of rupees and the following conditions of peace. Instead of the occupation of the four points in Afghánistán, which they had named to Shir-Ali, they now required only two points, *viz.*, Kábul and Herát, the English garrisons of which were to be stationed outside those cities, in forts specially constructed for the purpose. They further agreed to pay to Yakúb-Khán a yearly subsidy of not less than ten *lakhs*. Besides these conditions England would undertake to protect Afghánistán from foreign invasion.

To my question had Yakúb-Khán accepted the peace proposals of the English, I received an answer "that, of course, he had, if he had taken the money." Zamaan-Bek then inquired why, if Yakúb-Khán had taken the English money, he had also attacked them. To this question the Afghán replied—"The Afgháns are this kind of people. They will take money and they will attack the donors all the same if they get the chance.* He then related, almost word for word, the news which we had already received—news which had been brought to the members of the Afghán Mission to Bukhára.

To-day passed and still no communication from the Amír, neither did the *Karaul-Beg* come to us at our supper time. We shall see what the morrow will bring. There was no help for it, for we must, as Saadi says, "place on the carpet of expectation the pillow of patience."

13th (25th) March.—This morning, when the *Karaul-Beg* came to offer us the usual "Salaam," I asked him whether he had received any intimation from the Amír, and on his giving me a reply in the negative, it was quite clear either that the Amír was in no hurry to give his permission for our departure, or else that the *Bii* had not made his report as I had instructed him. To longer put up with such treatment was not in me, since at this time I was not a private individual but the representative of Russia. Further waiting and further concessions on my part would bear traces of abasement. Therefore, in the *Karaul-Beg's* presence, I summoned Nassir-Khán, my *caraván-báshi*, and ordered him to saddle all the pack-animals and to put on the loads. I then directed the sergeant-major to have his Cossacks ready for an immediate start. I further requested Zamaan-Bek to interpret to the *Karaul-Beg* all the orders which I had just given. "We have waited three days for the Amír's pleasure," said I to the *Karaul-Beg*, "and nothing has been intimated to us, whilst the *Bii* has done nothing but exercise deception. I cannot wait any longer, and I have, therefore, decided to go without a farewell audience. I have come to this decision with extreme unwillingness and

* Our experience of this people has shewn this description of them to be very true.—*W. E. G.*

regret." Seeing my arrangements and hearing what I said, and moreover noticing the movements of the Cossacks, *Jigits*, and drivers, the *Karaul-Beg* was disconcerted.

"The *Doctor-Tura* decided to make his arrangements fall in with the Amír's wishes," returned the *Karaul-Beg*, for did he not say we will go when it is agreeable to *Janáb-Ali*? If he said this, it is evident that he should wait for the Amír's permission to go."

I was surprised and displeased at this argument on the part of the *Karaul-Beg*. How could I explain to this stupid man what constituted politeness and what obligation? I then informed him that what I had said was due to friendliness on my part, and that if the Amír did not comprehend its true meaning, so much the worse for him.

"Another time," continued I, "I shall know that it does not do to be amiable with you people."

The *Karaul-Beg* now observed that if I, on arrival at Bukhára, had appointed a day for my departure, I should not have had to wait a single hour.

"All Russians who have come to Bukhára have so acted, and the Amír has never detained them another day. You should have done the same," continued the *Karaul-Beg*.

I then stated that, under such circumstances, I would appoint the next day for our departure, and that without fail.

"Go you then," said I, "and tell this to the *Bii*, and ask if it is pleasing or not to the Amír to grant me a farewell audience, for I will not alter my decision."

The *Karaul-Beg*, after such a categorical declaration on my part, hastened off to the *Bii*. Meanwhile the packs were already ready, and a sign was only awaited to start the animals off on the road. The sergeant-major came and informed me that the Cossacks were ready for the march, and asked if he should give the order to mount. But I ordered him to wait.

About noon the *Karaul-Beg* came back, bringing a note from the *Bii* to tell us that, according to his report, the Amír had consented to allow us to go and would send the *Shigarul* to invite the *Doctor-Tura* to go and see him at his country residence. I was, of course, very glad to receive this communication, for it signified that there would not now be an open breach in our relations, but why did the Amír think it necessary to detain us here until now? Strange people these Bukhárans!!!

Whilst we were dressing for the visit to the Amír, the *Shigarul* came to tell us that *Janáb-Ali* invited us to go and see him. He then informed us that the Amír was staying at his country-house, *viz.*, in the garden called *Shiri-Dár*, distant 5 *versts* (3½ miles) from Bukhára. We immediately mounted our horses and started off. The day was warm and even sultry and the air was filled with dust, especially on the road between the city and the Amír's country house. The fact was that during the Amír's stay in the country a temporary fair and popular promenade exist near to the Amír's residence, so that, on the line of our route, persons of every class were passing to and fro. The nearer we approached the Amír's garden the thicker became the crowds of people. At last the crush became frightful and progress was made almost impossible through

the throngs of people and the strings of carts. The whip of the *Kuraul-Beg* who went on ahead of us cleared some sort of passage, and when we reached the gates of the Amír's house, we found a guard of honour drawn up to receive us.*

At the gate we were met by the courtiers of the Amír, amongst whom were *Bii* Muhammad-Sharif and the *Udaichi*, Shaadi-Bek. After dismounting we passed into a court-yard, where the rest of our party remained. Then I and Zamaan-Bek, preceded by the *Bii*, entered another and smaller courtyard, at the far end of which appeared a very large and plainly constructed building wherein the Amír was waiting to receive us. The *Bii*, who went on in front, made low obeisances almost to the ground as he advanced. As he reached the door of the building, he stopped timidly, peeped into the room, and then, as if filled with alarm, drew back and motioned to us to advance.

The Amír was seated in the centre of the room, as on the previous occasion, on a very ordinary-looking chair, and his dress was of the poorest description. As on the occasion of our first visit, he remained seated, but offered us his hand in a friendly manner. Then we exchanged compliments, and I did not omit to extol his hospitality to the sky. In answer, the Amír expressed regret that he had not been able to show us hospitality for a longer period.

"You are in a great hurry to leave me and my capital," continued the Amír. "Perhaps it is because you are displeased with my reception of you. But I at least have endeavoured to show you all such pleasure and amusement as it is in my power to afford."

"The hospitality of Your Highness is celebrated throughout the world," I answered, "and for us there would have been no higher delight to have enjoyed this hospitality for as long a time as possible, had not our duty and our service recalled us to our posts." Our conversation proceeded in the same strain for some minutes, after which I rose and took leave of the Amír. At the door the *Bii* was waiting for us. He then conducted us to the garden, saying that the Amír wished to show us his new and not yet quite finished country palace. As we went along, we had to pass by the window of the room in which the Amír had just received us. Perceiving that he was still there, as I went past the window, I raised my hand to my head-dress, but the Amír only looked at us over his shoulder as we went by. We then entered another courtyard, where a very handsome large building of horse-shoe form met our eyes. It could at once be seen, however, that its architecture

* "The uniform of the rank and file is of the Bukhárán soldiery of a nondescript character, and easily imagined when I add that the Amír's soldiers find their own food and clothing. One soldier had buttons on his coat that had done service in various British regiments, the 11th among them, whilst their muskets are of all degrees of antiquity, one having been stamped in the year of Grace 1800. The Amír has 12 guns at Kitáb, 5 more at Bukhára, and his army consisted, it was said, of 14,600 warriors, of whom 6,000 were cavalry. Another informant said 20 battalions of 1,000 each and the cavalry as many more, but the *Kush-Begi* or 'Viceroy' told me 15,000, of whom 5,000 were cavalry. All of them are volunteers, who serve from 18 till death, on the munificent pay in the country of 17s. 6d. a month or at the capital of 20s. Another account I heard said 10s. a month; that these hired troops are a militia rather than a standing army, of which there is said to be none in the Khánate of Bukhára. The men live at home and come up for drill occasionally, and when they wish to quit the force, simply give up their muskets and uniforms and go about their business."—(Lansdell's *Russian Central Asia*.)

was a mixture of European and Asiatic. Generally speaking, too, the building was hardly deserving of the designation of a palace, but rather of the house of a wealthy land-owner. The courtyard in front of the palace was strewn with sand well rammed down, and for its lighting there was a huge glass chandelier which would contain from 30 to 40 candles.

We returned to our quarters about 6 P.M. The next day we quitted the walls of "noble Bukhára" or *Bukhára-i-Sharif*, as the Bukhárans themselves call their city, and we went on our way to the frontiers of our own dear Russia.

CHAPTER XII.

RETURN TO TÁSHKAND.

Route from the town of Bukhára to Kátta-Kurgán—Kirmana—Ziaddin—On the frontier—Heights of Zará-Bulák—A day at Kátta-Kurgán—From Kátta-Kurgán to Sámarkand—The Miankal Valley—Arrival at Táshkand—General glance at the events which occurred during 1878-79—Conclusion.

ON the 14th (26th) March we left Bukhára, and, having breakfasted at Kuyuk-Mazár, halted for the night at the village of Bustán. Our route throughout lay across a carefully cultivated country. Gardens gave place to fields, part of which had only just been ploughed up and part had been already sown over. The picturesqueness of the country round was still further increased by the fact that the villages were surrounded by small groves of trees and the roofs of the houses were, in many cases, crowned with the huge nests of storks which had but recently returned from the Himálayas and the Hindu-Kush. These birds loudly made themselves known by their curious cry, resembling the gurgling of water in a *kalián* or native pipe.*

In places the desert waste cut into the freshly ploughed fields and flourishing gardens, bearing with it the brackish gritty deposit of the neighbouring sea of sand.

Gurbun.—This is a very large village which is blocked up with fuel and timber of various kinds and sizes. Thus, side by side with miserable beams, lie poles, logs, and even twigs. This place is in fact the forest wharf of Bukhára, and to it is floated down from the upper course of the Zarafshán river the produce of the forest lands. In order that this supply may reach Gurbun, the very wide canal of Shahábád has been diverted from the Zarafshán and its course measures many miles. From Gurbun the wood supply is conveyed to Bukhára on carts (*arbas*) and the backs of asses, the distance being 7 *versts* ($4\frac{2}{3}$ miles).

The next day† we marched from Bustán to the small village of Malik. At a distance of $\frac{4}{5}$ ths *verst* ($\frac{8}{15}$ ths mile) from Bustán, the gardens and village come to an end, and the country partakes of the character of a desert waste which is called the "Malik steppe." As the soil of this locality is a sandy clay, it is terribly muddy when rain falls, but in the summer season, or in dry weather, it is very dusty. We traversed this tract, however, at a very opportune time; for though a slight fall of rain had scarcely moistened the surface of the ground, it had clad the steppe with a slight carpet of green. Soon to the right of us rose up a low mountain range, which stretches right up to the town of Kátta-Kurgán. The Malik steppe is approximately from 30 to 35 *versts* (20 to $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles) long and 20 *versts* ($13\frac{1}{2}$ miles) across. There are other roads leading from Bukhára to Kirmina which turn the Malik steppe on the north and traverse the narrower parts of the Zarafshán valley.

* The familiar hubble-bubble of India.—*W. E. G.*

† No date is given in the Russian text.—*W. E. G.*

We halted for the night at the village of Malik, having ridden on this march a distance of about 35 *versts* (23½ miles).

From Malik to the town of Kirmina, the distance is considered to be about 20 *versts* (13½ miles). At a point $\frac{4}{5}$ ths *verst* ($\frac{8}{15}$ ths mile) from Malik, there is a very effective half ruined mosque, ornamented with tiles, which attracts attention, and here gardens begin which continue in one thick belt of forest growth right up to the town of Kirmina. This town is in no way remarkable, but it covers a large area. The bridge built by Abdulla-Khán has made the town of Kirmina famous throughout Central Asia, and it is, moreover, the only bridge across the Zarafshán river.

At Kirmina we enjoyed the hospitality of Samat-Khán, a son of the Amír of Bukhára, who was performing the duties of Bek at the place. He was a healthy, strong-looking lad of 18, without a single hair on his face. It seemed to me, however, that he was more intelligent than his brothers, whom I had seen in various towns of the Khánate of Bukhára. But apparently he is not distinguished for courage, because when I gave him a Berdan breech-loader and wished to fire it at a mark before him, he timidly expressed a desire that I would not carry out any such experiment. I then regretted that I should have given a rifle to a man, who, it might be, would never take it into his hands; but there was no help for it.

We passed the night at Kirmina and the next day, *i.e.*, the 17th (29th) March, we marched to Ziaddin, a distance of 35 *versts* (23½ miles). Before we had reached the village of Táš-Kupruk (called after the stone bridge over the Nura-Pai canal), we came in for some heavy rain. It was well that Táš-Kupruk was not more than 5 or 6 *versts* (3½ or 4 miles) off. We accordingly urged our horses forward, and in the space of from 15 to 20 minutes were under the hospitable roof of the *Ak-Sukál* or village elder of Táš-Kupruk. By this time we were all wet through and were not a little annoyed thereat, but the Bukhárans blessed our arrival, since we had brought with us the rain, which, as they said, is the source of their prosperity. As our own spare clothing was in the boxes on the pack animals which were far behind, the kind Bukhárans clothed us in their own *khaláts* and fur-coats. A heated stove, hot tea, and an ample breakfast enabled us to laugh at the rain which still continued, and at the bad weather that had set in. Our hospitable hosts brought in some *mangals* and dried our drenched clothes on them, so that in an hour's time they were again ready for us to put on.

Having rested at Táš-Kupruk for some hours, waiting for the rain to stop, we once more started off. From Táš-Kupruk to Ziaddin the distance is reckoned to be a *tásh*, *i.e.*, from 8 to 10 *versts* (5½ to 6¾ miles). After the rain, which had fallen, our route lay through a continuous bog, into which our horses' legs sank almost up to the knee. The Nura-Pai canal, which is also diverted from the Zarafshán river, was as swollen and noisy as though it were a mountain stream, whilst the gardens and the fields were all under water. The villages along the route seemed to rise up out of a sea of mud; in fact mud appeared to be all around us, as well as on our clothes and on our faces. I was therefore very glad when I saw before me the serrated wall of the Ziaddin fort.

At the gates of the fort a "guard of honour" of Bukhárán soldiers was drawn up, and with it were two standards. As I rode up the street, formed by the double ranks of the guard, the band played, the drums beat, and the standards were lowered. Of course I adequately acknowledged the salute, but I was, under the circumstances, much embarrassed by this kind of reception. The local Beg met us at the gates. His rank was that of *Parrandáchi*, and he proved to be an amiable and even a charming companion. Of the hospitality which he shewed us, it is superfluous to say anything here.

On the 18th (30th) March we once more entered Russian territory, for, on this date, we marched from Ziaddin to Kátta-Kurgán.

At the village of Shirin-Khatún (literally "the sweet woman"), we parted from our Bukhárán guides. In discharging them, I gave them a certificate of good behaviour, which they said was indispensable for them to show to the Bukhárán authorities, for, were they to return without it, the authorities would suppose that they had not pleased me and then they might be punished.

From Kirmina to Kátta-Kurgán the distance is 75 *versts* (50 miles), the route lying through one thick belt of gardens and the whole country being excellently cultivated and very picturesque. The prettiest bit of scenery is between Ziaddin and Shirin-Khatún. Here the gardens and fields are arranged in terraces. To the right of us stretched detached clumps of gardens and small groves, alternating with green fields. These lie somewhat above the road and are watered by the Nura-Pai canal. To the left of us and towards the north the fields and gardens lie in the deep valley of the Zarafshán river, and are lost to view in the hazy horizon.

The Russo-Bukhárán frontier is marked at a point distant from 3 to 4 *versts* (2 to 2½ miles) from Zara-Bulak by a high stone pillar, bearing the Russian State Arms. As we rode past this pillar, we all took off our hats and crossed ourselves. Not far from the village of Zara-Bulak, on a flat piece of table-land, is the locality whereon took place the fight between a handful of Russian "eagles" and a rabble of Bukhárán soldiery. The fight occurred on the 2nd (14th) June 1868, and ended brilliantly in a victory for the Russian arms. A column has been raised in honour of the fallen warriors. Peace be to your ashes, valiant sons of Russia!

We reached Kátta-Kurgán about 4 P.M., and we there enjoyed the hospitality of Colonel Voitsekhovitch, Commander of the District. I say frankly that I gave to his cook the tribute which was his due. The native cooks, whose services we had exclusively employed from the period of our departure from Mazár-i-Sharif, so bored me that I could not look on a *pilax* without loathing, whilst the famous *kabáb* (*shashlik*) aroused within me a feeling of nausea.

From Kátta-Kurgán to Sámarkand the distance is reckoned at 66 *versts* (44 miles). Although I could have gone on to Sámarkand in a postal carriage, I preferred to do the rest of the journey on horse-back.* We got over the distance in two days. The road throughout runs along the left and high bank of the Zarafshán river. From it there opens out a splendid view of the famous Miankal or central portion of

* No one who has once ridden in a Russian post-carriage would do so again, if he could get along in any other way.—W. E. G.

the Zarafshán valley, which forms an island measuring 90 *versts* (60 miles) in length and 20 *versts* ($13\frac{1}{2}$ miles) in width. This island lies between the two principal channels of the Zarafshán, *viz.*, the Ak-Daria and the Kara-Daria. Vámbéry must undoubtedly have been to Sámarkand, because the Miankal gardens from the road really present the appearance of a dark forest such as he says they do. Along the elevated bank of the Zarafshán, which has the appearance of a level plateau lying at the foot of the Sámarkand mountain range, stretch recently ploughed-up fields. With what satisfaction did I gaze on the far-stretching line of telegraph wire, and with what a feeling of excitement did I hear the familiar bells of the post horses! At Sámarkand all my acquaintances looked on me exactly as though I had returned from another world, for, until the receipt of my letters from Mazár-i-Sharif, they had given me up as lost, and as having been killed during the political disorders which took place at Mazár-i-Sharif after Shir-Ali-Khán's death. From almost all my acquaintances who met me I heard the self-same phrase "what! are you alive? you were not killed then after all by those Afghán fanatics? We had altogether given up mourning for you."

By the 25th March (6th April) 1879, I was back again at Táshkand.

My story has now come to an end, and I might here place the final full stop; but I consider it not superfluous to express my individual opinion regarding the part played by the Russian Mission to Afghánistán, in the events which occurred in 1858, not only in Central Asia, but also in Europe and throughout the world.

It is an undoubted fact that the despatch of this Mission was closely connected with the events in the Balkán peninsula and in Europe generally, and therefore the fact has the significance of a very important historical occurrence. Our constant enemies the English, guided by the political inspirations of "the great Jew of our days," wished to minimise to the smallest extent the success of our arms taken up for the freedom of our brethren in flesh and feeling. In consequence of the exertions of this great (yes, great, in spite of his ill-will) man, an Areopagus was convened at Berlin for the purpose of controlling the fate of Europe and of the whole world. Here was arrayed against us the "honest broker," who had already begun to rub his hands in expectation of a good honorarium for his brokerage. It was, therefore, perfectly natural that true Russians should, at the time, have heartily lamented the fact that our victory-bearing eagles should have appeared at the tribunal of unclean kites. The only possible way of preserving our national honour and of retaining even a portion of our conquests was to strike at the Achilles heel of the British lion. This heel has been, is, and will be, up to a certain time, India. To strike at England is only possible in this direction; but here she is perfectly valuable, and only on this side is there a breach in her impenetrable armour. The movement of our troops from Sámarkand towards India would serve as an excellent lightning-conductor for the thunder clouds collected in the Gulf of Izmid, and at Berlin. But as between Russian Turkistán and India there lies a very

vast sovereignty, which has long been considered to be under the influence and protection of England, *viz.*, mountainous and inaccessible Afghánistán, and as it would, therefore, be advantageous to draw this country to our side, a Russian Mission was accordingly despatched to its ruler.

This Mission then had for its immediate object the drawing of Shir-Ali-Khán to our side, the conclusion with him, if possible, of an offensive and defensive alliance against England, and, under given circumstances, against India also. Of course such a diversion on our part would have been excellent. One thing only could be said against it, and that is the time. The Mission put off its departure for Afghánistán till too late, for it should have been sent off early in 1878. Then, in all probability, there would have been no Berlin Congress, no Treaty of Berlin, and peace would have been made under the terms of the Treaty of San-Stefano.

But, although late in the day, a Mission was nevertheless despatched to Kábul. Let us now see how the members fulfilled their trust.

They did it both well and ill. Well, in the sense that the Mission was able to draw Afghánistán to the side of Russia, and indeed this was not a very difficult task. Well, in that through its presence at Kábul it caused the English to embark on a difficult campaign and one which entailed a great expenditure of money and of men. Well, because it has now been thrown prominently into relief that the Afgháns are the natural allies of Russia against England. Ill, because our Mission needlessly encouraged the Amír Shir-Ali-Khán to pursue an energetic course of action in respect of the English. Ill, in that our Mission allowed itself to make to Shir-Ali-Khán various promises of a serious nature which the Russian Government could not at the time redeem. Ill, that, in so doing, our Mission falsified our relations with the Afgháns and needlessly repeated the mistakes committed by our agents in 1837-38 at Kábul and at Herát. All the good results, above enumerated, following the despatch of our Mission to Kábul would have been well attained if exaggerated promises had not been made to the head of the Afghán monarchy. Now, therefore, if we again found it expedient to establish direct relations with Kábul and to place in the scales our own influence and that of the English with the Afgháns, it would be necessary for us to employ much greater efforts than before for the attainment of the desired result. However this may be, our Mission has deceived the expectations of the Afghán people, and this is a fact which is very clearly recognised by the inhabitants of Afghánistán. Of course, in the end they will be found on the side of Russia and not of England, but they will nevertheless be more cautious in their relations with us. With respect to this circumstance, it is only needful to bear in mind one thing, as long as England looks on all nationalities, including the inhabitants of Afghánistán (of course from a utilitarian point of view) as slaves destined to work for England as for an owner, and as long as she is so unscrupulously exacting in her dealings with the peoples whom she has subject to her, so long will Afghánistán be on our side in the event of a war between Russia and England. For this reason, her heel, *i.e.*, India, will always be vulnerable by us. But this breach, in the otherwise impenetrable armour of England, will be closed when she becomes a

more Christian nation in her dealings with the peoples subject to her and also with those close at hand; when she competes with us not only for political and trade supremacy, but also in a career of Christian charity. Then will Afghánistán fall more readily under her influence than under ours. Then will England have in her pocket "the keys of the gates of India." But there is hardly any reasons for supposing that such a metamorphosis of the moral characteristics of the English people will be accomplished at an early period, and we can, therefore, be quite easy on that score.

And since our Mission had made a mistake in dealing with the Afghán Government, the errors once made had to be rectified. On his own responsibility, Russia's representative promised the Amír, Shir-Ali-Khán, military assistance in the event of a collision with England. This aid Russia could not give, and so he was defeated by the English troops. But Russia could and should have afforded him moral support, more especially as the Amír had not asked much of us. He had begged for favour to this extent, *viz.*, that he might be allowed to go to St. Petersburg and have an interview with the Russian Emperor, whom he recognised as his *Suzerain*. But all at once the Amír received a refusal to his request. This refusal he received too at a time when our Mission was in his territory at his very court. A refusal to a request suggested to him by our own Mission!

It is true that the Amír received an invitation to visit Táshkand, but this invitation came too late. In spite of this, Shir-Ali-Khán was so sensible and magnanimous that he himself repeatedly shewed our Mission how it might correct its mistakes by begging that several battalions of our troops might be sent to the Amu.

"I do not want," said he, "that these troops should pass the frontier of my kingdom, or that they should take an active part in the struggle between the Afghán people and the English. I only want that these troops should be concentrated near my frontier, so that my people may see that they are not finally abandoned by the White Tsár to the tender mercies of England."

But we did not accede to this request. We were too much afraid of the various questions on the part of the English Cabinet.

"But why? wherefore? how? for what reason?" would have been the lachrymose questions from London!! But why should we, of our own accord, have sent to the Amír a polite refusal to his expressed wishes?

Russia thus voluntarily surrendered a certain amount of her influence over the Afghán people.

It may be that those people who thought fit to do so had not turned their attention, before so acting, to the complete strangeness of such questions on the part of English diplomatists. What would the English authorities have said to us if we had posed them with this sort of question? Why are the Indian administrators carrying out such movements of troops in the direction of Nepál and of Káshmir? Should not we then have been told—"the movements of these troops are without the sphere of your influence"? So, too, could we have answered the English regarding their immodest questioning with respect to the movements of several of our battalions towards the banks of the Amu-Daria. Was not "a neutral zone" between the frontier of Russia and of India established by the

force of an agreement between Russia and England in 1873, and was not the Khánate of Bukhára completely excluded from the influence of England? On the contrary, too, did not England recognise within the limits of that Khánate Russian influence exclusively? Finally, if we had judged it necessary to answer England's inopportune questions in more elegant expressions such as "Don't thrust your nose into that which does not concern you," the precedents for such a course we should find to be numerous. For instance, the rebellion of 1878 in the Kara-Tágh mountains, and the preparations for the expedition against the Tekke-Turkumáns. But the principal reasons for the stationing of a Russian force near the Afghán frontier would have been the presence of a Russian Mission in Kábul itself, and the excuse that our solicitude for the personal safety of our envoys to Afghánistán necessitated the proximity of an armed body of Russians to the Afghán frontier. Did not the English equip an entire army to escort their embassy to Kábul when that city was much closer to the English than to the Russian frontier?

Of course, it was a pity that we did nothing to soften the mistakes made by our own Mission. In the future we shall have not only to correct the errors of the past, but to begin all over again. The Afgháns will not put faith in any future Mission of ours, unless it be followed by our army!!!

THE END.

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