PART 1

REPORT ON A MISSION TO CHINESE TURKESTAN AND BADAKHSHAN IN 1885-86

N. Elias

Source: BL, OIOC, MSS Eur 112/378, Calcutta 1886.

BRITAIN AND RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA, 1880–1907

Edited by Martin Ewans

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Volume V

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The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original documents may be apparent.

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(CONFIDENTIAL.)

REPORT

OF

A MISSION TO CHINESE TURKISTAN AND BADAKHSHAN

IN

1885-86.

BY

N. ELIAS,

POLITICAL AGENT ON SPECIAL DUTY.

With a Route Map.

CALCUTTA:

PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF GOVERNMENT PRINTING, INDIA.

1886.

NOTE.

Throughout this report, proper names transliterated from languages using the Arabic alphabet are spelt according to the system originated by Sir W. Jones, and adopted by the Government of India. In cases where a name occurs very frequently, the accent over the *a* has sometimes been omitted, but it will always be found repeated a sufficient number of times to fix the right pronunciation. On the route-sketch the same system has been followed, only the accent over the *a* has been rather too frequently omitted. In Chinese names the "Wade" orthography has been used, which may be said to correspond, for all practical purposes, to the "Jones" system in other languages. Thus, in all the more important vowel-sounds, &c., the names spelt according to the two systems will read alike.

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REPORT

OF

A MISSION TO CHINESE TURKISTAN AND BADAKSHAN

IN

1885-86.

CHAPTER I.

CHINESE TURKISTAN.

1. As far as concerns Chinese Turkistan, the late Mission can only be described as an experiment, or a preliminary measure towards establishing a permanent political agency at Kashgar; and the causes of its failure, as will be shown below, lay altogether beyond the control of the Government of India or their agent. The four principal objects which the Government of India had in view were stated, as follows, in their No. 942F., dated 26th May 1885 :—

> "(1) To improve, the political relations of the Government of of India with the Chinese Provincial Government in Turkistan;
>
> "(2) to remove, as far as possible, the restrictions now placed upon Indian trade in that country;
>
> "(3) to watch the movements of the Russians in and around the regions to which the deputation was to extend; and
>
> "(4) to explore the Afghan districts on the Upper Oxus."

With regard to the first of these objects, it was added that the chief aim of the Government was to establish a permanent political agency in Chinese Turkistan (now called the New Dominion), and that the agreement of the Chinese Government would be sought in communication with Her Majesty's Minister at Peking. The second object was, if possible, to be effected by concluding with the Chinese authorities of Turkistan, an agreement embodying certain provisions for placing the trade and general intercourse with India on

a recognised basis, and the Peking Government were asked to nominate one of their officers in Turkistan, to discuss these points with the Political Agent who was to be appointed. It will be seen, therefore, that neither of these two objects could be accomplished without the consent of the Chinese Government and, indeed, without their cordial co-operation in the plans of the Government of India. A letter* was therefore sent to the Chargé d'Affaires at Peking explaining fully the views and wishes of the Government of India, and requesting his assistance in obtaining the necessary co-operation of the Chinese. It was shown that Indian trade was unrecognised, and that British subjects had no authorised rights in the New Dominion, while Russian trade and Russian subjects laboured under no such disabilities, but were, on the contrary, provided for by full treaty rights, equal to, if not greater than, those enjoyed by European nations in China proper. It was shown, also, that the political interests of the New Dominion were identical with those of India: an assurance was given that Indian trade interests would not be pressed, by the Political Agent, to an extent which might embarrass the Chinese authorities, and that he would be strictly prohibited from interfering in the internal affairs of the province. It will be unnecessary, here, to give a detailed résumé of the correspondence which ensued with the Peking Legation: the general tone of his despatches shows that the Chargé d'Affaires was unwilling to do more than give a lukewarm support to the wishes of the Government of India, and that, according to his own showing, he only brought before the Chinese Government a part of the proposed measures. Thus the establishment of an agency in the New Dominion was not even mentioned by the Chargé d'Affaires; and the reply he elicited from the Tsungli Yamên regarding the trade, was a curt—almost insolent—refusal to take the proposals of the Government of India into consideration. The New Dominion, they said, was not a treaty port, nor were there any trade regulations that could be discussed, so that there was "no occasion to consider the remarks in the letter of the Viceroy of India." Neither would they agree to discuss commercial affairs, or any other subject, with the Agent of the Indian Government:—"It was not a treaty right and they saw no advantage in opening the question."*

* No. 349F., dated 18th May 1885.

* See No. 26, dated Peking, 24th July 1885, and enclosures.

2. Although the proposals of the Government of India

were simple, moderate, and guarded, a refusal, in one form or another, was always regarded as possible by the Foreign Department. Before despatching the proposals, therefore, it had been determined, as a first step, to secure from Peking a passport which would, in any case, enable the officer deputed to carry out the 4th of the "objects" laid down by the Government of India. A telegram* asking for a passport was, thus, the first communication addressed to the Chinese on the subject of the mission, and though it stated clearly that the party to be despatched was an official mission, Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires accepted from the Tsungli Yamên an ordinary traveller's passport, authorising the holder to travel "for pleasure and instruction." No mention was made of a Government mission, and the paper was not issued (as it was said to be by the Chargé d'Affaires†) by the Tsungli Yamên (the Peking Foreign Office) but by the Shun-tien-fu, or Mayor of Peking. Thus, the document was quite insufficient for a political purpose, but as it contained a clause which the Foreign Office had specially telegraphed for, to the effect that their agent might cross and recross the frontier of Afghanistan, it became a sufficient authorisation to admit of the 4th object being carried out. It had the effect, in short, of opening a road from Ladak to the Eastern frontiers of the Afghan states on the Upper Oxus, and immediately after receipt of a telegraphic answer from Peking that the passport would be granted, letters were obtained from the Amir of Afghanistan, authorising the mission to cross the frontier of Shighnan or Wakhan, and to travel freely in these and the neighbouring Afghan possessions. At this stage of the preparations, and before receipt of the written communication from Peking, above quoted, the mission was finally despatched, the Government of India having laid down, under object 4, the following instructions for the guidance of the Political Agent :—

"..... You should do your best to ascertain, as nearly as possible, the recognised boundaries between these districts (Wakhan and Shighnan) and the Russian and Chinese possessions on and near the upper waters of the Oxus. It is possible that the Afghan Boundary Commission may delimit the frontiers of Afghanistan in this direction in the course of the year, and the more information you can collect meanwhile, the better. You will of course endeavour to gain the goodwill of the rulers and people wherever you may go, and to discover their feelings towards the Amir ....."‡

* Dated 11th April 1885.

† No. 7, dated Peking, 17th April 1885.

‡ No. 942F., dated 26th May 1885.

3. The mission as finally constituted and despatched on the 26th May 1885, consisted only of myself and a small native following,* no European officer and no armed escort being considered necessary. Some delay was caused in Ladak by having to await the arrival of the Chinese writer from Shanghai, and it was not until the 15th August that a start could be made for Yarkand, which place was reached on the 14th September. Almost immediately on my arrival it became evident that the mission was far from being welcome to the local authorities. The Ámbán informed me that he had received a copy of the passport from Peking, and promised to carry out all the orders that it contained, but allowed me indirectly to understand that not a single request would be granted, not a single movement permitted, which was not distinctly provided for in that document. One of his assistants also informed me that an order of the Peking Government had been received, by the local authorities, declining to sanction Indian trade and prohibiting all dealings with the English. This was probably an unauthorised communication on the part of the assistant, but taken together with the behaviour of the Ámbán and with other communications made to me indirectly, it served to show that there was little disposition to regard an English mission in a friendly light. Certain other officials informed my Chinese writer that they considered one foreign Consul (the Russian) inconvenient enough, and that the admission of a second would double the inconvenience. The Russian Consul, they said, was never tired of raising troublesome questions, and seemed to regard himself as the chief authority in the country; all Westerns were alike; and what guarantee was there that an English official, if once admitted to reside in the country, might not follow the same course and make himself as obnoxious as the Russian?* As regards the Ámbán himself, one Liu Tsao Mei, a native of Hunan, I found very shortly after my arrival, that he had surrounded himself with certain Kashmiris, Khokandis (Russian subjects), and the former Hákim Beg of

*(1) A Persian Maulvi as "Mawlai;"
(2) a Hindustani Hospital Assistant attached by the Medical Department;
(3) a Chinese "writer" obtained from the Consulate General at Shanghai; and afterwards
(4) a Turki interpreter or Caravan báshi, temporarily engaged in Ladak for a portion of the journey.

* The Russian Consulate, in 1885, consisted of M. Nicolai Petrovski, Consul; M. Jacob Lutsch, probably Vice-Consul, or assistant; M. Ivan Putinseff (?), Captain of Cossacks; a guard of one Sotnia of Cossacks; a Tungani as Chinese interpreter; two Andijani Munshis, and a number of followers, all of whom were Russian subjects. No Chinese subject was permitted to take service, of any kind, within the limits of the Consulate premises.

Yarkand,* as advisers in all matters concerning the mission. Most of these were the same individuals who intrigued successfully against me in 1880 at Kashgar, and the tactics now pursued by the Ámbán, only differed from those of the authorities in 1880, where the orders contained in the passport compelled a modification. It was the habit of these chosen advisers last year, as in 1880, to suggest suspicions to the Ámbán regarding my objects, to propose to him the means of obstructing my wishes and intentions, and to carry to him malicious reports of my proceedings, none of which appeared to be too extravagant—too ludicrous—to secure his attention. On every occasion of the kind, he communicated with me officially, either verbally or in writing, gravely protesting, in this case, against an infraction of the passport, in that case against some imaginary act committed, or in a third requesting me to desist from some objectionable step which I had never even dreamed of taking. I need not burden the present report with instances of this kind of unfriendly conduct, but it is necessary to point out that no useful political intercourse can be carried on with the New Dominion as long as the agents of the Government of India are met in this spirit by the Chinese authorities. It may perhaps be imagined by those unacquainted with the Chinese, that this Ámbán was a simple, unsophisticated man, unused to the ways of Europeans, and that he acted on the advice of refugee Kashmiris and Russian agents, for want of better guidance. But this is not the case: Liu Tsao Mei had served in several of the treaty ports on the coast of China and was well acquainted with everything concerning foreign intercourse; he was besides as shrewd and clever as any Chinese official I have ever met, and probably better able to do without counsel on such a subject as the treatment of an English mission, than any official in the New Dominion. Had he, or his superiors, had any desire to meet the Government of India in a friendly spirit, no malicious promptings would for a moment have been listened to, and indeed had it not been well understood, throughout Yarkand and Kashgar, that the English were to be received with disfavour, no Mussulman of any nationality would have ventured to furnish him with mischievous reports or advice. There can be little doubt that on the first announcement of a mission from India, a line of action had been determined on, which should show clearly, not only to us, but to all spectators, that our presence was

* There is now no Hákim Beg.

unwelcome, and that our friendly advances were to be rejected, while in order to carry this policy into effect, the same individuals were utilised, who had succeeded in 1880, in furnishing the authorities with the means of nullifying the objects of my mission. Since 1880 I had always been under the impression that the want of credentials was the sole cause of failure on that occasion; but last year it became abundantly evident that the unfriendly spirit of the Chinese is not to be overcome even by proper credentials. It is true that my passport last year was an insufficient document, and that, in fact, the mission was not properly accredited; but if tactics, such as those described above, can be pursued at all, the degree of authority contained in the credentials would make but little difference. At the time of my visit in September last, the local authorities were unaware of the refusal of the Peking Government to entertain the proposals of the Government of India for a resident Agent and a trade convention; now that they have, no doubt, been informed of that refusal, there can be no hope whatever of friendly official intercourse between India and Chinese Turkistan, until the entire policy of the Chinese Government undergoes a radical change. The policy they now pursue towards us, in that country, is regulated by the love of seclusion natural to the yellow races, by their hatred and suspicion of all Western nations, and by the fear of offending their more dangerous neighbour on the north.* The position is not encouraging, but it is best to acknowledge it, and to admit that useful though Kashgar would undoubtedly be as a station for a Political Agent, no further advances towards official intercourse can be made by our Government, under present circumstances, if it is desired to avoid a repetition of the rebuffs we have already received, and to obviate the loss of prestige, in Turkistan and the surrounding countries, to which they must inevitably lead. The only remedy is a change of policy at Peking.

* *See* the Ámbán's reasons for expelling Mr. Dalgleish, in enclosure to my demi-official, dated Yarkand, 17th September 1885.

4. After my visits to Yarkand and Kashgar in 1879 and 1880, I reported fully to the Government of India on the political position of the Chinese in Turkistan, the strength of their army, and the conditions under which the trade with India was carried on; and during my short stay in September 1885, I learned but little that can usefully be added to former reports. Certain changes had taken place in the

administration during the interval; the army had been reduced and trade was suffering from Russian competition. The province of the New Dominion is now no longer under the Tsung Tu, or Governor General of Shensi and Kánsu; it forms a separate Local Government under a Futai, whose rank may be best represented by that of Lieutenant-Governor, or Chief Commissioner, in India. The present incumbent was appointed, I believe, in 1882, and is the first Futai created for the New Dominion. His name is Liu Kin Tang, and he is the same officer who was "Resident" at Kashgar during my visit in 1880; he lives now at Urumtsi (Hung Miao tze) and has converted that place into the capital of the province. At Kashgar there is a Taotai or Commissioner, who is also superintendent of trade, &c., and has under his jurisdiction the four districts of Kashgar, Yángi Hissar, Yarkand, and Khotan.* These form the western division of the New Dominion, and the district officials and magistrates are now entirely Chinese, the Hakim Begs having been abolished since 1883. Near each town there is a walled Chinese city, or fort, in which almost all the officials—civil as well as military—live, and where the bulk of the troops are garrisoned. A statement which I obtained of the troops of all four districts gives the following totals :—

* The official, or Chinese, names for these towns are as follow :—
Kashgar . . Shu li chou.
Yangi Hissar . Yang Sha ting.
Yarkand . . Sha Chê chou.
Khotan . . Ho tien chou.
These are usually administered by a Chê-li-chou or Deputy Commissioner, commonly called Amban.

Kashgar fort	2,350	infantry.
„ „	1,000	cavalry.
„ „	12	guns.
„ old city	1,100	infantry.
Yangi Hissar	750	cavalry.
Yarkand	500	infantry.
„	750	cavalry.
Khotan	350	„

Besides these there are said to be some 650 irregular Kirghiz horse stationed at various "Karáwals" or frontier posts. Thus the entire garrison of the western division of the New Dominion would appear to be 3,950 infantry, 3,500 cavalry, and 12 guns. But these figures are, no doubt, too high. In the detailed statement above mentioned, nearly every "Ying," or battalion, is taken at the full strength of 500 men, while in reality they are usually much below that number. In all probability, a total of between 6,000 and

7,000 men is the utmost that should now be reckoned as the strength of the western division. In 1880 the approximate total stood at about 11,000 men.* The fluctuations in strength, which have taken place, may probably be accounted for by the facts that, in 1880, as many troops as possible were brought into the country on account of the expected hostilities with Russia, on the subject of Kulja, and that, in 1884, a number of the Hunan troops were sent back to China to meet calls for the war with France. The present may, perhaps, be regarded as about the ordinary peace footing for this division of the province. The other divisions I have no new estimates for, but it is probable that their garrisons have been reduced since 1880 in about the same proportion as those of the western districts. The bad physique and morale, the lax discipline, and the inferior equipment of the Chinese soldiery I have twice before reported on, and need not go into the subject again. So far from any improvement having taken place of late, it would seem that in point of discipline, at least, there has been a change for the worse. In October and November last, several "Ying," or battalions, at Kashgar mutinied, shot some of their officers, and finally dispersed among the hills in the direction of Kulja, where numbers of refugees from among the troops which mutinied at Kulja and Mánás in the autumn of 1884, were known to have found an asylum. These men are said to form roving bands, who live more or less with the nomad tribes and infest the trade roads as brigands or robbers. They are quite beyond the reach of official authority, and their presence on the frontiers, and among alien tribes of Kalmaks, Kirghiz, &c., probably causes the Provincial Government more anxiety, at present, than the attitude of any external enemy. In fact, the mutinous spirit of the Manchu and Western Chinese troops, which has been conspicuous in the New Dominion during the last two years, should not be lost sight of in estimating the strength of the Chinese position on these outlying frontiers. It should also be remembered that the entire population of the

* On that occasion I wrote: "The whole may be put now at about 11,000 men, and the Aksu army, which extends from Ush Turfan eastward to Turfan, at about 9,000 or 10,000. The force north of the mountains, extending from the Ili frontier to Barkul, may be put roughly as something under 20,000 ..... Probably 18,000 would not be far from the mark." This (say 40,000) may be reckoned as nearly the maximum *force* that the Chinese Government have shown themselves (as yet) capable of throwing into the New Dominion. During the Tungani war (1875-77) the number of troops employed was most likely higher, but the garrisons, then, were not all in the New Dominion—some were on the frontiers of Kansu and none farther west than Mánás. Ili was then in Russian occupation.

country consists of alien Musulmans, to the number, perhaps, of about a million and a half, and that no Chinese other than the troops and the officials, and their hangers-on, together with a very few traders, are to be found west of the great wall. There are no native troops—on the contrary the natives are not allowed arms and are regarded, in ordinary times, as the danger chiefly to be guarded against. If, therefore, their army were to fail them, to any much greater degree than it has done lately, it is difficult to see what standing the Chinese Government would have in the country.

5. It has been thought by some, in India, that this Chinese army of the New Dominion might be of value to us, as an auxiliary, in case of a war with Russia. It has been thought, also, that an arrangement might be made with the Chinese Government, to place the whole or part of the force, under the command of British officers for operations against Russian Turkistan; or that, perhaps, the right of raising a Chinese army in the New Dominion might be conceded to our Government, by the central authorities at Peking. I cannot help expressing my fear that these schemes will be found impracticable. In the last paragraph I have shown how small the existing army is. I also pointed out that there is scarcely any Chinese population in the land, apart from the army and the officials, so that a recruiting ground for Chinese levies must be sought elsewhere than in Turkistan. Thus the question is narrowed to (1) securing the co-operation of the Turkistan army, or (2) of obtaining command of it. In the first place, the Chinese force, in its existing state of disorganisation, and led by corrupt native officers, could never be expected to offer effectual resistance to the Russians, even though its present numbers were trebled. But it is improbable that China could, under any circumstances, place a larger force in the New Dominion than she had there in 1876-77, when, as far as I recollect, the best estimate obtained by the Peking Legation showed that the maximum ever attained was only about 50,000 men. To effect even this, the efforts made by the Central Government were perhaps unprecedented, and the strain on the resources of the whole empire was, at that time, often described by Her Majesty's Minister at Peking. China was then in a very prosperous condition, and was probably quite as able as she is now, to place a large force in the extreme west; yet the difficulties in raising men in sufficient numbers, the obstacles encountered in moving them so far from their base, the absence

of all military organisation, the untrustworthiness of the officers, and above all, the sacrifices found necessary in every department in China to meet the expenditure involved, were constantly pointed out by Sir T. Wade, who drew from the situation generally, the lesson that, in spite of an immense population and great natural wealth, China was, in fact, an exceedingly weak State. The people had no warlike spirit, and consequently made no response to the efforts of their Government. The enemy at that time was an unorganised ill-armed rabble of Tunganis,* aided only by a kind of moral support from Yakub Beg, then Amir of Eastern Turkistan; yet the Chinese were barely able to subdue them till Yakub Beg died, and his kingdom fell to pieces through internal dissensions. He had been called a "rebel" by the Chinese, but his power up to the last was so much respected by them, that they had never ventured to attack him, or to cross the border of his territory. What his power really was is well known in India, where no one would, I believe, compare it with that of the Russians in Turkistan. As regards (2), the supposition that the Chinese might be induced, by negotiation, to allow our Government to take charge of their army—to arm, officer and lead it—I would only point out their extreme reluctance to permit even a simple political agent to reside in the New Dominion, and their aversion to concede any commercial rights to traders. If these small measures call forth their opposition, on the ground of fear lest we should obtain a footing in the country, it would seem scarcely likely that they should agree to our assuming control of all the material power that exists there. It may be said that if the Chinese were pressed by the Russians, they might make common cause with us and throw their resources into our hands. But any such movement on the part of the Chinese, would be quite opposed to their traditional policy of playing one foreign nation off against another, and siding with neither. It would also be opposed to their ideas of national pride and independence. The Peking Government probably distrust us as much as they do Russia, and it is quite inconceivable to me that they should be induced to hand over their entire hold on the New Dominion to our officers. Circumstances are perhaps imaginable that might induce them to co-operate with England, against Russia, in the form of a simple alliance, but this would be very different from entrusting our Government with entire mastery over a pro-

* Chinese Musulmans.

vince which they have lately made great sacrifices to re-gain possession of. To recruit a separate army in China proper, might offer less difficulty, if a diplomatic alliance against Russia were once arranged; but even in this case, I cannot think that the precedent of Gordon's force should be too much relied on by our Government. When that force was raised, China was in the lowest depths of distress. The capital had been lately taken by the allies; the Government had been humbled, and the Taiping rebels were overrunning province after province. The Government was glad to adopt any measure that would check the rebels, and welcomed an English commander as a deliverer. But this was the first time China had ever found herself in such a position. The idea of trusting a foreign commander had perhaps never suggested itself before in the course of her history. The measure was entered into hurriedly, while danger was close at hand; and probably the suspicions that afterwards showed themselves, had scarcely time to be acted on, before the scheme became an accomplished fact. But no sooner was the progress of the rebels arrested, and the Central Government once more felt itself free from immediate danger, than jealousy and suspicion of foreign power began to be displayed. Obstacles were thrown in Gordon's way, and the Chinese "Generals" began to assert their right to command. At about this time, too, the sister scheme of defence to Gordon's force—the Lay-Osborne fleet—broke down precisely on this point of mistrust. The ships had arrived from England and crews had been enlisted, according to agreements made at the time of greatest need. Now the Chinese declined to take over the fleet while under command of Captain Sherard Osborne, but insisted on their right to appoint a Chinese official to the supreme command. Gordon had broken the back of the rebellion, and they felt so much relief at having got rid of him, that they declined to repeat the experiment of placing power in the hands of a foreigner. Sinceth at time there has never been an instance of an independent command being given to a European. English, French, and German officers have been engaged as instructors—both military and naval—as organisers, or as naval constructors, but the men placed under them have been always commanded by native Chinese. Whether anything short of overwhelming danger or distress, would ever induce the Chinese Government again to place a body of their people at the disposal of a European Government, is a problem for diplomatic experiment. In the

above remarks I have only endeavoured to show that both policy and precedent are opposed to such a course. How far levies made from a people devoid of warlike instincts, and whose history is one of defeats, might prove trustworthy troops, is a question for our military authorities and need not be entered into here.

6. As regards the trade with India, the changes which have taken place between 1880 and 1885 are easily accounted for. In 1879 and 1880, the strained relations between China and Russia regarding the Kulja question, had the effect of almost stopping the Russian trade with the New Dominion; Indian trade advanced, in consequence, and continued to increase till 1883, when the full effects of the commercial treaty of 1881, with Russia, began first to be felt. From 1883, forward, Russian caravans, trading under the favourable provisions of the treaty, have poured such large quantities of goods (especially the heavier kinds of cotton manufactures) into the province, that imports from India have been unable to compete with them, and the consequence has been a falling off in Indian trade. The export trade has not suffered to the same extent, mainly because India is almost the only market for the chief natural product of Chinese Turkistan, *viz.*, "charas" or Indian hemp, generally known in India as "bhang." Among the imports that hold their own, and may be expected to continue to do so, are the spices (pepper, cinnamon, nutmegs, &c., &c.) and the cheap teas, which neither Russia nor any Russian possession can, for climatic reasons, ever produce. The Indian trade in common manufactured cotton, which has always been one of the most considerable branches of commerce with Chinese Turkistan, must be regarded as precarious, now that Russia is in a position to compete on equal tariff terms and from a nearer base than our traders. This should not be the case, however, with the better classes of British manufactures, and with fabrics intended for use in hot weather. The commercial convention which our Government proposed to make, would have been advantageous to Indian trade generally, but it could not have saved those branches of it, where the proximity of the Russian base and the cheapness of their transport, give a clear advantage to Russian competitors. It may be remarked here, that on conclusion of the treaty with Russia, providing for complete freedom of commerce between the two territories, the Chinese, of their own accord, relinquished the duties they had previously levied on the trade with India, and for a time, both imports and exports on

our side were absolutely free. About 1884, however, means were found of evading the agreement with Russia as far as exports were concerned. Certain taxes, or internal dues, were levied from the producers or local dealers in produce, though not from the exporting traders, and Indian, as well as Russian trade, was included in the new scheme. The Russian Consul at Kashgar regarded these dues as a form of export duty in disguise, and during my late visit, was engaged in protesting against them as an evasion of the treaty, while the Chinese supported their action on the ground that they had a right, as a matter of internal administration, with which Russia had no concern, to levy dues on all but the exporter of merchandise. The upshot of the dispute I have not been able to ascertain since leaving the province in October last, but it may be safely predicted that the Chinese will, of their own accord, place the Indian trade on the same footing as the Russian, whatever decision may be arrived at; though this will be done, not as a measure of friendly policy towards us, but with the far-sighted object (of which they have already shown themselves capable) of cutting from under our feet any ground for complaint of unequal treatment, and thus depriving us of a reason for demanding a commercial treaty or political representation. And though imports are nominally free, and a similar system of taxing the internal dealer is not applied to them, still there can be little doubt—to judge from the reports of Indian traders—that transit duties are levied on all imported goods that are sent from one town to another within the Dominion. It is possible that this duty is the "lekin" or war tax, which I believe is regularly levied on goods in transit in China proper, in contravention of the treaty of Tientsin; if this should be the case, it must be regarded as a condition of the trade to be reckoned with as a permanent factor.

7. In spite of their slender garrisons and the weakness of their position, generally, in Turkistan, the Chinese appear to have no misgivings about increasing their territory, or, at all events, in extending their political responsibilities. It is not easy to trace the history of their relations with the petty state of Hunza which borders the Chinese Pamirs on the south. It is probable that they received tribute, or homage of some kind, from the Khans of Hunza, even previous to their expulsion from Kashgar in 1865; but whether this was the case or not, it is certain that the authorities of the New Dominion have encouraged the vassalage of Hunza since the commence-

ment of their re-occupation in 1878. From that year up to 1883, many tributary missions from Hunza visited Kashgar, and were received as vassals of the Empire; on some occasion also, the tribute-bearers offered allegiance and even begged for incorporation of their state with Chinese territory, if all accounts are to be trusted. The Chinese appear to have treated the advances of Hunza with haughty condescension, and an assumption of superiority that, no doubt, had an excellent effect in impressing the half-savage envoys with a sense of Chinese power, and caused them to press their homage with greater earnestness than if they had been received in a reasonable manner. For several years no further action seems to have been taken by the Chinese than, from time to time, to dismiss the envoys with a supercilious assurance that their "petition" would be considered, but in 1885 the opportunity was taken of a dispute between the people of Sarikol and the Kanjutis (or people of Hunza), to send down a Chinese official to the frontier, to accept, formally, the allegiance of the Hunza Khan. A deputation of Kanjuti Chiefs who met this official,* are said to have made complete submission in the name of the Khan, who however, excused himself from accompanying the deputation on the plea of sickness. The result was that at the time of my arrival in Yarkand, the Chinese authorities regarded Hunza as an outlying district of the New Dominion, and talked of incorporating it formally in the province. I am not aware that any further steps have been taken towards incorporation of the territory, but there can be no doubt of the complete acknowledgment of Chinese supremacy by the Hunza Khan. Thus, in the spring of this year, when Colonel Lockhart wrote from Gilgit to the Khan of Hunza, proposing to pass through his territory to Wakhan, the proposal was sent to the Chinese authorities at Kashgar for orders. In what light Colonel Lockhart's expedition was represented by the Kanjutis it is impossible to say, but I was informed, on good authority,† that the reply sent to the Khan was to the effect that he was to "keep the English out." The Chinese official who brought the answer, was a Mussulman Beg of Sarikol, and he had been despatched with two guns (probably small wall-pieces) and nine

* One Yang by name: the Pao Chia Chê, or town magistrate of the old, or Mussulman, city of Yarkand.

† The Rajah of Astor, who went with Colonel Lockhart to Hunza and rendered him good service in extricating the party from the difficulties they were in at the Khan's fort. The Rajah is a brother-in-law of the Hunza Khan, and remained at the fort for some time after Colonel Lockhart's passed on towards Wakhan.

boxes of ammunition, to support the Khan in carrying out the order. This would have been about April last, and the snow on the pass leading from Sarikol was so heavy, that the Beg was unable to cross the guns, and eventually left them on the pass, while he and his men went on to Hunza and delivered the ammunition, in presence of my informant. By that time, however, Colonel Lockhart's party had passed through the Khanate and had crossed, by the Kilik pass, into Wakhan. The Beg expressed his relief that they had not crossed by the more easterly pass into Sarikol, and intimated that the Chinese would have held the Khan responsible if they had done so. If this information is correct (and I should not record it in this report unless I had good reason to believe it) it would appear that the Chinese treat Hunza as one of their outposts, and are prepared to interfere there, even to the extent of promoting an attack on a party of British officers engaged on a peaceful mission.

8. Under the conditions described in paragraph 3 above, there appeared to be a better chance of furthering the views of the Government of India by taking up the 4th object of the mission, without delay, than in remaining in Kashgar, while awaiting communication from the Foreign Office regarding the answer of the Chinese Government to the proposals of the Government of India. Nearly two months remained of the season when travelling on the Pamirs and the neighbouring elevated regions might be possible, and transport being obtainable in Yarkand, at the time, I determined to postpone whatever duties there might eventually be for me in the New Dominion and go on, at once, to the Oxus States. There might have been some advantage in paying a short visit to Kashgar, in order to introduce oneself to the Taotai, as the chief authority of the division, but there were several considerations against it. In the first place it could not have been accomplished under three weeks at least, and had any unforeseen delay taken place, it would probably have resulted in the expedition to the Oxus States having to be put off for the winter, which, in the regions to be visited, would mean till May of the following year. In the second place, the Russians, and other intriguers, would have had a better opportunity of thwarting my plans had I delayed my departure by visiting Kashgar; and thirdly, it would have been most unsatisfactory to have had even an introductory interview with the Taotai, before hearing of the acceptance, or otherwise, of the proposals

of the Government of India by the Peking Government, and while only holding a tourist's passport as credentials. It may be mentioned here, that the result of the correspondence with Peking only reached me in the following January, while wintering in Badakhshan. It appeared then that the Legation had first claimed the right to negotiate direct with the Tsungli Yamên, regarding the trade, &c., of the New Dominion, but that afterwards the Home Government had taken the matter out of their hands, with the intention of negotiating it themselves. In this way, a useful measure, and one connected entirely with Indian affairs, has passed from the hands of the Government of India and has been allowed to die a silent death—a sacrifice to departmental exigencies.

CHAPTER II.

THE PAMIR AND UPPER OXUS REGIONS.

1. Towards the end of my stay in Yarkand, several obstructions, more or less serious, were thrown in the way of my departure by the unfriendly Amban Liu, but on the 28th September I succeeded in leaving the city and arrived, on the evening of the 30th, after making three long marches, at the border village of Ighiz Yár. This place is within the jurisdiction of the Amban of Yángi Hissár, and is situated at the foot of the hills which form the western limit of that district. It had been my intention to join, from here, the route which leads from Kashgar to Little Kára Kul, by the Gaz defile, but as the road was reported by the Ighiz Yár villagers to be too difficult for loaded ponies, and the water at some of the fords too high, I had to abandon this intention, at the last moment, and to start by a track to the south of the Gaz, known as the Káratásh route. We set off, accordingly, the next morning (1st October), and at the mouth of the nulla, about six miles from Ighiz Yár, passed through the Karáwal fort, or frontier post, called the "Uruk (or Apricot) Karáwal." This fort is so placed that all passengers, to or from the plains, must actually pass into the fort by one gate, and out by another. On the opposite (right) bank of the nulla, there is another small fort and wall, and the intervening river is barred by wooden barricades, to prevent the possibility of a person even making his way along the channel of the stream in the low-water season. Above the chief fort on the left bank, a wall—a "Great wall of China" in miniature—has been built over the crests of the adjacent spurs until it reaches a point where the hills, according to the Chinese mind, are inaccessible. These works may perhaps form a defence against the raids of unorganised Andijanis and Kirghiz, such as those that took place in 1878 and 1879, but they would be made little of by a Russian or Afghan force. At the entrance to the Gaz defile there is said to be a similar Karáwal. No Chinese troops are stationed at either, but only an inferior Beg and six or eight men from the neighbouring villages, who take it in turns to serve as frontier guards. Immediately beyond this fort, the Kirghiz population begins—Kirghiz belonging

to the Pamir tribes, but settled in these valleys as cultivators. They grow the wheat and barley required by their nomadic relations on the Pamirs, who come down, at intervals, with camels and yaks, to carry it away. They build small square, or oblong, houses of stone and earth to live in during the winter, and in the summer inhabit their round felt tents, or "Akuis," as in their native highlands. A light tax is levied by the Chinese on the ground they cultivate, but otherwise they seem to be left very much to themselves. A few of these Kirghiz serve in the Chinese army as a kind of irregular local cavalry, or corps of scouts, but I am not aware if this service is compulsory.* Each man supplies his own pony and, I believe, his own matchlock also, but rations, fodder, &c., are found him by the army.

* (See Chapter I, paragraph 4.)

2. We followed the usual road towards Sarikol for the first nine miles beyond the Karáwal, and then branched off to the westward, making our first stage at the Kirghiz village of Ghijak. Here the Chinese authorities washed their hands of us. At Yarkand the Amban had offered me a guard of 50 soldiers and two guides to take me to "Yang Hu" (Rang Kul), where he said the Chinese had an outer "Chátze," or frontier post. Believing that the guard of 50 would probably mean 5, after the first day's march from Yarkand, and that I should be able to get rid of even these on one pretence or another, I gladly accepted the offer for the sake of the guides, for at Yarkand I was unable to find a guide. But up to Ighiz Yár neither guard nor guides were forthcoming, and though a man from the village was sent, by the Beg, to show us the road for the first day's march, I found myself, at a distance of barely a dozen miles from the Karawal, as completely separated from all evidence of Chinese jurisdiction, as if I had crossed into the country of some other Government. From Ghijak onwards no outward sign of Chinese rule was apparent, during the whole course of my journey, and, needless to remark, the Amban's assertion that a Chinese post existed at Rang Kul, turned out to be quite devoid of foundation. Still the Chinese claim the country, the inhabitants acknowledge the claim, and, as yet, no neighbour has disputed it, but the incident mentioned above shows to what distance their practical jurisdiction reaches.

3. From the head of the Ghijak valley, a low but steep pass (about 11,000 feet) leads over to the valley of the Chim-

gán, or Yangi Hissar river, which is said to rise near Káskásu, on the Sarikol road, and to emerge from the hills just above Yangi Hissar. It is a stream of no great importance. Our road lay southward up the Chimgán, for a short distance, and then branching off to the westward, led us, on the fifth day from Ighiz Yar, across the Káratásh pass, and into the valley of the Gaz river, close to one of its main sources, *i.e.*, about three miles below the snow-fields from which it issues. After following this stream down for about six miles, we came to a ravine on the left, the head of which, about two miles distant, was filled by a large broad glacier, whence another and more voluminous branch of the Gaz flows: more or less voluminous according to the season and the weather, as is usual with streams issuing directly from glaciers. The other source mentioned, would be the more constant in volume, besides being the longer one: consequently it is the main source. The Káratásh pass was covered with snow for some three miles on the Chimgan side and about half that distance on the Gaz side. The ascent is easy, the descent rather steep, but if judged by a Ladak standard, the pass must be called, on the whole, an easy one. The altitude of the top is about 14,100 feet. Just opposite the opening of the glacier nulla, a very bad piece of road occurs—a steep rocky descent of about 200 feet, where baggage animals, after being relieved of their loads, can only be assisted down with a great deal of trouble and delay. Continuing down the Gaz for a short distance, then leaving it on our right, and crossing some low hills and the spurs of a great snow-and ice-clad peak to the south, the (Tágharma), we came on the lake of Kára Kul near its upper or southern end. Here a most interesting piece of new geography presented itself, the region never having, I believe, been visited before, even by the Russian expeditions. Both the water system and the hills differ considerably from our latest maps. The details, however, need not be gone into here, as I have endeavoured to embody them in the accompanying sketch. One curious circumstance regarding the hills, however, may be noticed, *viz.*, that two great peaks rise, the one to the north-north-east of the lake and the other to the south-south-east, which I have reason to believe have been taken for one and the same by former travellers in Turkistan. The former is visible from the plains at Yarkand and Kashgar, and was fixed and measured by Major Trotter, from the latter place, in 1874. It had also been roughly fixed in 1868 by Mr. Hayward,

and was named by both of them Tághárma peak, because people informed them that it was near Tághárma. Major Trotter also saw and took bearings of some peaks near Tághárma, from Sarikol, but does not mention whether any of them coincided with the one he had already fixed from Kashgar. Again, Colonel Kostenko saw, from the Kizil Art pass, a huge peak in the direction of Little Kára Kul, which he called the "Father of Mountains." In fact, there are two peaks, some 20 miles apart, and the one measured by Major Trotter is to the north of the Gaz river, while the one probably seen by him from the Sarikol side, and by Colonel Kostenko, is to the south of the river, and has its base not far from Tághárma. This last is, in reality, the Tághárma peak, and, strangely enough, it is one which all Yarkandis and Kirghiz consider that they see from the plains of Turkistan. It is not so, however, as my own angles, &c., will prove, though from Kashgar and Sarikol the two summits would bear nearly on the same line, so that one might be occulted by the other. The Tághárma peak is perhaps the more remarkable feature of the two, though the one measured by Major Trotter has an elevation of 25,350 feet. The latter is marked on all our maps where Major Trotter fixed it, and it requires only a name,* while the peak properly called "Tághárma" remains to be separately placed on the map. The Kirghiz insist that the real Tághárma peak is much higher than the one north of Kára Kul fixed by Major Trotter, but I doubt their judgment on this point: it is conical and isolated, and therefore more remarkable than the other, which is only a point in a long, high ridge. Still, its altitude cannot be far short of 25,000 feet, and its huge glaciers and deep precipitous gorges render it a grand and noteworthy feature. The chief characteristic about the water system is that the drainage of the whole Kára Kul region is performed by the Gáz and flows to Kashgar. Thus the KáraKul Lake is only a basin, or expansion, of a small river which has sources in the spurs of the Tághárma peak near Ulugh Robát and on the Tokhterek pass, and falls into the Gaz some four miles below the outlet of the lake. At about half a mile below the lake outlet, the stream takes in from the left, the discharge of a string of small lakes

* It has since been named, with the permission of His Excellency the Viceroy, "Mount Dufferin." There is no native name for either peak, or rather the name "Mastagh" or "ice mountain" is applied to both, and, indeed, to most great snowy peaks. The late Mr. R. B. Shaw heard Ul Tágh — "horse mountain"—applied to the one visible from Kashgar, but after many enquiries for a name, I could hear of none but the familiar "Mustágh."

ending with the Bási Kul, and carries their waters likewise to the Gaz. Again at about five "tásh" or one short day's journey (according to local information) below the joining point of the Kára Kul discharge with the Gaz, the latter receives the Ulugh Art stream on the left, which drains from the Ulugh Art hills, Muji, Chákar-Agil, &c. And lastly, on the left, about half-way between the Kára Kul and Ulugh Art junction, the Gaz is said to be joined by the Bulun Kul stream. The valleys of all these streams are visible from the hills near Kára Kul, but not the rivers themselves. On the right the Gaz receives the Yáman-yár, which, descending from the west face of Mount Dufferin, falls into the Gaz, a short distance from the Kára Kul junction. It is a short stream, but having, as far as can be seen from Kára Kul, a direct glacier origin, its discharge, in summer, must be considerable.

4. The Kirghiz in the Kára Kul district, as is the case nearly all over the Pamirs, belong to no one tribe exclusively, but are composed of representatives of all the tribes that occur in these regions. The four chief divisions are the Naimán, the Tait, the Kára Tait and the Kásik, and there are also many sub-divisions. At Kára Kul, Kirghiz of all four main divisions are found living together promiscuously and having in many cases intermarried.* The most numerous of the tribes is perhaps the Tait, which is said to number some 600 tents or families, but this is probably too high an estimate. The Náimans, though perhaps less numerous, claim to be of the best Kirghiz blood, or of the highest caste, on account of their kinship with the Kipcháks, whom all Kirghiz seem to regard as a superior people to themselves. The common descent which the Naimáns claim with the Kipcháks dates from many hundreds of years ago, when the home of their common ancestors was, as they believe, in the country between Bokhara and Samarkand. They seem to have no record or estimate of the time they have inhabited the Pamirs, yet it is curious to note the clear knowledge that the most squalid and ignorant among them have of their own descent, and the pride with which they point out their respective pedigrees. Like all nomads that I have come in contact with, they are vain and fickle, and consider the chief aim in

* From the best estimates I have been able to procure, I should say that the total Kirghis population of all the hill and Pamir country south of the Russian frontier might, perhaps, be taken at about 1,200 tents or families, making a total population of about 5,000 or 6,000 persons. This estimate is, however, only a rough one.

life to be able to live it through without work. They are humble enough to the commonest Yarkandi, Andijani, or Shighni, will do as he orders them and accept from him any amount of abuse or ill-usage; but they would never consent to work for him for wages or, indeed, to *earn* a livelihood in any way whatever, poor as they are in everything but the barest necessaries of life. On the eastern Pamirs they seem well content to be under Chinese rule, as they feel that this is little more than nominal, and that in fact they are left almost entirely to themselves. Under the rule of Yakub Beg a certain proportion had to serve in his army, and Russian rule is dreaded by them on account of the tax-gatherer. Farther west—at Rang Kul and onwards—I found a distinct leaning towards the Afghans.

5. On the north shore of Kára Kul I was shown a rock called the "Tamgha Tásh" (the marked stone), which is supposed, by the Kirghiz, to bear a Chinese inscription relating to the flight of the Khojas from Kashgar, in 1759, and the pursuit of them by the Chinese. On inspection, the figures cut, or rather scratched, on the rock, proved not to be Chinese characters, or, indeed, characters of any language, though the tradition of the Kirghiz that they were made by the Chinese party which pursued the Khojas is, no doubt, correct. The story is well known in English and French literature, and in these regions is in the mouth of every Kirghiz, Shighni, Badakhshi, and Afghan: but the facts have been much perverted. The circumstance that a Chinese party once crossed the Pamirs as far as the border of Shighnan territory, has been exaggerated, by some writers, into an assertion that Badakhshan was conquered by the Chinese and was, in fact, at one time a Chinese possession. What really happened was, I believe, as follows. When the Chinese occupied Kashgar in 1759, and turned out the Kálmak dynasty, the two Khojas, with a large party of Kálmak followers and a certain amount of treasure, fled from Kashgar, by the Gaz route, intending to take refuge in Balkh. A Chinese party, under a certain Ku Ta jen, usually known in these parts as the Sákál Ámbán, or "bearded Ambán," was sent in pursuit, and followed the fugitives as far as Yeshil Kul, at the western end of the Alichur Pamir. Here he is said to have cut some characters on a rock like those at Kára Kul, and then to have returned to Kashgar. The Khojas and their party passed unmolested through Shighnán and had reached Argu, below Faizabad, when they were attacked by

Sultan Shah, the Mir of Badakhshan, and taken prisoners. Sultan Shah plundered the whole party, beheaded the Khojas, and kept the Kálmaks as slaves, his motive being plunder and not the fear of the Chinese, who had never even ventured into the inhabited parts of Shighnán, and who had, moreover, returned to Kashgar long before the Khojas had arrived at Argu. On the news of the death of their enemies being received at Kashgar, the Chinese were so pleased at the action of Sultan Shah that they consented to extend to him the privilege they had just previously granted to the Khan of Khokand, of appointing an Áksákál in Kashgar, who was empowered to levy taxes on his nationals residing there, and remit them to the Mir of his own country. Thus so far from Badakhshan ever having been subject to, or even tributary to China, it would appear, rather, that the Badakhshis obtained an important concession from the Chinese, which they continued to hold, up to the expulsion of the latter from their Turkistan provinces in 1865. The Chinese and Badakhshi forces, moreover, never met either at this or any other time, as far as I can ascertain, and the spirited print of the battle of Badakhshan, which adorns the work of a certain French author, must be founded upon imagination only. As I did not pass by Yeshil Kul, I was unable to visit the stone said to have been cut there by the Sákál Ámbán,* but at a village called Revak, or Go-Revak, in the Ghund Valley, there is a Persian inscription without date, on a rock near the river-side, declaring that point to be the frontier between Ghund and Suchán, "by order of the Khákán of Chin," or the Emperor of China. Ghund, properly called Deh basta, and Suchán, are merely two villages of Shighnán, and it is difficult to see what concern the Chinese Emperor can have had in the boundary disputes of the villagers. As I was anxious to ascertain whether China had ever exercised any jurisdiction or suzerainty over the Oxus provinces, I made particular enquiries regarding this inscription, and found that the people did not connect it with the events of 1759, but assigned to it an age of 600 years. None of their traditions, however, mention the reason for the stone having been put up, or indeed show in any way that China was, even in those days, regarded as the para-

* This Ku, the bearded Ámbán, seems to have been accounted a great soldier among the Chinese of those days, and to have impressed the Kirghiz and others with his bravery and activity. He died shortly after his return from the Pamir and was buried near the west gate of Yarkand, where the present Chinese authorities have lately built a small temple to his memory. As Chinese military officers can seldom read or write, it is unlikely that the stone near the Yeshil Kul bears anything more than marks, like the one on the shore of Little Kára Kul.

mount power. I have no books here to refer to, but during the Mongol dynasty (the descendants of Changhiz Khan) which flourished in China about 600 years ago, it is just possible that some nominal suzerainty of the Peking Emperor might have been acknowledged, even as far west as Shighnán.

6. On the 9th October we left the Kara Kul and marched southward and westward up its only feeder to the foot of the Tokhterek pass, a low and easy neck in the meridional range which separates the Gaz water system from the streams that run towards the valley of Rang Kul. These, however, according to the Kirghiz, seldom or never reach the lake—their water, even in summer, being absorbed in the soft sandy soil before arriving at the Kul. Though the plain occupied by the Kara Kul, and the valley extending to the south of it, must be considered a Pamir, yet it is only after crossing the Tokhterek pass that typical Pamir country is reached in this direction. Here the valleys are wide and open, and the hills that bound them usually low and easy. There is grass in abundance, as the large flocks of the Kirghiz and numbers of Ovis Poli testify. In summer, also, there must be abundance of water, but by October many of the streams have run dry, and it is not always easy to make marches so as to reach a camping ground with water. The third march from Kara Kul brought us, on the 11th October, to the upper, or eastern, end of Rang Kul, or lake of all colours, or "any colour," as the name is interpreted to mean,* there being no special colour, either in the water or the surrounding hills, to distinguish it, as there is (according to the Kirghiz eye) at Kara Kul or black lake, Yeshil Kul or green lake, &c. We camped at the *aul* of Kurmushi Beg, who is the headman of all the Kirghiz in the Rang Kul and Ak Baitál districts. He was civil but suspicious, and at first declined to furnish us with a guide, which was all that we required of him, without orders from the Chinese. He was prevailed upon, eventually, by means of coaxing and bribing, and in the end, not only supplied us with guides to the Ghund valley, but also gave much useful information. His connection with the Chinese seems to be of the loosest description, yet he and his people stand in great awe of them. He carries a small tribute to Kashgar about once a year, and has once, since the Chinese reoccupation, been visited by a Chinese official, who came up to watch the proceedings of

* The name has been thought to mean "Ibex" lake, but strangely enough the Turki-speaking Kirghiz use the Persian word "Taka" for "Ibex," while the Tájiks of Badakhshan use the Turki word "Rang" for the same animal.

the Russian expedition of 1883. This official was, I believe, one Yang, the magistrate of the old or Mussulman city of Yarkand, who last spring was sent to the Hunza frontier to accept, on the part of China, the allegiance offered by the Kanjut Khan. Yang not only looted the Kirghiz of Rang Kul of all the property he could conveniently carry away, but, as the Beg pathetically added, bored him with childish questions from morning to night, till he had to feign illness to escape from the Chinaman's company. He and his people could endure being plundered, he said, because it was the function of rulers all the world over, to plunder their subjects, but the other infliction went beyond the limits of all recognised customs.

7. At Rang Kul I ascertained that the Great Kara Kul and Kizil Jik regions are not recognised as lying within Russian territory, though they are marked within the green line on our maps. All the Kirghiz assert positively that their people in the Kizil Jik valley are Chinese subjects, and are under a Beg who carries tribute to Kashgar. They had never heard of these regions being claimed by Russia till I mentioned it. Round the Kul itself there appear to be no resident Kirghiz, and those of the Alai are said never to visit Kara Kul or Kizil Jik for pasture. All my informants agreed that the Kizil Art pass, over the range running east and west between the Kul and the Alai Pamir, is the Russian boundary, and that a Russian pillar has been built on the top of the pass to mark the frontier between Russian and Chinese territory in this direction; while no pillar or mark of any kind exists on the south of the range. I was also informed that the Russians had never levied any taxes south of the Kizil Art, though they take taxes regularly from the Kirghiz of the Alai on the northern side. The Beg of Rang Kul and his people were very accurate in most of the information they gave me, and I should have been inclined to trust them on this point without confirmation, but while travelling, afterwards, up the Murghábi from Kila Wámar, I met, at Básit, a party of Kirghiz from the Kákui Bel feeder of the Kudara, who had come down to buy grain in the Roshán villages. These people confirmed what the Rang Kul Kirghiz had told me, and as their home is just within the green line in question, they probably have some knowledge of the subject. They had no idea of Great Kara Kul and Kizil Jik being Russian territory, and said that the Russians had never claimed jurisdiction over those parts, nor had they ever levied

taxes from the inhabitants, as they do from the Kirghiz beyond the Kízil Art pass. As for themselves, they considered that they were subjects of the rulers of Shighnán for the time being—whoever these might be—and their country a portion of the Roshán province. In this they are borne out by all the Shighnis and Roshánis who have any knowledge of the subject, and I think it may safely be assumed that all the Kudara sources, as marked in our latest maps, from Russian surveys, are, according to ancient usage, within Shighnán territory, and perhaps also the western shores of Great Kara Kul. The Russian flag was, I believe, "planted" on the Kara Kul-Rang Kul water-parting about nine or ten years ago, by Prince Wittgenstein's expedition, and it is just possible that the Russian Government may have recognised the acquisition by marking it on their maps, but may never have assumed jurisdiction over it. Thus the Kirghiz inhabitants may still consider themselves, with good reason, to be subject to the rulers of Shighnán or Kashgar. At all events they are claimed now, as subjects, by the Afghans, though it is probable that the Chinese would claim them also, for in all likelihood they pay tribute to the Chinese as well as to the Afghans. With the Kákui Bel party was a man from Rang Kul—undoubted Chinese territory—on a mission to the Hakim of Shighnán with "tártuk" or tribute! It appears that "tártuk" is sent every year by the Rang Kul Kirghiz to the Shighnan authorities, but the matter is kept secret from the Chinese, and though the Afghans are well aware that the same people also carry tribute to Kashgar, yet, strangely enough, they make no objection to being the inheritors of a divided allegiance. For people like the Kirghiz to pay tribute to two or more States which they fear, is nothing new in Central Asia, and is often only a way of propitiating possible enemies, but the circumstance shows how difficult it is to prove the ownership of these border-lands, how dangerously ill-defined the frontiers must be where such things occur, and how easily advantage could be taken by Russia to advance a claim to territory on the Pamirs, if not for herself, for some third party in Russian interests.

8. The region of Rang Kul having been thoroughly explored and reported on by the Russian expedition of 1883, I need hardly give any detailed description of it here. Its feeders were all dry at the time of my visit, and, indeed, they only flow during the summer. There are, in reality, two lakes connected by a narrow strait, as shown by the Russian sur-

vey, and the upper lake is considered to be fresh, while the lower or western basin is *called* salt, though, on tasting the water, I was scarcely able to perceive any trace of salt. No outlet is to be seen, though the Kirghiz affirm that the water flows underground to the Ak Baitál, a distance of some nine miles. The Ak Baitál, however, runs dry about the end of September, and does not flow again till late in spring; the water of the lake, moreover, has no appearance of being absorbed by sands or loose soil, for the banks of the lower basin are hard and stony. It is difficult, therefore, to account for an underground outlet; while the fact that the Ak Baitál flows only in summer, is fully accounted for by the melting of the neighbouring snows at that season only. The upper lake is, to a great extent, a series of swamps at this season, like the upper end of the Little Kara Kul, and the banks and islands are covered with efflorescent and incrusted salts. Here the wildfowl swarm—geese, duck, and teal—till towards the end of October, when they go southward (probably to India) and return again about May. The lower basin is a fine blue sheet, set in brown and yellow hills like the great lakes of Ladak, but the scenery has none of the impressive grandeur of Little Kara Kul, where the peaks, mentioned above, tower over its valley on two sides to a height of 25,000 feet, and an opening to the north affords a panorama of some of the loftiest summits of the Kizil Art ranges. The Kirghiz of Rang Kul were beginning to leave the valley of the lake to take up winter quarters in the neighbouring ravines, where better shelter and more pasture are to be found during the winter months than on the open plains. The geese were becoming uneasy, and could be heard at night rising from the lake, at intervals, to escape being frozen in; while each successive squall that swept up the valley from the west left a lower line of snow upon the hill-sides. In short, winter was approaching fast, and I had, reluctantly, to give up a projected visit to the Russian frontier at the Kizil Art pass—some four marches distant—and to continue my journey on the 14th October towards Shighnan. The absence of water in the Ak Baitál (the "white mare" river) and its tributaries, compelled us to make the journey from the upper end of Rang Kul to the Murghábi in one day. In following the track down the south shore of the lake, a rock, or cliff, is passed, standing about 100 yards from the water's edge and presenting a sheer front of about 100 feet in height towards the lake. This is

called the Chirágh Tásh or "lamp rock," famous over these regions, for a light which always burns in a cave near the top of the cliff, and is the object of a great deal of superstitious awe on the part of all Kirghiz, Shighnis, and others who know the locality. To all appearance, a steady white flame burns within the cave, but even with a powerful field-glass I could make out nothing more. My impression was that there must be some phosphorescent substance far back in the cave, but this, I was assured, was quite an erroneous view, the real fact being that vast treasures are stored in it, which are guarded by a dragon with a large diamond set in his forehead, and it is this diamond that shines by day and night. The cliff did not appear difficult to scale, but no native of these parts would ever venture to pry so closely into the secret of the light, as to attempt to enter the cave.

9. Ever since my camp on the Chimgán, on the 3rd October, I had heard reports of the Kirghiz of the Alichur and other trans-Murghábi valleys, having been summoned, by order of the Chinese, to within the right bank of the Murghábi, and on arriving at that river I found that these reports were correct. In the time of the Shighnán Mirs the Kirghiz, who lived beyond the left bank of the Murghabi, paid tribute to Shighnan; when the Afghans took the country from Yusuf Ali in 1883, they sent out and demanded the customary tribute, which was paid as usual. But at this time the Chinese, fearing a general Afghan advance, and believing the Kirghiz would be used against them, despatched a Beg, from Kashgar, with instructions to collect all the Kirghiz within the line of the Murghabi—implying in this way that the Murghabi formed the Chinese frontier. I have since ascertained that the Murghabi, from Aktásh downwards, is considered by all the people in this region, including the Afghans, to be the frontier between Chinese territory and the provinces of Shighnan and Wakhan. The act of the Chinese in thus practically pointing out what they hold to be their frontier, must be considered an important one, in a region where all frontiers are so loosely defined as on the Pamirs. It is, moreover, an undisputed frontier for the present, for the Afghans recognise it, and, as far as one can judge from their actions, seem willing to accept it as the line which ancient usage has laid down as the limit of their Tájik provinces. Still they have never taken formal possession of any point on the left bank of the Murghabi, nor performed any act that can be held to show that they do more than tacitly accept it as their frontier. Indeed, no

Afghan official, as far as I am aware, has ever shown himself above the settled villages of Roshán, Ghund, Shákhdara or Wákhán, during the two years that these provinces have been in the Amir's possession. The Murghabi line makes a good frontier, or, at all events, I can see nothing in it to object to; nor do I know of any line in the neighbourhood that might be considered a better one. It would probably never be attacked, and in time of peace would not withdraw from the Amir's army more than half a dozen sepoys for the purpose of guarding it. In settled countries, rivers that are easily crossed form bad boundaries, but in nomadic countries one line is nearly as good as another, and, in the absence of an inaccessible range of hills, even a small stream like the Upper Murghabi would serve as an indication as well anything else, either natural or artificial. In the case of these Pamirs it seems to me most desirable to leave no strip of unowned land between Afghan and Chinese territory; any such strip would lead directly from Russian territory towards passes leading into Chitrál, and might be occupied at any time by Russia or by Russian partisans. We have already seen, in the Great Kara Kul region, how a large tract can be quietly absorbed by a flag-planting expedition, and the world left to accept the accomplished fact. If, next summer, a similar expedition to that of Prince Wittgenstein were to hoist the Russian flag on the Alichur and Great Pamirs, my impression is that the Afghans would find a difficulty in proving that these regions belonged to them. About eight or nine years ago a Russian officer, who knew these parts (Colonel Kostenko), wrote :* "The extent of country between the most southern portion of the province of Farghána and the pass mentioned above (the Baroghil) lies in the Pamirs and belongs to no one. . . . . This belt of no-man's land must probably, sooner or later, be included in Russian dominions, which will then be in immediate contact with the range forming the water-parting from the Indus." It is precisely this fulfilment of a Russian desire that I believe can be frustrated (as long as Afghanistan and China remain outwardly friendly to England) by closing up Afghan and Chinese territory to a common frontier line across the belt in question, and leaving to Russia only the possibility of violating it by an open act of aggression or war.† I am well aware of the political

* See page 8, "From Oxh to Chitral," &c., by Captain C. H. Beley, Quartermaster General's Office, Simla, 1885.

† The point to the north of the Murghabi, where this line might begin, and the point on the Hunza or Chitral frontier, where it might end, need not be gone into here.

obstacles which stand in the way, at present, of adopting any course which would have the effect of causing the Afghans to advance their position. If, however, existing engagements with Russia, regarding the Oxus frontier, should be modified, an opportunity will be afforded to the Afghans to occupy a common frontier line with China, so as to leave no unclaimed territory between two states.

10. On the 15th October we descended the grassy valley of the Murghabi for about six miles, and crossing the stream, struck into the gorge of the Kára Su near a spot called Yeman Tál. Below the Kára Su junction, the Murghabi valley continues open and well grassed for some two or three miles, then the hills close in, and the ravine becomes narrow and rugged, and quite impracticable for baggage animals. There is a difficult track for foot passengers, however, which leads in three marches to the small Roshan village of Sárez—the highest settled point on the Murghabi—and from there again in one long march, or two short ones, to Sonáb, near the Kudara confluence, where the valley widens a little and the road becomes somewhat better. There is no "Sárez Pamir," and these misleading words should be erased from our maps: all the region so marked is occupied by steep, close-packed, difficult mountains, without any of the characteristics of a "Pamir." The Murghabi near the Kara Su confluence is quite an insignificant stream at this season—some twenty yards broad and barely knee-deep even where it flows in a single channel—though in summer it would of course swell to many times its autumn volume. The water at this season is clear, and large shoals of fish* are found in the pools. Here, at Yemán Tál, our Rang Kul guides joined us for the journey to Shighnan, and brought with them a deputation of several Kirghiz from the Murghabi valley, who had formerly inhabited the Alichur, to ask me to intercede with the Chinese authorities, on my return to Kashgar, and move them to withdraw the prohibition against the Kirghiz having communication with Shighnan. It appeared that not only are the Kirghiz required to live within the line of the Murghabi, but they are also forbidden to have any communication with Afghan territory. The Chinese fear and jealousy of the Afghans is so great, that they try to keep even these humble Kirghiz from falling under their influence and increasing their power. If all accounts are to be trusted, the Chinese stand in even greater fear of

* Probably a kind of barbel.

Afghanistan than of Russia. I was informed, in Yarkand, that during the last three or four years they had sent several secret emissaries (generally Badakhshis) into the Badakhshan provinces to report upon the strength of the Afghans, and on their movements and designs. These emissaries seem to have reported the Afghans to be strong in numbers and warlike, and the Chinese, having no diplomatic relations with them as they have with Russia, do not know what to expect, and fear that at any time the Afghans may make some aggressive movement or take some opportunity to pick a quarrel.* This state of apprehension on the part of the Chinese may not be without its use for us. British power in India is far off, and separated by mountains that preclude all idea of coercing the Chinese in Turkistan. This fact they are well aware of now a days, and have little respect for us in consequence, but a knowledge that we could, if necessary, encourage Afghanistan against them, might have a beneficial influence on our relations with them. And I may mention, here, that with this end in view, I took several opportunities, during my short stay in Yarkand, to enlarge on the military strength of the Afghans and their close alliance with the Government of India. The Chinese regard all foreign nations, whatever their power or their motives, as enemies, and it is ever the way with barbarous people to fear a barbarous enemy more than a civilised one. Thus when the Chinese become fully persuaded of the fact that Afghan foreign policy is more or less guided by the Government of India, and that military movements, aggressive or otherwise, on the part of the Afghan rulers, are to a great extent under British influence, I predict a decided improvement in our relations with the Turkistan authorities. But to return to the Kirghiz deputation. From these people it became evident that their grievance was not so much the loss of the excellent pastures of the Alichur, as the prohibition they were under against resorting to the Shighnan villages for their requirements of grain, clothing, &c. This latter circumstance weighed heavily with them. It was a hardship, they considered, to have to resort to the plains of Kashgar for their supplies, while the natural source lay close and convenient in

* Gukár Khan, the Hakim of Shighnan, told me that the Chinese officials had, from time to time, invited Afghan traders at Yarkand, &c., to give hints to their officers in Badakhshan that it would be well to have an understanding between the two provincial Governments. In this underhand way the Chinese try to cause the Afghans to take the first step, while they save their own false pride.

Shighnan.* The "basar-parting" (if one may use the term) on the Pamirs, is very much that of the water-parting, and might be placed between Little Kara Kul and Rang Kul on this line of road. Thus the people of Rang Kul, Ak Baitál, Murghabi, &c., naturally resort for their supplies to Shighnan, while those from Kara Kul, Karatash, Tagharma, &c., look to Kashgar. The former are on the western, or Shighnan, basar-shed, and feel the inconvenience of being obliged to draw their supplies from beyond the eastern shed. The Chinese policy of fear and suspicion, however, has begun to take effect in the way that might be expected: the Kirghiz are becoming alienated, and this summer sent a deputation to Sardár Abdulla Ján, Governor of Badakhshan, to ascertain how the Afghans would receive them if they abandoned their allegiance to the Chinese. The Sardár assured them of a welcome in the Oxus provinces whenever they chose to settle there.

* As a matter of fact, as I afterwards saw for myself, they frequently obtain supplies from the Shighnan villages, but it is done secretly.

11. Perhaps the most curious point to remark about the relations of the Kirghiz to their neighbours, is the anxiety of both the Chinese and the Afghans to keep them as subjects. Were they a numerous, a warlike or a wealthy people, this desire could be understood—the taxes taken from them might swell the revenues of the province, or their men might be counted on as a defence against an enemy. But, as I have already shown, they are a poor people and pay little or no revenue, except where they cultivate the ground; their numbers, too, are small, and it is estimated that only about one tent in four possesses a matchlock (usually a heavy small-bore, rifled barrel of Russian make, fitted to a rude home-made stock). If this estimate be applied to the total population (5,000 to 6,000 in about 1,200 tents), it would give only about 300 firearms for the whole of the Pamirs, and there cannot be a question of more than a quarter of the population abandoning the Chinese allegiance and going over to the Afghans. All the Kirghiz of the Eastern Pamirs—and they form by far the greater proportion—would, in any case, remain under the Chinese. It is difficult, therefore, to see how this western section of the Pamir Kirghiz can be considered either valuable allies or formidable enemies. Warlike qualities I believe nobody would attribute to them; on the contrary, they have been the victims of raids from Shighnan for many generations past, and if they were ever

possessed of any aggressive spirit, it must have been long ago crushed by the treatment they have received from more powerful neighbours. From time to time, as the demand in the slave market might require, the Shighni Mirs would organise "chapaus," or forays, to the Alichur or the Rang Kul Pamir, and carry off as many marketable head of Kirghiz as they could dispose of to advantage in the neighbouring countries. Even the villagers of the Ghund and Shákhdara valleys of Shighnan—themselves but slaves of their Mir—after harvesting their summer crops, were in the habit of making up raiding parties to the Pamir, where they plundered all the Kirghiz within their reach, of sheep, ponies, woollen stuffs, and, in short, anything they could lay their hands on, except the people themselves. These were a "royal monopoly" in the Shighnan State, and the Mir's subjects did not dare to deal in them. The Kirghiz could seldom call themselves secure, except when the Mirs were engaged in war with some neighbouring State; and perhaps the darkest day for them was when the sister of the last Mir, Shah Yusuf Ali, was given in marriage (about 1870) to Yakub Beg of Kashgar. This alliance with the powerful Beg gave additional strength and prestige to Shighnan, and besides entailed frequent missions across the Pamirs to Kashgar, each of which took, more or less, the form of a raid on any Kirghiz who might be accessible *en route*. All these lawless proceedings have been put an end to since Shighnan has passed into the hands of the Afghans, and the Kirghiz appear to feel that a new era of peace and security has dawned upon them. Hence little wonder that they should have leanings towards the Afghans, even putting aside the late childish measure of the Chinese regarding the Murghabi frontier.

12. Our road now lay up the Kara Su, over the Nezá Tásh pass, and down the Alichur valley to the Sasik Kul, where we left the Alichur, and passing the mouth of the Khargosh nulla, up which a track leads to Wakhan, crossed the Koh-i-Tezek pass into the head of the Ghund valley. The whole of this ground was gone over by the Russian expedition of 1883 and has been described by them. There is some mistake, however, regarding the height of the Nezá Tásh pass, as marked on the 12-mile Government map (1884), the figure given, 15,600 feet, being probably a misprint for 13,600. My altitudes throughout are, *for the present*, somewhat lower than those of the Russian expedition, but when certain cor-

rections are obtained for the instruments used, they will show rather higher figures. In the case of the Nezá Tásh my measurement is, for the present, 13,400 feet, and it is in relative agreement with all other heights I have obtained, so that the great discrepancy of 2,200 feet can only be accounted for by a misprint on the map or in the report on which the map is based. The pass is a remarkably easy one; indeed it hardly deserves the name of a pass, but only of a water-parting. Two nullas facing each other bring down streams—the one from the south, the other from the north—and shed them, the former westward into the Alichur valley and the latter eastward into the Kara Su. The turning point of these is the water-parting, or pass. Both streams are dry at this season. Another matter in which the 12-mile map is in error—this time probably misled by the Russian surveyors—is in marking a certain Sari Kul to the eastward of the Sasik Kul. The name of the most easterly lake of the group is the Sasik, according to my Kirghiz informants, and there is no Sari Kul. Though mere names are not of great importance, it is as well not to have more than are necessary, on our maps, of the nature of *Sarikol*, *Siri Kul*, &c., which have a tendency to mislead enquirers who do not make nice distinctions. I was unable to examine either of the passes leading from the Alichur to Wakhan—the Básh Gumbaz or the Khargosh—owing to the deep snow and constant snow-storms. I went up the ravine of the former, however, for some distance, and should judge it to be an easy pass in summer as far as the ascent from the Alichur side is concerned, but my Kirghiz guide informed me that the decents towards the Great Pamir is much more difficult. The pass may be considered practicable for horses for about four months in the year at the outside. Its height would be about that of the Nezá Tásh. The Khargosh is perhaps somewhat easier than the Básh Gumbas and is open for about the same time. The Koh-i-Tezek is a perfectly easy pass, formed of open rounded hills, and has an altitude of only 13,950 feet (about). It gives rise, on its western slope, to a stream which joins the main river of the Ghund valley, some 31 miles to the north-west; and immediately at its western foot is joined, on the left, by a ravine coming from the Kukbai pass, at the head of the Shákhdara valley. This last is also an easy pass and is distant from the foot of the Koh-i-Tezek only so me 9 or 10 miles, while on the Shákhdara side, about an equal distanco brings one to the Kirghiz settlement of Joshángáz, which lies

above all the settled habitations of the Shighnis. These Kirghiz—some 15 or 16 Akuis only—are partly cultivators, and have been subject to Shighnan for many years. Two short days' journey down a deep narrow gorge, thick with willow and thorn jungle, brought us, on the 22nd of October, to the highest inhabited spot in the Ghund valley—a small kishlák (or hamlet) of three or four families,* called Sardim, just below the point where the Koh-i-Tezek stream joins the main river descending from Yeshil Kul. From Burzila, the point where we left this stream just above the Sasik Kul, down to Sardim, is reckoned at three fair marches or four short ones by the Bugrumál route. The track leads, at one point, over some very difficult rocks on the margin of the Yeshil Kul, and then over a spur-pass called the Bugrumál, which is said to be steep and rocky, but probably of no great elevation. In all likelihood this road is passable by baggage animals with more or less labour or delay. From Sardim, after a short march of 14½ miles, we arrived at Cháhrsim on the left bank, and just below some steep rapids in the river. The village consists of some seven or eight "houses," as the term goes here—more properly, seven or eight families of poverty-stricken, half-clad wretches, living in as many dilapidated huts. At one point above Sardim, and at two or three places between that place and Cháhrsim, we passed the remains of deserted villages, which at a glance told a tale of tyranny and bad government. We were told at first that the inhabitants had "gone" to Khokand and Kashgar, but little by little it oozed out that these were the remains of villages whose inhabitants had been driven, by their Mir, to Khokand and Kashgar, and sold there as slaves. A village once depopulated in this way is not readily occupied again. Just before the Afghans took the country, the Hakim of the Ghund valley, who was a relation of Yusuf Ali Shah, began to build a fort here for the defence of the frontier; he had erected six square towers or bastions, and had just commenced to connect these by a wall, when the Mir's rule came to an end. The towers are roughly and badly built, about 20 feet high, square in plan and falling in towards the top. Proceeding down the valley into lower altitudes, the villages become a little more populous, the cultivated areas larger,

* Some of these cultivate a spot called Langer, a little above the junction, on the main stream. Sardim is the lowest point reached by the Russian expedition of 1883. They came down by the direct road from Yeshil Kul and returned by the Koh-i-Tezek, having been met by the Hakim of Shighnan at Sardim, who turned them back from that point.

and the ground more fertile. At Cháhrsim, Sardim, Joshangáz, &c., little else than barley can be cultivated, but as one advances towards the Panjah valley, all kinds of grain, except rice, are met with, and nearly all the fruits of temperate climates in Europe. The people, also, below Deh Basta (known as Ghund *par excellence*) are not only better off as to clothing and houses, but look less cowed and miserable, the reason being, not, as one naturally supposes at first sight, that they inhabit a more genial district, but that the Lower Ghund valley was never one of the favourite slave-farms of the Mirs. The Upper Ghund, the Khof villages near the Darband, and the three or four lower villages of the Bártang valley in Roshán, were, for some reason which I have never heard explained, the chief sources from which the later Mirs, at all events, derived their supply of slaves for the foreign markets; and in these parts the people bear the brand that might be expected. There is no populous village, however, in the whole Ghund valley, and none of the side nullas are inhabited.

13. At Chahrsim, on the 24th, we were met by a "Captain," a Dafadar, and a guard of sepoys, sent by the authorities of Shighnan to meet us and escort us down to Bar Panjah. The day before, the messenger I had sent on from the Murghabi with a letter announcing my arrival, had returned to camp from Deh Basta, where he had been stopped and made to wait, while orders were asked for from the Hakim. It appeared that a report had reached the authorities,* that a large party of foreigners had descended into the valley from the Pamir, and one rumour was that they were Russians. A guard of 20 or 30 men, accordingly, was sent up the valley to ascertain the facts and to stop the intruders if unfriendly. They met my Yarkandi messenger, who told them the true story and said he had a letter for the Hakim. They disbelieved his story, however, and made him wait while they forwarded the letter and obtained an answer. The answer came the next day to the effect that we were guests of the State and were to be treated accordingly, and it was followed up by the "Captain" and the guard before alluded to. I learned, afterwards, that for more than two months previously three Mehmándárs with supplies, &c., had been sent from Khánábád to Wakhan to await my arrival there, as it was never expected that I should come by any but the

* Probably word had been sent on from Chahrsim, from village to village; otherwise it is not easy to see how a report could have preceded my messenger.

Sarikol and Wakhan road. These Mehmándárs joined me later on at Kila Wámar. My reception at Bar Panjah (on the 30th) could not be surpassed for cordiality, and explanations were freely offered about the messenger being stopped on the road. The Hakim or "Sarhad-dár" is one Gulzár Khan, a native of Kandahar and a neighbour of the family of the Sardár, Abdulla Ján. He has been in Shighnan since Dr. Regel's visit, having been sent up to accompany that gentleman in his movements, and to see him across the Darwáz frontier on his departure. On the arrival of a section of the Pamir expedition of 1883 at Sardim, Gulzar Khan was the officer sent up to turn them back. He described the officer in charge of the Pamir party * as a very straightforward, reasonable man, but he had little praise to bestow on Dr. Regel. The Pamir party was supplied by Gulzar Khan with all they wanted in the way of provisions, fodder, &c., but their request to be allowed to descend the valley to the Panjah was declined, and they returned to the Pamir after a few days' stay at Sardim. The "General" in command of the province is one Saidál Khan, a native of Kabul. He was sent up in 1883 to take over the province from Yusuf Ali, and has been in Shighnan ever since. He has under his command 6 companies of regular infantry, 2 companies of Khásadárs (or irregulars), half a battery of 3-pounder mule-guns, and about 30 sowars. Most of the men are natives of Afghan Turkistan, though they have a way of calling themselves Kabulis. A fair number of the regulars are armed with Sniders (part of the late gifts to the Amir, it is said) and the rest with English muzzle-loading rifles and muskets. There is also a very fair establishment of artizans, and I was shown a gun-carriage which had been entirely made in Shighnan—the wheels, elevator, and in fact all parts of it. The fort is of native construction and is badly built of uncut stone and mud. It contains all the dwellings of the Mirs now occupied by the Afghan General and his men, a number of other buildings used as barracks, stables, store-houses, &c., and a small line of Afghan butchers' and grocers' stalls, to which the inappropriate name of "bazar" has been given. It is crowded and filthy in the extreme, though when seen from a distance, standing on a cliff overlooking the river, at a height of some 250 feet,† it is picturesque enough. Besides the fort there is no town at Bar Panjah,

* One Ivanoff, I believe.

† The altitude of the Panjah river at this point is about 6,600 feet above the sea.

though villages and orchards occupy the hill spurs round about.

14. As the fine autumn weather we experienced on arrival at Bar Panjah was not expected to last, I determined to continue my journey to Roshán without delay, and Gulzár Khan having been good enough to make the necessary arrangements, immediately the matter was mentioned to him, I was able to leave Bar Panjah on the 4th November. I left the greater part of my camp behind, because travelling up the Murghabi valley was said to be difficult, but as the "General" insisted on sending the "Captain" and a guard of sepoys, and as two or three persons on the part of Gulzár Khan also accompanied us, my efforts at reduction were of little avail. We crossed the Panjah a few miles below the fort and camped the first evening at Sácharv, on the right bank. Down to this point the Panjah valley is wide and comparatively populous. The villages, in their orchards, stand usually on the open spurs of the hills, or on terraces, at some height above the river, and in summer would no doubt look green and fertile enough. Though the fields are somewhat cramped, the fruit is abundant, and at certain times of the year the inhabitants live on it, to the exclusion of almost every other kind of food, in the same way as in some parts of Kashmir and Baltistán. Mulberries form a regular food-crop; in addition to these, apples, pears, apricots, and walnuts are the most common fruits, and there are also grapes, melons of different kinds, and some sorts of plums. Immediately below Sácharv, the river valley narrows and only admits of a village every here and there; about two miles before reaching the mouth of the Bártang valley, it attains what is perhaps the narrowest point at a spot where a spur, or point of rocks, juts out from the right bank and forms a cliff overlooking the river. This spot is called the "Darband." On the ridge of the spur, and just on the roadside, are the remains of two little towers which the Afghans destroyed after they took the country; and on the opposite side of the river, but about 300 yards lower down, is the ruin of another small tower which was destroyed at the same time. There is no village at the Darband, and it is not a very remarkable spot, though it certainly commands the track along either side of the river. It is also the border of the Roshan province, and here the Naib of Roshan met us, one Khudá Yár, a native Roshani, who has recently been placed in charge by

the Afghans. The fort of Wámar lies about a mile and a half to two miles below the junction of the Murghabi,* but I did not visit it till my return from Sonáb.

* On its lower course—all through the settled districts of Roshan—the Murghabi is called the Bártang.

15. The two chief points to be investigated about the Bártang, or lower Murghabi valley, were (1) whether its stream might prove to be of greater volume than the Panjah, and, therefore, the main feeder of the Oxus, as reported (I believe) by one of the native explorers, and (2) how far certain passes leading over from the Darwáz valley of Yaz Gulám might be considered practicable roads into Roshan. From the inspections of the confluence which I was able to make on the upward and the return journeys, from careful enquiries made from the people of Wámar regarding the fluctuations of the two rivers, during the course of the year, and from estimates made by fording both (on horseback) at short distances above the confluence, I was able to satisfy myself that the Panjah is a very much more voluminous stream than the Murghabi. In the absence of any kind of boat, I was unable to obtain measurements for the section of either river, so that I can give no figures for the volume, and even had I been able to take measurements, they would be of little value, because they would refer only to the season when they were taken, and would be no guide to the relative sizes of the rivers at other seasons.† Measurements taken at intervals throughout a year would be necessary for a complete and final result. The general estimate that I arrived at was that at this, the season of lowest water, the Murghabi has somewhat less than half the volume of the Panjah. The sources of the two rivers are, perhaps, about equidistant, but the chief glacier feeders of the former (the Kashála Yákh) are much nearer to the confluence than those of the Panjah are to the same point; it is also a more confined stream than the Panjah and has a steeper bed—a greater fall per mile—from the glacier feeders downwards. The two former circumstances cause a greater range in volume between summer, when the glaciers are melting, and winter, when they are frozen,—so much so, that in summer the volume of the Murghabi is probably almost equal to that of the Panjah at the same point, for a short time during June and July.

† The volume of a river, at any point, is its discharge expressed in cubic feet per second. To compute this, it is necessary to measure the breadth of the stream and the velocity of the current, and to obtain a line of soundings across it, from which to calculate the area of the section, or average depth. It is obvious that without a boat (which must also be very skilfully handled) and other preparations, these data cannot be obtained.

but after that it decreases rapidly to the winter level, which is (as above remarked) less than half that of the Panjah. In the meantime the Panjah neither rises nor falls to the same extent, and this in itself, in a mountainous country, is a characteristic of a main stream as opposed to a tributary. The third circumstance—the steeper bed—accounts, of course, for the greater velocity.* If the native explorer, who first put forth the theory that the Murghabi was the main stream, happened to have seen the junction in June or July, his mistake may be partly accounted for. The matter is of political importance, only in so far as it bears upon the wording of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1873, relating to the Oxus boundary of the Afghan provinces. As regards the passes leading across the range dividing the Yaz Gulám† and Bártang valleys, there are six between Wámar and Sonáb, but not one of them can be a source of danger to the Afghan provinces, as affording a road to an invader. All of them were closed by the autumn snow at the time of my visit, so that I was unable actually to examine any of them, but from what I could see, from a distance, and learn from the inhabitants in their neighbourhood, I do not think the above opinion is likely to prove incorrect. It will be seen, from the list on the margin,‡ that none of them are practicable for baggage animals at any time of the year; only two of them are passable for led ponies during the period of highest snow line (say part July, August, and September), and the rest can be used only by men on foot during the two or three most favourable months in the year. Moreover, as regards the four upper passes, the road along the Murghabi valley is so bad that supposing an enemy to have crossed from Yaz Gulam during the summer, it would only be necessary to destroy the ladders of twigs and basket-work which form the "road" along the face of the cliffs, at some places, to prevent him from descending the valley. And further, there is

* Of the three elements—breadth, depth, and velocity—the *first* is greater in the Murghabi in summer and in the Panjah in winter; the *second* is always greater in the Panjah; and the *third* is always greater in the Murghabi.

† Sometimes Yaz Gulán or Gilán, but never Ghalám.

‡ (1) Behind the village of Yemts. Footpath closed from about October to July.
(2) Behind Bhágu. Footpath closed from about October to July.
(3) Behind Sipanj. Footpath closed from about October to July.
(4) Raja ravine, between Sipanj and Darjomj. Footpath closed from about October to July.
(5) Behind Upper Bijravd village. Practicable for led ponies for two months of most favourable season, by crossing a snow top, closed even for men on foot early in November 1885.
(6) Behind Kala Shárv, a pass called "Khurjin." Practicable for led ponies for two months of most favourable season by crossing a snow top, closed even for men on foot early in November 1885.

a spot—a "rafak" or spur—below the lowest pass, and only some six miles from Wamar, where the exit from the valley could be defended by a mere handful of men at the high-water season. Lastly, there are no fords during the season that these passes are open, so that, supposing one of them to have been crossed, boats or rafts would be necessary in descending the valley, for the only practicable track crosses and re-crosses the river at intervals of every few miles, from about six miles above Wamar, upwards.

16. From the village of Sujand, about three miles above the mouth of the Murghabi, to the Kudara confluence, the highest point I reached, occupied five days. The "road," as it is called by the natives—whether by way of pleasantry or for want of a more expressive word, I know not—is quite impracticable for baggage animals, and riding ponies can only be used at intervals, though it is possible, by leading and swimming them, in certain places, to take them up as high as the Kudara during the low-water season. At the high-water season the road must be considered closed to ponies altogether. In some places ledges of rock, slightly improved, serve as a footpath; in others, a path has been made of poles, twigs, stones, &c., bound together in a very rough way, or of twig ladders suspended against the face of the cliff, by means of sticks or pegs let into holes and crevices of the rocks. They ascend, descend, or are carried along at a level, according to the facilities offered by the natural configuration of the cliff. Pathways of this kind are required in order to pass round points, or spurs, jutting out into the river, or along steep cliffs, where the water is deep up to the foot. They are called "rafak," and it is not always easy for a nervous traveller to pass over them, and to keep up a show of indifference which he does not feel. The natives of the country not only cross them as a matter of course, but carry loads over them. They, however, look to the foot-hold only, for, like other Asiatics, they have no nerves to speak of. In some places the "rafak" is to be outflanked by climbing a high and difficult pass over the ridge above; at some others a ford, always deep and always in icy cold water, is the only alternative. From the left bank of the Lower Murghabi two long nullas lead up to passes over the range bordering the Ghund valley on the north. The lower of these is the pass above the Romed village, which leads to Shetam; and the upper is behind Bár Dara, whence a difficult footpath is said to lead to a point near Sardim. The Romed stream is a

considerable one and adds visibly to the volume of the Murghabi; this is the case also with the stream which descends from the Khurjin (or saddle-bag) pass, between Ráh Shárv and Sonáb, but none of the other tributaries below the Kudara are of any importance, though some of them, no doubt, swell in summer to powerful mountain torrents.* That the Kudara† is the chief feeder of the Murghabi there can be no question, and as it has its own sources in a group of extensive glaciers called Kashála Yákh, at no great distance from its junction with the Murghabi, it must be considered the latter's chief glacier feeder, and, as a consequence, the parent of its great rise in summer—the chief cause of its great yearly range in volume. Here the Murghabi holds the same relation towards the Kudara that the Panjah holds towards the Murghabi at Wamer. It is, on the whole, the larger and more constant stream, though the greater velocity is with the Kudara on account of its shorter bed and higher source. The group or series of glaciers, known as the Kashála Yákh (the "long" or "hanging ice") is described as of great extent, and is said to give rise not only to the Kudara, but to the Yaz Gulam stream, the Wanj and the the river of Karategin.‡ The village of Sonáb or Tásh Kurghán lies about two miles below the Kudara junction, and possesses a rickety little fort of uncut stones and mud, whence its Turki name. Above Sonáb there are only two cultivated spots, both on the Murghabi; the lower is called Osáid with three "houses," at a distance of about one long day's journey, and the other Sárez, with ten or twelve "houses," at about an equal distance beyond. The road to these places, as noticed above, is very difficult even for pedestrians. From Sarez a better, if not shorter one, leads to Shighnan, across a pass to the south, and carries the traveller first to the shore of the Yeshil Kul (called by the Tájiks "Sámán Kul") and then down the Ghund valley. The whole of the region from Ráh Shárv upwards, including Sárez on the Murghabi, and the entire Kudara valley, is called Pásár, and is a district of Roshan under the jurisdiction of the Naib at Kila Wamar. In the Kudara valley the inhabitants are all Kirghiz, and there is no cultivation. The lowest settlement is an *aul* called Pálits

* Above the Kudara perhaps the Ak Baital would be the largest feeder in summer, but it is probably a stream of snow origin like the Murghabi itself, or it would not be dry so early as the first half of October.

† Called by the Tájiks "*Ghudara*." *Kudara* is the Kirghiz pronunciation.

‡ This glacier region would repay exploration by an active traveller, who should approach it late in summer, from the side of Great Kara Kul.

or Pálids, about eight miles above the confluence, where about half a dozen families reside under a Beg named Sahib Nazar. The people of Pásár are Shighni and Persian-speaking Tájiks, like the rest of the Roshánis, but from being much in communication with the Kirghiz, they nearly all know Turki as well. Many of them call themselves "Mir-i-Pásár" and profess to be descended from certain Mirs, though I was unable to learn that Pásár ever formed a separate State or Mirship. The lower portion of the Murghabi valley is known as the district of Bártang; its two chief villages are Sipunj and Básit; below these Yemts and Sujand are well situated and have a tendency to be prosperous; but they, and two or three smaller ones just above, were favourite slave "runs" of the late Mir Yusuf Ali, and are now only half populated in consequence.

17. On the 15th of November I found myself again at Wamar, and the next day continued my journey towards Waznaud, which I had always been informed was the frontier of Roshan in this direction; and it was not until I arrived at the village of Waznaud that I ascertained the actual frontier on the right bank to be some seven miles (by direct track) further on, below the village of Rákharv. The Tangsheb (sometimes called Gulsár) nulla, which descends from the ridge dividing Shiwa from the Panjah valley, and debouches just below Waznaud, but on the opposite (left) bank of the river, forms the boundary on the left bank. Below this, for about eight miles, the river itself forms the boundary line, until a "rafak," called Shipid, is reached on the right bank. This rafak is the recognised boundary point on the right of the river, and the line then extends along the main ridge dividing the Yaz Gulam valley from the Bártang. The last village of Roshan on the left bank is Chásnaud, and the Tangsheb nulla is considered the limit of the district of that village; in the same way, the Shipid rafak is considered the limit of the district of Waznaud, and hence forms the boundary point on the right bank. Rákharv, a small "kishlák" of about six houses, is within the village district of Waznaud, and is distant from that place about five miles along the river, or rather less over the spurs. The Shipid rafak may be reckoned at about two miles below Rákharv. On neither side is there anything to mark the boundary, nor is there any "karáwal" or frontier guard of any kind, either at the boundary points, or at Chásnaud, or Waznaud. The line, as I have described it, is held to be the frontier by acknowledged custom, and this

is considered sufficient even by the Afghans, who, it appears, have accepted all the frontiers of these provinces as they found them. The Shipid rafak is reckoned at about six or seven miles above the mouth of the Yaz Gulam stream, but the fort of Yaz Gulam is said to be half a day's journey back from the Panjah, up the stream. Below Waznaud, along the right bank of the Oxus, there is only a footpath; the bridle-path crosses to the left bank at Waznaud, but is said to become very difficult below the Tangsheb nulla. Personally I saw nothing below the Tangsheb nulla. After frequent enquiries, I had understood that the frontier line *crossed* the river just below Waznaud, and had left my camp at Shids (nearly opposite Yárkh), after making arrangements to return to Wamar by the 19th, in order to observe for the longitude on that night. It was only at Waznaud that I discovered the real facts, but as the longitude of Wamar seemed to be of more importance than inspecting the Shipid rafak, I decided not to lose the chance of determining it, by devoting two more days in marching from Shids to Shipid and back.* The frontier line, I may add, has been correctly shown, or nearly so, by Dr. Regel, though his topography is exceedingly faulty. Gulzar Khan, who accompanied Dr. Regel to Waznaud, told me that the latter obtained all the information available, and returned to Yaz Gulam down the left bank of the Panjah, thus passing both Tangsheb and Shipid. I have not seen Dr. Regel's paper or his original map, but only Mr. Delmar Morgan's general map of "Part of Central Asia," where I believe Dr. Regel's work is embodied (see Royal Geographical Society's Supplementary Papers, Vol. I, Part 2, 1884).

* The night of the 19th November was wet and cloudy, and a rare opportunity for fixing the longitude of that important point was lost. During three nights spent at Wamar not even an observation for the latitude could be obtained.

18. The Panjah valley from Wamar down to Wamd, though only some 8 or 10 miles, is no doubt the most favoured portion of the province of Shighnan. The river valley is wide, the slopes between the river and the hills on the right bank are easy and open to the sun, and leave larger culturable spaces than in any other part of the province; the climate also is warm, for the elevation is but little over 6,000 feet. In consequence the villages are larger here than elsewhere, and though bad government has checked their prosperity, still they are fairly populous, and in summer would, no doubt, appear fertile and productive enough. During my visit, the continual sleet and rain prevented them from

appearing to advantage. On the whole, they have much the appearance of Kashmir villages and most of the same products as in Kashmir, except rice, are found there. The chinar tree is also found from Wamar downwards. The fort of Wamar stands on the flat near the river bank, and is not remarkable either for the strength of its walls or for its commanding position. The interior is crowded with dwellings, stables, and accumulations of dirt, like the fort at Bar Panjah, its walls are in bad repair, and it has no moat. In the days of the Mirs of Shighnan, the Hakim of Roshan was usually a brother or other relation of the Mir, and had his residence in the fort; the Mir himself also spent a portion of his time there every year. The village outside the fort is a small one, some 20 or 30 houses, but there is much culturable waste land round about, which might be taken up. Wamar never seems to have been attacked (in modern times at least) by the Darwázis; in the petty wars that occasionally took place between the two states, the Shighnis seem generally to have met their enemy lower down the river, at Shids, Pájward, &c. The Afghans keep no troops in Roshan.

19. It has been said, I believe, in certain quarters that Bokhara has a claim to the allegiance of Roshan. On this point I made particular enquiries wherever I met anyone who had a knowledge of such matters, but I could find no trace of Roshan ever having been subject to Bokhara or to Darwáz.* Neither had anybody, of whom I enquired on this subject, ever heard that Bokhara had put forward claims to Roshan. Gulzar Khan, however, informed me that when he took Shah Yusuf Ali prisoner, he found among his papers documents to show that Yusuf Ali had been constantly in the habit of declaring himself a dependent (*tábeah*) of neighbouring rulers. Besides, the Amir of Afghanistan, the Amir of Bokhara, the Khan of Khokand, the Badaulat of Kashgar, and others had all, in their turn, received letters from the Shighni Mir assuring them of his dependence. My impression is that none of these letters were meant to have any more than a mere complimentary significance, or, at most, to be expressions of good-will or flattery of the extravagant kind that such people often use. He could not have offered

* Darwáz has only been under the rule of Bokhara since 1877, though previous to that date the Mirs, no doubt, sent tribute to Bokhara as well as to other neighbouring states. The last Mir of Darwáz was one Mahomed Suráj, who in 1877 (it is said) was called upon to carry his tribute personally to the Amir of Bokhara. On arrival, he was seized and imprisoned on a charge of meditated treason, and a hakim was appointed to administer Darwáz. The present hakim is one Yusuf Diwán Begi, whose seat of government is at Wanj.

subjection to *all* of them, though he might have paid tribute to all, as is frequently the custom with petty Asiatic rulers who wish to propitiate neighbours more powerful than themselves. As the Afghans were the only people he feared, it is scarcely likely that he would have willingly renounced his independence, except to the one power who could defend him from their aggression, *viz.*, Russia; yet it does not appear that he ever offered allegiance to the Russians, though he might have been on the point of doing so (as the Afghans allege) when the Amir seized him.

20. After returning to Bar Panjah and making a short stay there, I continued my journey up the Oxus on the 29th November. On a sandy plain by the river-side, just opposite the Suchán confluence, is a rather remarkable spot known as "Shah Wanji bazar" or "Shah Wanji bágh,"—a spot where a former Mir of Shighnan endeavoured to perpetuate his name by founding a city. The nucleus of this city was to be a bazar, for Shah Wanji had a sufficient glimmering of civilisation, to see that trade would assist his scheme more than the erection of a palace or a temple, and he determined to "facilitate" it, accordingly, in the only way known to him. He built a double row of about a dozen shops, the ruins of which are still standing, as also the remains of a canal which was to fertilise the sandy plain and bring water to the city. The plain is about four miles from Bar Panjah, but it was a good site for a bazar, in the Shah's estimation, and therefore people were ordered to come and open shops. Close by, he built himself a house, planted a grove of trees and an orchard, and had several stone slabs erected, bearing inscriptions in his own honour. Indeed, nothing was wanting for the foundation of a great city but population, and the only circumstance which marred the scheme of the bazar was the absence of goods and customers. These even Shah Wanji, absolute little monarch though he was, felt himself unable to supply in sufficient quantities, so he determined to turn merchant himself, and being the possessor of large herds of human cattle, he opened a trade by driving them off to the neighbouring markets in Bokhara, Khokand, Kashgar, Chitral, &c., and exchanging them there for the wares he required. Shah Wanji, in short, is credited with being the founder of the slave trade—the first Mir of Shighnan who sold his subjects into foreign countries;* and his three lineal de-

* It is more probable that the practice of selling Shiahs existed, to some extent, since the time of the Uzbeg Khans of the 15th and 16th centuries (Shaibani Khan and Abdulla Khan, &c.), but was extended to the dimensions of a regular commercial institution by this Shah Wanji.

scendants have shown themselves to be worthy successors, by keeping up the practice for nearly a hundred years. His character, as far as one can glean it, seems to have been that of a typical Central Asian Khan, who by means of personal energy and some warlike instincts* succeeds in making a mark in the obscure and barbarous little world that knows him. The family of the Shighni Mirs trace their origin to a certain Shah-i-Khámosh, a Darwesh and Sáyad of Bokhara, who appears to have first converted the people to Sunni Mahomadanism, in his capacity of Pir, and then to have become Mir over them. Long afterwards the people became Shiahs, though the family of the Mirs remained Sunni till the last. When Shah-i-Khámosh lived I have not been able to ascertain, and there are no written histories in the country. Probably it was about the same time as the conversion of the Badakhshis, or some time in the seventh century; this, at all events, is what the Khan Mullah of Badakhshan thinks probable.† The Pir's shrine exists to the present day, in a village close to the Bar Panjah fort, but it contains I believe, no record from which a date can be ascertained. The earliest Mir, of whom the people of the present day seem to have any distinct knowledge, was one Shah Mir, whose death is estimated to have taken place about 120 years ago. He was the father of Shah Wanji (the latter was so called because his mother was a native of Wanj in Darwáz), and the only date I have been able to find occurs during the latter's reign. On one of the stone inscriptions at the "bazar" it is recorded that Shah Wanji built the canal, mentioned above, in the year of the Hijra 1204, or 1786, but it is not known how many years he lived after that date. His son and successor was Kuliád Khan, of whom nothing remarkable is reported; his grandson, who followed Kuliád, was called Abdur Rahim. This personage is remembered

* Shah Wanji is said to have invaded Badakhshan at one time, but was not able to hold it.

† At the village of Sushan, in the Ghund valley, is the ruin of a fort attributed to a "Kafir," or pre-Muselman king of Shighnan, but no inscription or mark is to be found in or near it. Another and similar ruin is said to exist in Wakhan, and to be referred by tradition to the same ruler. This personage is called "Kahkaha" (the "laugher"), a name taken probably from Persian story-books, and having no more historical significance than "Bluebeard" or "King Cole" would have in English. Just below Bahárak, near the confluence of the Sarguláu and Varduj streams in Badakhshan, stands another of these ruins. This, like the one at Sushán, consists of mere mounds of uncut stones, and is quite devoid of interest. My Maulvi searched them both for some inscription or carving that might be made to tell a tale, but found nothing.

for having defended his country successfully against the Darwazis, who invaded Roshan about 1858 or 1859. Abdur Rahim had married one of his sons (named Shah Mir) to the daughter of Ismail, Mir of Darwaz, who considered that his son-in-law should have brought with him the province of Roshan. Abdur Rahim, however, declined to part with Roshan, met the invasion of the Darwazis, which followed, at Shids near the frontier, and defeated them. This was the last war with Darwaz. A few years after this event, Abdur Rahim died and was succeeded by his son Yusuf Ali, who ruled the country till 1883, when he was carried a prisoner to Kabul by the present Amir. All three generations since Shah Wanji have been slave traders, and there is no sign in the country, that I can discern, of their having been anything else: the results of their slave-dealing—a broken people and a half-ruined country—are the only monuments left standing to their memory. There was no trade except the slave trade, and when a trader visited the country it was to barter his wares, with the Mir, against slaves. Clothing, saddlery, tea, whatever was brought by the trader, was taken to the Mir as the one merchant in the country, who paid for what he bought in the only coin he possessed.* Justice again was only a branch of the slave trade, and subservient Kázis easily reconciled the sale of their fellow-countrymen with the "Shara" or Mahomadan law, on the ground that it was no sin for an orthodox king to sell heretical subjects. When a person offended he was sent as a slave to Bokhara, Khokand, or elsewhere; a light punishment was to sell the offender alone, a heavier one was to sell him and the whole of his family, in different directions, and confiscate whatever property he might have.†

* No coinage seems ever to have existed in Shighnan.

† The external slave trade has been entirely abolished under Afghan rule, and is not carried on even secretly, I believe. The news of this has already spread far, and the consequence is that Shighni slaves are escaping from the neighbouring countries and are returning to their homes. I met some of these myself, and just before leaving Shighnan I heard of the arrival, on the Lower Murghabi, of a party of 13 persons, who had been sold into Khokand some years ago, and who had lately made their escape by way of the Alai. Domestic slavery is also forbidden by the present Government, but it is carried on clandestinely to some extent.

21. The day after passing Shah Wanji's "city," I left my camp at Darmárokht and paid a flying visit to the Shiwa lake, returning to Darmárokht in the afternoon. The direct road from Bar Panjah to Badakhshan, which leads over the Ghár Zabin pass and along the north-west shore of the lake,

had been closed by snow for some time, but it was just possible, on a fine day, to reach the east shore of the lake from the Darmárokht ravine. I need hardly describe this interesting lake and its water system in this report, but as a good deal of confusion has risen with regard to it, I may mention that there is only one lake, and that it has an outlet, though partly underground, to the Panjah at Darmárokht. It is not a Pamir lake, *i.e.*, a sheet of water occupying a relatively low-lying plain, but a high mountain tarn, set, as it were, among the hill-tops and having scarcely a yard of level ground round its shores. It must have been visited by several of the native explorers, who have minimised its dimensions, and it was explored by Dr. Regel, who, as far as I was able to see, has very considerably exaggerated them. He also placed it a great deal too far west. The Survey Department, having been unable to reconcile the conflicting data, seem to have hit upon the ingenious device of making two lakes,* and to have carried the road from Shighnan to Badakhshan between them. Dr. Regel, I believe, records that he walked round the lake, and therefore ought to have formed a correct estimate of its size. I saw it from only one point, and from that spot could not get a view of the extreme southern end. Yet I must venture so far to trust my own estimate, as to believe that Dr. Regel has at least doubled the length from north to south, and more than doubled it from east to west,† though he has shown the shape of the lake correctly. The altitude, moreover, which is given, I *believe* on his authority, on Mr. Delmar Morgan's map, as 11,800 feet, differs greatly from that which I obtained. I boiled carefully on the margin of the lake and obtained only an altitude of 10,100 feet—a figure that will probably be slightly increased when the boiling points of the thermometers used, come to be determined afresh at the Kew Observatory,‡ but which can never reach to anything approaching the altitude given by Dr. Regel. The distance of the eastern shore of the lake from the nearest point of the Panjah would be only some 5¾

* See 12-mile map of 1884.

† Measured on Mr. Delmar Morgan's map, cited above, the length given by Dr. Regel appears to be about 14 miles, and the breadth of the widest part (the northern section) about 11½ miles. I cannot estimate the latter at more than 4½ or 5 miles.

‡ Mercurial thermometers are liable through age to read too high and thus to cause elevations calculated from them to appear too low. The boiling points of my thermometers have not been determined since 1874. I do not know what means Dr. Regel used for determining the altitude.

miles (about) as the crow flies: the difference of level about 3,400 feet.

22. Continuing up the Panjah, I found that the river, as far as Ishkáshim, had been fairly correctly described and mapped by the native explorers, and as I came, at that place, on to the line travelled by Captain Wood in 1838, I brought my own route sketch to an end there. The road is now entirely on the left bank of the river, from Bar Panjah to Ishkashim, and it has been so much improved during the Afghan occupation, that it is perfectly safe and easy for baggage ponies at all times of the year. It fails only in the gradients: otherwise it would be an admirable hill road. From the end of November to about the middle or end of May, in each year, it is the main road between Badakhshan and Shighnan, the road over the Shiwa highlands being closed during the whole of that period, and the intermediate line up the Sargulán stream, and over the Yághurda pass to near Andáj, being closed for the greater portion of the time. At between 4 and 5 miles above the Darmárokht stream (there is no village of that name on the left bank) the boundary line of Ghárán is reached at a spur, or point of rocks, called "Sang-i-Surákh." There is no pillar or boundary mark of any kind on either side of the river, and on the right bank there is not even a point of rocks to indicate it. On that side, the line is considered to cut the hills *opposite* the Sang-i-Surákh. About 2½ miles above the village of Andáj and nearly opposite to Kázi Deh (which is in Ghárán) the road passes over another rocky spur, which marks the boundary of Ishkáshim on the left of the river. This point is called "Abring-i-Safed," and there is no artificial mark to indicate the boundary: the line is taken to cross the river to a point *opposite*, but there is nothing on the right bank to indicate its whereabouts. It would be at a spot rather less than a mile above the mouth of the Kázi Deh ravine. The upper boundary of Ishkáshim has generally been assumed to cross the river near Pátur; more exactly, however, it cuts the left bank of the Panjah at the lower end of a small "kishlák" known as Irugh, nearly a mile below Pátur, while it cuts the right bank about 2½ miles above Pátur, at the upper end of the village of Namadgut, the whole of the cultivation of the latter village being within Ishkáshim. Between Irugh and Namadgut the river forms the boundary line, as it does between the Tangsheb nulla and the Shipid rafak. There is no town or even chief village of Ishkáshim; the greater part of its cultivation

and inhabitants are found on the concave bank of the river, where the hills on the south slope so gradually down, that a large amphitheatre of habitable ground is formed. Here the villages are dotted about among the terraced fields, in much the same way as in Roshan, and no one of them in particular owns the name of Ishkáshim.* The fort stands about two miles back from the river, and is rather better built than most of the forts in the Tájik States, but it is unarmed and even ungarrisoned, for the few Afghan irregulars stationed in the district, seem to have taken up private quarters in the neighbouring villages, where they are engaged only in collecting revenue, &c. The people appear poorer and less independent than in the better parts of Shighnan and Roshan; this is, no doubt, attributable to the climate, which renders it more difficult to support life than in those districts, for the slave trade has, I believe, never flourished to any extent in Ishkáshim, and cannot therefore be held responsible. The climate, however, is a rigourous one, and though not so severe as that of Wakhan, still much worse than in the districts down the Panjah. The altitude of most of the habitations is from 8,500 to 9,000 feet (according to situation), and the "Bád-i-Wakhan" (or Wakhan wind) blows violently, for nearly the whole year, either up or down the valley.

* A Persian (i.e., Tájik) name for Ishkáshim is Khush Khwár, but it is probably only a perversion of the original Ishkáshim.

23. The question of population in an Asiatic State is always an unsatisfactory one to deal with, and the figures given can generally be regarded as only rough estimates. Shighnan proper (without Roshan) is to some extent an exception to this general rule, for Gulzar Khan was good enough to place at my disposal the figures he had obtained for revenue purposes. These are given, as is usual in the east, with "houses" for the unit, instead of individuals, and it may be generally assumed that a house is taken to mean a family of which the members are settled at a certain spot. But there is always a small floating population—usually single men connected, for instance, with the Government, the troops, &c.—whose numbers are not included in an estimate by the house. In some countries (as Kashmir for example) such people amount to a large proportion, but in Shighnan they must be few, and I have added only 5 per cent. to account for them. For each house or family, I believe five persons, in a Mussulman country, may fairly be taken as an average. Thus Gulzar Khan's computation shows 762

"houses" for the eight districts into which he divides Shighnan,* and these would give a total population of 3,810 persons, or with 5 per cent. added for the floating portion, about 4,000 in round numbers. In addition to these there would be some 800 or 900 Afghan troops, followers, &c. In Roshan no revenue has yet been levied, and there is, as yet, no census of the "houses." I saw nearly every village in Roshan, however, and have been able, with the assistance of the Naib and others, to form a rough estimate, which results in a total population of 3,000,† making a final total for the whole of the province (with troops) of some 8,000 persons. Ghárán, Ishkáshim, and Zebák are, together, under a separate Naib, who resides at the last-named place; they may be taken to number as follows:—

Ghárán, about	40	families	200
Ishkáshim	90	„	450
„	20	„ of Kirghiz at present	100
Zebák	400	„	2,000
		Total	2,750

There are no troops in the last three districts, or in the Roshan district. For Wakhan I have not yet been able to obtain any estimate; it would probably be between Zebák and Roshan. For Darwaz I was only able to obtain an estimate for that section which lies on the left bank of the Oxus. It appears that there are about 24 villages on that side, and though mostly exceedingly cramped for space—so rugged is the country—yet they are more populous than a similar number of villages in Roshan would be. The climate is warm on account of the lower altitude and sheltered position of the nullas, and therefore the villages are said to be productive and populous. On the whole the population of these 24 villages may perhaps be assumed at about 2,500 or 3,000 persons. The whole of the inhabitants of Shighnan,

* These are—

Dumfrokht	32	"houses"
Wir	60	„
Shákhdara	80	„
Ghund and Sachán	100	„
Bar Panjah	250	„
Rúshniv	100	„
Der Panjah	80	„
Khof and Bája	60	„
	762	

† Roughly thus—

4 villages	with 30	houses each	120
6 „	„ 25	„	150
9 „	„ 20	„	180
13 „	„ 10 or 15	„	150
	Houses		600
			5
	Persons		3,000

Roshan, and Gharan are Shighni-speaking* Tájiks and mostly understand Persian; in Ishkashim the people are also Tájiks, but a different dialect is spoken, which, however, is quite separate from the Wakhi. Again, in the southern villages of Zebák, such as Sanglich, &c., a language is spoken which differs from Shighni and Ishkashimi, but may perhaps be that of Munján. The whole of the inhabitants of these provinces, as well as a large proportion of the Darwazis, may be reckoned as Shiahs of the Ismaili sect, or followers of Agha Khan of Bombay. The chief disciples of the Khan and religious leaders of the people are as follows: (1) Mirza Sharaf of Suchán for Ghund and neighbourhood; (2) Sháhzáda Hasan of Deh Roshan for nearly the whole of Roshan and parts of Shighnan and Darwaz; (3) Mizráb Shah called the Shah-i-Munján for Darmarokht, Gharan, &c.; (4) Shah Abdur Rahim of Zebak, now in exile in Chitral, for Zebak and neighbourhood.

* Called Khugni, Khugnán, &c., in their own language. An ancient name for Shighnan is said to be Lam.

CHAPTER III.

BADAKHSHAN AND KATTAGHAN.

1. The road from Ishkáshim to Zebák leads up from the Panjah, by an easy slope, to the top of a low pass (rather over 10,000 feet) which separates, here, the head-waters of the Kokcha system from the Panjah. The ground was deep in snow on the 5th December, when my caravan crossed it, but so easy is the pass, that the pack animals completed the march to Zebák, of fully 18 miles, in a little over six hours. On the slope towards Zebák lie two or three small hamlets, and where the ravine opens out into a wide flat valley, are the group of villages known as Zebák proper. There is, however, no one village to which the name is applied, and there is no fort, like at Ishkáshim, which might be reckoned as a central point, to bear the name, unless indeed, the insignificant little building at the village of Dán could be dignified by the name of fort. Probably the largest and most central of the Zebák villages would be that known as Shah Abdur Rahim's, where the *Ismaili Pir*, alluded to in paragraph 23 of the last chapter, has his residence, and where, previous to his flight to Chitral, he and his family always lived.* The village is nearly opposite the junction of the three streams which unite to form the Vardoj river, and is consequently the lowest in altitude (about 8,500 feet) of all the Zebák villages. The largest of the three streams is probably the most westerly, which descends from the Durah and neighbouring passes and takes in, on its left, about eleven miles above the triple junction, a feeder ending in a remarkably fine waterfall. The next stream, towards the east, has its rise on the Nuksán pass and is perhaps the smallest of the three, while the most easterly is the one which is shed by the Ishkáshim water-parting, and which accompanies the road from that point to Zebák.† The united streams enter the narrow

* His brother Mahomed Sadik Shah was arrested by the Afghans on suspicion. Sadik implicated Abur Rahim, who on hearing that he had been accused, fled to Chitral. The Afghans suspected that Sadik had warned his brother and caused his flight: they therefore sent him (Sadik) a prisoner to Kabul.

† One of the most remarkable circumstances about Zebák is perhaps the diversity of languages, or the manner in which a number of languages—all of the Aryan type, I believe—converge near this point. The language of the lower, or central, villages is Persian as spoken in Badakhshan: the villages immediately above, in the valley towards the Durah, speak a language which is possibly that

or nearly that, of Munján (the district above Jarm), but which is said to have no affinity to either Ishkashimi or Chitrali. Thus, within a circle (described on the map) of about 25 miles radius round the centre of Zebák, certainly five and perhaps six languages may be found in daily use, viz., Persian, Shighni, Wakhi, Ishkashimi, Munjani, and Sanglichi—if the last should prove to be separate from Munjani. Just as the Zebák region is a knot among the mountain systems, and a point of junctions and approximations among the rivers, so it appears also that nature has made it a converging point of languages.

and rocky Vardoj valley immediately below the junction, and along the river runs the road to Badakhshan. For the first twenty or thirty miles the hills on either hand are steep and rugged, with here and there a sprinkling of dwarf juniper trees, but farther on this impressive scenery changes and gives place to wider openings, more villages and lower hills, till at about 47 miles from Zebak, the valley opens out on to the open plain of Bohárak, on the right bank, and that of Jarm on the left. The village of Bohárak itself, stands on the Sarghalán stream, about a couple of miles above its junction with the Vardoj and about four or five miles above the junction of the latter with the Kokcha. On the right of the Vardoj, the plains of Bohárak and Farhád are well cultivated and productive,—in strong contrast with the barren, stony expanse on the opposite side of the Vardoj, which forms a peninsula between it and the Kokcha.. Though of no great extent, Bohárak is said to be one of the best grain and fruit producing districts of Badakhshan, and during summer it is, without doubt, one of the pleasantest spots to be found in any of these regions. Its groves and orchards along the banks of the Sarghalán, stretch for some miles up the valley, while the heavy snows of the mountains above Yághurda send down a never-failing supply of water for irrigation. The altitude is about 6,000 feet above the sea, or more than 2,000 above Faizábád; the climate, in consequence, is much superior to that of Faizábád, and previous to the Afghan occupation, the Mirs constantly resorted to Bohárak as a summer residence, or at times when epidemics raged at their capital. About ten miles below Bohárak, the plain of Farhád closes in and the Kokcha enters the narrow gorge, or "Tangi," of Badakhshan. In some places this gorge is cliff-bound and obstructed by rocks, over which the river courses, in the flood season, in a succession of rapids; at others it opens out somewhat, and affords space to a few small villages. The "Tangi" may be said to extend the whole way from the lower end of the Farhád plain to Faizábád, a distance of about fourteen miles, though just above the town on the left bank a narrow terrace, of about two miles in length, is formed at some height above the river, and between

it andthe hills: on this stand the villages and orchards of Chittah—a green and shady strip, the resort, in summer, of all who can escape the stifling heat of the town.

2. The 10th December brought us to Faizábád, where the Afghan authorities accorded us a similar reception to that at Bar Panjah. We met the "General" in command, with a large staff, about a mile above the town, and rode in with him to the quarters which had been appointed for us to put up in. His name is Gul Ahmad Khan, a native of Kuner, whose later services have been chiefly in the direction of Herat and the Turkoman country. He seemed to have a fair knowledge of all that was going on at the Boundary Commissioner's camp, and to take a keen interest in the extent of territory which the Amir was to gain or lose by the operations of the Commission. Considerations other than gain or loss of territory, he was unable to appreciate, and I may remark here, that I noticed this narrow view of the matter to be the one taken by all Afghan officials with whom I conversed. Even Abdulla Ján was no exception in this respect, though, in the course of discussion, he was willing to admit that there was reason in contracting frontiers, in order to gain a strong defensive position, and that there was no advantage in holding large tracks of uninhabited wilds, which neither produced revenue nor added to the defensibility of the country. Still, in the matter of Trans-Oxus Shighnan as well as the Russian boundary, he could not avoid showing, like "General" Gul Ahmad and the rest of the officials, that the view he naturally took was that a loss of territory meant a loss of "izat," or dignity, to Afghanistan, while to gain territory—whether valuable or otherwise—would mean an increase of "izat." Gul Ahmad may perhaps have been more warlike in his views than most of his colleagues, but I think not; probably he was only more outspoken, and wished to support the reputation he has of being a fighting-man; at any rate his opinion was that no curtailment of territory should be allowed in any direction, but that Russia and Bokhara should be fought, either in the Turkoman country or in Shighnan, or wherever they might make a claim. The Afghans, he believed, were quite strong enough to oppose the Russians, and if backed by supplies of breech-loaders from the British Government, he was sure that the Russians would stand no chance. It was true that at Panj Deh they had lately beaten "General" Ghaus-ud-Din, whom he described as an old comrade, but on that occasion Ghaus-ud-Din had committed

certain errors (which he did not particularise), and moreover the Afghans were not armed with breech-loaders. This is probably a fair average specimen of Afghan opinion, and when less decided views are expressed in presence of a foreigner, it is probably due only to the speaker's caution or mistrust of his audience. In Badakhshan, as in Shighnan, there would seem to be no very clear demarcation between civil and military jurisdiction, in anything but the command of the troops; in what would be called in India "political" duties, both the Hakim and the General seemed authorised to take equal shares. In matters concerning my mission, for instance, both issued orders, both gave and received, presents, and both corresponded with Sardár Abdulla Ján; the same was the case—as far as I could observe—in carrying on communications with Chitrál, Koláb, &c.; both the Hakim and the General seemed to deal with any question that arose. In fact civil institutions generally, in these regions, are regarded as of so little importance, by the Afghans, that very slight attention is paid to them. Changes have, of course, been made since the Amir's occupation of the country, but whether in the direction of improvement I am unable to say. It would seem unlikely that even the Mirs of Badakshan could have carried on an administration with a ruder machinery than the Afghans now employ. Few of even the highest officials in the province can read or write, and their mirzas, or clerks, are men of very little education. In many places the most important branches of fiscal jurisdiction are either managed by, or farmed out to, Hindus who make their own arrangements for keeping accounts and are responsible only for results. They are of course greatly mistrusted, and all kinds of provisions are made for watching their actions and for isolating them from the people of the country. The Hakim of Badakhshan is at present one Wali Mahomed Khan, a native of Kelat-i-Ghilzai and an old Kháwáni Sowár of the days of Dost Mahomed. He was in India at the time of one of the Sikh wars, and was the only Afghan I met, who seemed really to believe that the Russians could never stand against the English. He is an old man, lives in a peculiarly squalid way and appears to have been chosen as Governor of this large district, not on account of his ability, but because of some family or tribal tie connecting him with some branch of the ruling family—a tie which is thought to render it less likely than otherwise, that he should be untrue to his country. In this

way many appointments are made in Afghan territory, where trustworthiness, in its narrowest sense, is considered not only a more valuable quality than ability, but an infinitely rarer one.

3. The town of Faizábád is one of the most uninteresting spots to be found even in Central Asia. The air of torpor and the absence of enterprise are perhaps the most notable features. It contains probably some 4,000 inhabitants (chiefly Tájiks), and is therefore considerably larger than Leh, and perhaps rather smaller than Kargalik in Chinese Turkistan, but it cannot compare with either of those places in point of enterprise, trade, or general prosperity. A bazar is held twice a week, and on those occasions a fairly large gathering of people from the neighbouring districts takes place, but during the remainder of the week the place lies torpid, the majority of the shops are shut, and even the Kalandars, Darweshis and other beggars, who seem to spring up by magic on market days, are nowhere to be seen. The chief trade is probably with Koláb, whence Russian cotton manufactures, sugar, cutlery, crockery, candles, &c., and Bokhara silks are brought, and these are the wares that in addition to country produce chiefly fill the shops. English manufactures are rarer, but still they are to be seen—chiefly cotton prints and muslin—together with Indian-made "lungis" or turbans, and common kimkhwáb (kincob), all of which come from Peshawar either by way of Kabul or Chitral. The slave trade is now extinct or nearly so—the slave *market* that once flourished, is entirely done away with, and only domestic slavery seems to have survived. Even this form, I believe, is forbidden by the Amir, and perhaps it is for this reason that such dealings as still go on, are kept quiet and are never paraded in the open market. Traders enjoy little encouragement under Afghan rule, for duties are high, and when a merchant is known to have been successful, a loan is generally requested of him by the authorities: even the smaller shopkeepers, I was informed, are constantly called upon by the officers, and frequently by the soldiers of the garrison, to advance them their arrears of pay—a call they dare not fail to comply with, though they rarely expect the debt to be repaid. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that many Badakhshi traders leave the country and settle in Chinese Turkistan, where so commercial a people as the Tájiks find a freer and a larger field. I should estimate that the trade carried on by Badakhshis in Yarkand alone, is

greater than the whole trade of Faizabad. The town is situated between the right bank of the Kokcha and the foot of the hills, at a point where these recede somewhat from the river, and where the gorge or "Tangi" may be said to come to an end. Immediately below the town, on the left bank, is the large open plain described by Wood, where there is ample room for a large city, and it is difficult for a European to conjecture why Faizabad should have been crowded into the small, ill-ventilated hollow it now occupies. Though it lies at an altitude of 8,800 feet above the sea and is supplied with the purest of water from the Kokcha and from a hill stream on the north, still it must be almost as unhealthy a place as Khánábád or any of the towns on the plains of Kattaghán, except perhaps Kunduz. Sanitary arrangements, there are of course none, and this combined with severe heat in summer, great cold in winter and usually a deadly stillness in the atmosphere, seems to produce conditions that render outbreaks of epidemics of frequent occurrence. On my arrival in December, small-pox was decimating the children of the place, while in May, when returning from Turkistan, a sort of typhus had been raging, by which many of the townspeople and garrison had been carried off, and which had left General Gul Ahmad, among others, a wreck, probably for life. My native doctor, at this time, also had his hands full of cases of a kind of low fever, of a dangerous type, which chiefly showed itself among the Afghans. Possibly the only circumstance which renders the place habitable, is its frequent depopulation in comparatively recent times, which has had the effect of causing the town to be rebuilt, at intervals, and fresh starts, as it were, to be made—a terrible plan of sanitation, but one that is scarcely likely to happen again. The three last calamities of this kind which have overtaken Faizabad, cannot be better described than by quoting Colonel Yule's account of them, as contained in his Introduction to the new edition of Wood's Travels (p. xxxvii). He tells us that in 1765 (according to Pandit Manphul):—

"Shah Wali Khan, the Wazir of Ahmed Shah Abdali of Kabul, invaded the country, put to death the treacherous King Sultan Shah and carried off from Faizabad a certain holy relic, the shirt of Mahomed, which had been the pretext of aggression. In the beginning of the present century Kokan Beg, Chief of the Kattaghan Usbeks of Kunduz, again ravaged the country, and its misery came to a climax in 1829, when Murad Beg, the son and successor of Kokán, again overran Badakhshan, and swept away a large part of the inhabitants, whom he sold into slavery, or set down to perish of fever in the swampy plains of

Kunduz. It was when still languishing under this tremendous infliction, that Badakhshan was visited by Captain Wood."

This was in December 1837, when Wood described the town as in ruins and uninhabited:—

"Of Fyzabad ..... scarcely a vestige is left save the withered trees which once ornamented its gardens." *

* "Journey to the source of the Oxus," p. 163.

It is hardly surprising that in a town which has been rebuilt so lately as within the last fifty years, no remarkable buildings should exist.† The shrine of the Khirkat-i-Sharif, or "holy shirt," mentioned by Colonel Yule, is still to be seen, though the relic is gone; but in spite of its being still an object of great veneration, it is housed in a perfectly insignificant, mud-plastered building. The "Madressah," too, though perhaps the largest institution in the place, is merely a low rambling enclosure of brown mud rooms with two little minárs of the same colour. The dwelling of the Mirs, which was at the south-west extremity of the town, is now almost entirely in ruins, and is only used by the Afghans for storing fuel and fodder for the garrison. The only structures, in fact, which strike the eye at all, are the new forts on the outskirts, which the Afghans have put up to dominate the town and keep the inhabitants in subjection, but by no means as a measure of defence. There are four in all. The chief of these is the old citadel of Zaghárchi, entirely remodelled, which overlooks the north-east extremity of the town and the road to Shiwa and Shighnan; two others stand on the spurs of hills to the west of Zaghárchi and command the town from the north, while the fourth occupies a high bluff overhanging the left bank of the Kokcha, and dominates the place from the south. All are within half a mile of the centre of the town, but, as far as I was able to learn, they are very badly armed.

† Neither are there any inscriptions at Faizabad itself, but at a point about five miles down the Kokcha opposite the plain called Dasht-i-Kimchán and close to the ruined head of a bridge, there lies a stone with an Arabic inscription, known as the Sang-i-Mohr. The stone was overgrown with lichens, &c., but my Maulvi cleaned it and read the inscription. I regret that he carried off the text with him when discharged, but I find, in my journal, a note that it bore the date 884 of the Hijra (about 1467 A. D.), and that it was inscribed by Sultan Mahomed (a Mir of Badakhshan) to commemorate his building the bridge. Further down the Kokcha, near Alum Jilák there are said to be some extensive ruins of the ancient town and fort of Kila-i-Zafar, and there also an inscription is spoken of, as being well preserved and legible. I was unfortunately not able to visit these ruins. They are mentioned by Colonel Yule in his Introduction to Wood's "Oxus."

4. My stay in Faizabad lasted till the end of December, and on the 1st January 1886 I started for Khánábád, on a

visit to Sardár Abdulla Ján. Though I had no duties with the Sardár, under the instructions from the Foreign Office, yet I found that he desired to see me, and I thought it might be as well, while waiting for the higher regions to re-open after the winter, to spend a few weeks in paying him a visit. I had found also, on arrival at Faizabad, that all preparations had been made for my journey to his seat of government; for the Faizabad officials regarded me as his guest, and had taken it for granted that I should go to see him. The visit seriously interfered with the geographical work,* but as I had every expectation of returning after about a month, I hoped to have a long uninterrupted period in the early spring to finish all that was necessary: how this hope was disappointed will be seen lower down. The winter chanced to be a late one, and had hardly set in when we left Faizabad; still the country was fairly deep in snow, and little was to be seen save white hill-sides, and half-thawed villages in the valleys, standing in lakes of well-churned mud. The road leads over the high plateau of Argu, and thence, as described by Wood, transversely, across the spurs which run out from the main range of the Hindu-Kush down to the valley of the Kokcha. From Argu to Mashad—three marches †—the line follows roughly the course of the river, but is always at a considerable distance from it, and usually from one to two thousand feet above it. The country is nearly everywhere soft and loamy, and the road has been cut straight across the spurs without any reference to gradients. Thus it rises and falls in a series of steep hills, but in spite of this it is an easy road, the rivers to be crossed—small affluents of the Kokcha—present no difficulty, and supplies are fairly plentiful. From the valley of Tálikán to Faizabad, it would be passable by artillery everywhere. From Mashad a long and, in some places, steep rise leads to the plateau of Kila Aoghan, where a small fort, unarmed and of no strength, marks the administrative limit in this direction of the district of Badakhshan. The plateau may be regarded as a kind of shoulder of the spur which forms the Lattaband pass, and lies at an altitude of about 4,950 feet above the sea; it is well grassed and, in places, cultivated, and though in January it was deep in snow, I found it, in May, on my return journey, a fine, green, breezy plain covered with droves of ponies and sheep. A more convenient spot for a sani-

* I had had no opportunity of fixing the longitude during my stay at Faizabad.

† For details of the road see appendix.

tarium for the fever-stricken garrison of Khánábád could hardly be found; but it never appears to have occurred to the Afghans to utilise it for this purpose. About ten miles beyond the fort of Kila Aoghan, the Lattaband pass is crossed at a height of about 5,150 feet (approximately). Properly speaking, this can hardly be called a pass; it is simply the highest point to which the road reaches in crossing the spurs which here—as east of Mashad—run down from the mountains on the south, to the gorge of the Kokcha on the north. The road is soft and easy, and descends by gentle slopes to the first valley of Kattaghán (the Tálikán river) at the large village of Ahan Dara, where the snow of the higher levels is exchanged for rain and mud. Here we pitched in the compound of one Mahomed Amin Khoja, a grandson of the Pirzádá Kássim Ján, who saved Moorcroft from ill-treatment at the hands of Murád Beg, and who was afterwards thanked by the Government of India through Sir Alexander Burnes. Afghan suspicion would not permit Mahomed Amin to pay me a visit, and when I sent to invite him, he had to return an excuse: he is considered a holy man and seems much respected, but his influence, I believe, is not great. Indeed, Pirs and Sáyads would have little chance nowadays of gaining the influence they used to have under their native Khans. The centralised Afghan Government is not favourable to influence of this kind, and religious leaders who are known to have power are usually suspected by the authorities. Many have been seized and sent to Kabul on account of their influence over the people, and the fear that they might use it against the Government: others have voluntarily left the country and have mostly, I believe, taken up their abode in Bokhára territory, where native rule rather invites than discourages Mussulman refugees of all classes and nationalities, provided, only, that they are Sunnis.

5. From the east foot of the Lattaband, a short march along the flat open valley of Talikán brings one to the town of that name—a straggling, insignificant place of the usual mud-plaster type, standing on low swampy ground near the river. Here a grandson of Mir Murád Beg of Moorcroft's and Wood's days, is the chief local authority, and has nearly independent powers as far as internal affairs are concerned: his father was Atálik Beg, who administered the district at the time of Wood's visit. His name, Mahomed Murád, frequently occurs in the line of Usbeg Khans, even previous to his grandfather, and he is variously known as Mir Murád

Beg, Sultan Murád Beg, and—in view of the Afghan ascendency—Sardár Murád Khan. His jurisdiction may be regarded as the modern representative, on a small scale, of the Usbeg State formerly known as Kunduz * and the chief part of which now forms the Afghan Province of Kattaghán. On the arrival of the Amir Abdur Rahman from Russian territory in 1880, Murád Beg was one of the first to welcome him, and assist him with money to commence his government in Kabul; and, in return, was given all the Usbeg districts of Kattaghán (except Khánabád and the immediate neighbourhood) as a kind of jáhgir. These he administers from Tálikán, according to old Usbeg customs, which differ in many respects, as to revenue and other laws, from the Afghan system, so that his jurisdiction may be looked upon as the last remnant of the former Usbeg rule. † He has no jurisdiction in the mountain districts of Kattaghán, such as Anderáb, Farkhár, Wirsaj, Khinján, Khost, Ghori, &c. These are inhabited almost entirely by Tájiks, and are under the direct control of Sardár Abdulla Ján, who administers them according to the Afghan system. Thus the broad division in Kattaghán is between the Tájik population of the mountains, under direct Afghan government and the Usbeg population of the plains and lower hills, under the immediate control of the Mir of Tálikán, as "jáhgirdár." The Mir's subjection to the Afghans, however, is complete, for he has no political power—a circumstance that his people and neighbours may perhaps be congratulated on; for it is as much for their benefit that the Usbeg Khans should be kept in subjection, as that the slave-trading Mirs of the Tájik States should be swept away. Their "álámáns," or raids, were the distinguishing feature of Usbeg rule, and the ruined towns and villages scattered over the dreary valleys of the province, testify to the truth of the stories one hears of their destructive instincts. No form of wealth or property could exist long under Usbeg rule; for wherever any sign of either appeared, an "álámán" was organised, and it was swept from the face of the country. As

* It was also known as Kattaghán, but rarely spoken of by any other name than Kunduz. Colonel Yule, I think, identifies the region with part of the ancient *Tokharistan*—a name that is now extinct.

† In his grandfather's most prosperous days—say between 1835 and 1840—the country owned by the Kunduz Mir included the whole of the present Badakhshan and its dependencies (Wakhan, Shighnan, &c.), and the whole of Afghan Turkistan, as far west as, and including, Balkh; besides some districts north of the Oxus, now belonging to Bokhara.

an example of the present Murád Beg's position, I may mention that, on the day of my arrival at Tálikán, he was forbidden by the Afghan Mehmandár, attached to my party, to pay me a visit, without first sending to Khanabad for permission to do so. When next day the permission arrived, and he came to see me, in company of the Mehmandár, he declined to talk on any subject of the least interest, and pretended to know nothing of the English travellers who had visited Kunduz in the time of his grandfather.* During the evening, however, he contrived, through one of his followers, to let me know that he had much to say, and that he had, in his possession, "writings" of the "Sahibs" in question, which he would like to show me, were it not for the fear that Afghan suspicion might fall upon him.

* These would be Messrs. Moorcroft and Trebeck in 1824, and Dr. Lord and Captain Wood in 1837-38. These are, as far as I can recollect, the only English travellers who have visited Kattaghan.

6. The difference between the Afghan and Usbeg systems of revenue is very marked; and wherever I have been able to obtain an expression of opinion from the natives of the country, it has been in favour of the Usbeg system, as falling much more lightly on all classes. Indeed, the Afghan levies are considered oppressive and unjust, and when the two scales of taxation are compared, this can hardly be wondered at. According to the best information I could get (for, on this subject, like that of population, &c., the authorities decline to impart any information), the two scales are as follows:—

AFGHAN SYSTEM.

Money Revenue.

	Per annum in Kabuli.
(1) Nikáhána or Sari Khána, *i.e.*, a tax on each married couple or "family," whether cultivators or not, but not on single men . . .	4½
(2) Sar-i-Kulba, or plough tax on cultivators only:	
For a pair of bullocks	10½
For one bullock	5½
(3) Sar-i-Asyáb or Jowíza (mill tax) on grain and oil mills alike	5½
(4) Sheep, per 100 head	10

Afghan System.

In kind.

(1) Sar-i-Kulba on grain,—one kharwár of about two maunds British per annum.

(2) Grass,—one bag in ten of what is brought to market for sale.

Bazar Taxes or Duties.

(1) On sale of cloth, woollen stuffs, &c., manufactured in the country,—one "pul" or $\frac{1}{60}$ of a R Kabuli on each rupee of sales.

(2) On traders entering the towns—

	R Kabuli.
(*a*) On each horse, &c., whether loaded or not	4
(*b*) On each horse-load of merchandise of whatever value	1

Besides the above, there are "begár" and "ulágh," or free labour and free transport for Government purposes.

Under the Usbeg system, as it is practised now, the collections are said to be as under; and they are also said to be those which were in force in days of the Usbeg Khanate. Possibly this may have been the case in theory, but in practice the "álámán" superseded every system of revenue collection.

Usbeg System.

In kind.

(1) On crops,—$\frac{1}{10}$ of produce per annum.

(2) On sheep and goats,—1 in 40 per annum.

(3) From each village, "árbáb" or headman,—1 sheep per mensem.

Besides the above, "begár" and "ulágh," or labour and transport. The reason why the Afghan Government has to levy more than the Usbeg Jáhgirdár, is explained to be that the whole administration and defence of the country falls upon their exchequer.* On the other hand, Usbeg rule is deprived of its worst features while under Afghan control. The result practically is that the Tájik population contributes, almost

* A certain number of horses only seem to be contributed yearly by the jahgirdár as "tártak," or tribute to the State; but whether these are used for the army or not, I cannot say.

alone, to the requirements of Afghan rule; and though they, in common with the Usbegs, are spared the periodical raids of the Mirs, yet it is not surprising that discontent should be expressed by a heavily-taxed section of a community, when they see their immediate neighbours much more lightly burdened.

7. The town of Tálikán, as remarked above, is a place of but little importance. Being under the jurisdiction of the Usbeg Jahgirdar, it has no Afghan garrison, and he is not permitted to keep troops of his own. The inhabitants are mostly Usbeg Turks, except the shopkeepers who are Tajiks; for the instincts of the Turks are far from commercial. The place might number, perhaps, about 2,000, and once a week a bazar is held, when much the same kind of trade is carried on as at Faizabad, only on even a smaller scale. Nearly all the imported goods seemed to be Russian, though I noticed some English muslin and calico and green tea which had been brought from India. The most valuable products of the region are the horses and sheep. The former are bred in large numbers and run usually from ponies of about 12½ to horses of about 15 hands: many are of a good stamp—hard, stringy, and clean-limbed—and have a reputation for extraordinary staying power, as well as for adaptability to all kinds of work, both in the flat country and in the hills. Where they fail often, is in a falling off of the hind quarters, but where this is not the case, very well shaped animals are to be seen. The Afghans use a fair number for their cavalry and guns and a much larger one for their "bárkhána" or transport train,* which not only does the ordinary transport work with the troops, but seems to be constantly engaged in collecting forage and provisions for the various garrisons. Pathán dealers from India occasionally visit the country to make purchases, but probably the number of Kattaghání horses and ponies that reach India is not large. They might perhaps be obtained in larger numbers through these dealers, but any organised measure on the part of our Government for buying them up, would certainly excite the jealousy of the Afghans. From Talikan we marched to the fort of Old

* This is one of the most efficient institutions I noticed in Afghan territory. The ponies are mostly of one type, about 13 hands, and are well fed and cared for. Their gear is "pukka" and uniform, the pack being, I believe, of a native Usbeg pattern, and certainly it is a most efficient one when compared with other Central Asian packs. The ponies are usually driven in separate strings of four, the driver sitting on the load of the leading pony. In this way a load of three Indian maunds is carried (and sometimes even more) at a pace of about 4½ miles an hour, where the road is fairly easy.

Khanabad by a road which skirts the southern spurs of the Ambar Koh, a remarkable, isolated range, stretching between the Khanabad river and the Oxus. On the next day we crossed the river to the new town of Khanabad, and were received with much honour and hospitality by the Sardár, who, as mentioned above, has established his seat of government there.

8. Sardár Abdulla Ján—a Tokhi—is a native of Kelát-i-Ghilzai, and is one of the few personal adherents of Amir Abdur Rahman, who followed him in his flight to Russian Turkistan, passed nearly the whole period of exile in his service, and returned with him in 1880 to Kabul. He is a man of about 35 or 40 years of age, with some Persian education, a slight knowledge of Russian, and an outer coating of Russian manners, which give him the appearance, at least, of being somewhat more civilised than the rough Afghan officials who surround him. How far his contact with a more civilised people has influenced his character and policy as a governor, I am scarcely able to say. At first I was but little impressed, and considered that, during the years he spent in Russian territory, he had observed little of their administrative institutions, or having observed them, hesitated, in his capacity of Mussulman, to apply them. Since passing through the provinces of Turkistan and Maimana, however, and seeing there the cruder arrangements of Sardár Ishák Khan and Walli Hossain Khan, it is impossible not to give credit to Abdulla Ján for being at any rate in advance of his neighbours. In his jurisdiction, orders are at least obeyed, district officials are completely under his authority, and some few improvements have been made in roads, bridges, &c. The manner, too, in which he carried out the spirit of the Amir's instructions, regarding the treatment of my party, left little to be desired. In all these matters his province was a marked contrast to those of his two neighbours, and the reason may perhaps be his semi-Russian education. His position in this respect is, no doubt, a difficult one. His government is the avowed enemy of the Russians, and his subordinates would certainly not regard him with favour for introducing innovations based on the model of a Christian State. The Mussulman law and revenue system, he would necessarily have to administer as in every part of the Amir's dominions: still it was with some little disappointment that I found his "capital" a place of perhaps less importance than even

Faizabad, and his official surroundings, generally, bearing no more evidence of civilisation than in Badakhshan or Shighnan. That the Sardár is a faithful servant of the present Amir, I think there is no doubt. Probably, he is the most trusted of all the Amir's lieutenants, and the only provincial governor who is thoroughly trusted. He has risen in the Amir's service, and has nothing to hope for from any other party in the State. Moreover, he has a kind of foreign, or Russian, taint in the eyes of those who consider themselves orthodox Afghan Mussulmans, which causes a certain feeling against him, and renders loyalty to his present master almost a necessity. For these reasons, I think it may be regarded that whatever policy he pursues, is usually the policy of the Amir. The Sardár's adherents and subordinates are necessarily in the Amir's interests also; and, in this way, a tone of loyalty is made perceptible throughout the Badakhshan provinces, which is not so apparent elsewhere—a circumstance which helps to show how purely personal the Government of Afghanistan now is.

9. The Sardár's jurisdiction extends over the whole of Badakhshan and its dependent provinces on the Upper Oxus, as well as over Kattaghan or the former Usbeg State, which, in the time of its own Mirs, had its capital at Kunduz. The Kattaghan province is limited on the west by a line dividing the valleys of the Khulm and Aksarai rivers, cutting the main road between Kunduz and Khulm at the second Abdan, and meeting the Oxus a little below the Aksarai junction. The dividing line between Kattaghan and Badakhshan, may be said to run along the spurs of the Lattaband till these abut on the left bank of the Kokcha, and then to follow the line of the Kokcha to its junction with the Oxus at Khwája Ghár. This line, however, has no signification in dividing the races of inhabitants. It does not in any way separate the Turks from the Tájiks, for to the east and north of it there are districts inhabited entirely by Turks, while all the hill districts to the south and west are Tájik.* It is a line, in fact, that indicates what was usually the limit of the territories ruled, respectively, by the Badakhshi and Kunduz Mirs; but

* Throughout this report I have used the terms "Turk" and "Usbeg" somewhat promiscuously, I fear. The Turks of Kattaghan are, I believe, real Usbegs, and all Usbegs must be Turks, but there are many divisions of Turks who are not Usbegs, such as the Changizi or descendants of Changiz Khan. I have also spelt the word Usbeg as generally written in English, though the proper orthography would be "Usbak." I was unable to make a complete list of the different sub-tribes or families of the Turks in Badakhshan proper, who are scattered among the Tájiks in communities of

varying size, but the following are a few of them:—

The Ak Mogal.—Above and below Faizabad in Kokcha Valley.

Kárluk.—Some villages on the Kokcha just south of Rusták, known as Kárluk Anderuna, or inner Kárluks. Also found in other places.

Utárchi.—Some villages just below Faizabad on left bank of Kokcha, and in other places.

Chang or Changiz.—The descendants of Changiz Khan—scattered all over Badakhshan, Kattaghan, &c., in small numbers.

it was subject, at various times, to a good deal of fluctuation, according to the fortunes of war, and probably was never accurately fixed. Even now some slight exceptions have been made for the convenience of administration. Thus, the district of Kila Aoghan, though on the east of the Lattaband, has been placed under Talikan, and some small hamlets on the right bank of the Kokcha, opposite Khwája Ghár, are included within the village district of that name. Between the western limit of Kattaghan and the Chinese frontier on the Murghabi a large area is contained; but the greater part of it is composed of uninhabitable mountains, so that the population is on the whole small and could not, I think, much exceed 200,000, even on a liberal estimate, and possibly might not even reach that figure.† The only towns of the least importance—or rather the only places that could be classed as towns—are Faizábad, Khanabad, Rusták, Talikan, and perhaps Házrat Imám.‡ Kunduz is now in ruins, and Khanabad is its modern representative, though the old town of Khanabad, the contemporary of Kunduz, is also in ruins. All that is left of its habitations, outer walls, and fort, lies on the north of the river, and the new town on the south. The latter may be said to have been "founded" by Abdulla Ján, and has neither walls nor fort. It is situated among swampy rice-fields, and, on the whole, is not a well-chosen spot for the seat of government of a large province. I have heard it said that the centre of Kattaghan was chosen for the residence of the Sardár because the inhabitants of that province were considered to be badly affected towards the Afghans, and likely, at any time, to make an effort for their freedom. But this, I believe, is not the case, for Abdulla Ján himself informed me that the Kattaghani Turks were much better affected than the Tajiks of Badakhshan, and that he was able to trust them

† Thus—

Badakhshan proper, about	80,000
Upper Oxus States and Zebak, about	14,000
Kattaghan	100,000 to 120,000

The Turks are said to outnumber the Tajiks in Kattaghan, but not in Badakhshan proper. The above figures for Kattaghan include certain small communities of Afghans settled at Ghori, Baghlán, Faring, and Ishkámish.

‡ Faizabad might contain about 4,000, Khanabad between 3,000 and 4,000 (without the garrisons), and the others less.

more. The matter is of no great importance; but my impression is that the capital was fixed at Khanabad chiefly to be as near as possible to Kabul; and, secondly, on account of the general dislike of the Afghans to service in Badakhshan. Their view is that they are expatriated after crossing the Lattaband pass; and nearly every official that I met in Badakhshan, Shighnan, &c., seemed to regard his return to the low country as one of the chief objects of his desires. In summer Khanabad is within easy reach of Kabul, and it is said that the Amir is improving the direct road over the Khinján pass in order to support the garrison of Khanabad whenever necessary.

10. In a conversation with Abdulla Jan on the 18th January, he complained of the weakness and dangerous nature of the frontier as formed by the River Oxus. He wished me to note how easily so open a frontier might lead to disputes with the Russians, whenever they should come to be possessors of Bokhara—an event which he thought might occur at any time. In some places, he pointed out, the river was not a rifle-shot across, and a runaway thief, or a quarrel between boatmen or traders, might lead to a fight, at any moment, between the frontier guards stationed on the banks. This part of the conversation was not initiated, or led up to, by me, but was purely spontaneous on his part. I observed from his remarks, however, that he had not a very clear view of the Afghan case, but seemed to mix up the questions of the Shighnan and other frontiers above the Kokcha, with the Bokhara frontier disputes in the Khamiáb neighbourhood. I noticed also, I thought, a tendency on this, and on a previous occasion, to regard cis-Oxus Darwaz as territory that Afghanistan *might* claim. I am not sure that this was, in fact, the Sardár's intention, or that he meant to put forward any particular view on that subject; but his conversation leads me here to venture the suggestion that it might perhaps be expedient to point out to the Amir's Government the superiority, generally, of hill frontiers in settled countries, and specially to show that it would be for the benefit of Afghanistan to limit the Oxus frontier as much as possible, by never claiming the section of Darwaz which lies on the south of the river. If that section of Darwaz should become Afghan, it would add another long stretch of river frontier to be guarded or perhaps defended. Though not so open or so vulnerable as the section on the plains of Turkistan and Kattaghan, still an infinitely worse frontier than the

difficult ranges of hills behind the river that form the frontier now. These ranges in no way interfere with Afghan jurisdiction, for on the south they are separated from all inhabited districts by the desert hill tracts of Shiwa and Upper Ragh; nor do they in any way obstruct communications between Shighnan and Badakhshan. In short, they form a natural frontier between the limits of Badakhsan and Darwaz, so that the latter lies altogether outside and beyond the territory the Afghans need hold, and should never be claimed by them, for two reasons. The first is, that by claiming cis-Oxus Darwaz they weaken—perhaps vitiate altogether—their claim to trans-Oxus Shighnan, and would therefore lose in territory, even if their claim were allowed.. The second is, that they would exchange their practically impenetrable and self-guarded hill frontier, as they have it now, for a river frontier which would extend, in any case, as high as Waznaud in Roshan; and, if they should lose trans-Oxus Shighnan, would reach to Ishkashim or thereabouts. In both cases it is the interest of Afghanistan to avoid making a claim to any part of Darwaz; and, on the other hand, to hold by her claim to all the possessions of the late Shighni Mirs, as far east as where she comes in contact with Chinese territory. In this way she would gain the maximum of hill frontier and be burdened with the minimum of river frontier; while over and above the interests of Afghanistan this arrangement would secure—and the other would not—the barrier of neutral territory which we require to extend across the heads of the Chitral passes. No doubt it would necessitate the revision, or the total abrogation, of the agreement of 1873; but as that document is based on a misconception (on the part of both contracting parties) of the boundaries as they stood at the time it was entered into, there would perhaps still be a possibility of coming to an arrangement with Russia on the subject, under which each party should keep the territory he now possesses. In connection with this subject, I may mention an attempt that has lately (December 1885) been made to bring the island of Darkat under Afghan jurisdiction. The island is formed by two arms of the Panjah, which divide near Yáng Kila and rejoin a little above Khwája Ghár. The region enclosed in this way is fertile and is peopled by Usbegs, who formerly belonged to the districts on the left bank of the Panjah, but who emigrated, from time to time, to their present position in order to escape from the oppres-

sion of Kunduz Mirs, and to be within the protection of Koláb. Lately the Afghans are said to have shown a desire to possess themselves of the island, and to count the right channel of the Panjah as the stream dividing their territory from Bokhara; but being unable to seize the island itself, without an open rupture, they endeavoured, by means of persuasion, to withdraw the inhabitants to the main left bank, on the ground that they belonged to that side and are, by right, Afghan subjects. Persuasion and intrigue having failed, the "colonel" commanding the Rusták district sent a party of his men, last December,[*] to drive the inhabitants over to the Afghan bank. A number of families were, in this way, forced to leave their fields and to take up abodes in Afghan territory; and when I left Faizabad on the 1st January, I was informed that another seizure of inhabitants of Darkat might shortly be expected. Shortly after arriving at Khanabad, however, news was secretly brought me that a Vakil from Koláb * had come in and had negotiated with Abdulla Ján the release of the Darkatis; on what terms, I never ascertained. It appeared, however, that the captured inhabitants were permitted to return to the island, and that the Rusták "colonel" (one Shah Zamán Khan) was forbidden to withdraw them by force.

* The whole of this affair was kept as secret as possible. The authorities never alluded to it, and I only heard of it from time to time from Badakhshi informers.

11. It seems to me, above all things, necessary that the Afghans should consolidate the territory they now hold in these regions. For this purpose the three chief steps required are (1) to define the boundaries in every direction; (2) either to conciliate or thoroughly overawe the discontented inhabitants; (3) to make no embarrassing claims for more territory, but rather to abandon old claims if more desirable boundaries can thereby be secured. They have a large tract of poor mountainous country divided into a number of petty provinces, the borders of which are still open to dispute. These provinces are inhabited by people who have little or nothing in common with the Afghans, and who hate them with the two kinds of hatred which, taken together, make up perhaps the most intense form of enmity. They hate them with race hatred—both Tajik and Turk; and they hate them as conquerors. A dangerous enemy threatens the frontier on one side and keeps, as guests, members of the families who formerly ruled these provinces, and who are ready, whenever

allowed an opportunity, to cross the frontier and incite their discontented countrymen to rebel. Under these circumstances, extension of territory without some *defensive* object in view, would bring weakness rather than strength to the State, and would have the effect of distributing the army among discontented populations,* while consolidation requires that large—or, at least, overawing—garrisons should be maintained in each chief centre of population. It appears to me a question whether the Afghans have sufficiently acknowledged the importance of making their power visible, and whether their governing institutions show to any advantage, in the Asiatic mind, over those of the native Mirs who have been deposed. An extreme simplicity, almost amounting to squalor, in all outward forms, an entire absence of pomp and display in everything connected with the government, are not conditions calculated to impress the Tajiks with a sense of Afghan superiority, although they may fear the Afghan knives and rifles. They see no buildings erected by their conquerors even as good as their own, no manufactures, no displays of wealth or art, no pompous ceremonies such as usually take the Asiatic fancy. In these respects the contrast between the Afghans in these provinces and the Chinese in Eastern Turkistan is sharply marked. There an absence of real power is made up for by "swagger," glitter, and bombast. The mandarins, who could never hold their own by force of arms, impress the native mind with a sense of their superiority, and make it believe otherwise, by keeping up a show of barbarous pomp in their institutions and ceremonies, by the arrogance of their demeanour, and by an assumption of ineffable superiority in learning and manners, which would impose on nobody but a race of ignorant Asiatics. In the Amir's territory exactly the reverse takes place; and though a great deal more respectable from a European point of view, it must be confessed that, in an Asiatic country, the Afghan system fails in commanding a proper amount of respect. The Afghans, small as their numbers are, can no doubt hold their own with both Tajik and Turk, if it should come to fighting, and they have per-

* This principle applies to ch-Orus Darwaz, Darkat, &c., but it does not affect the question of occupying the Shighnan frontier on the Murghabi. In that case, the object is distinctly defensive. It would have the effect of closing up with a harmless neighbour and thereby keeping a dangerous one from taking up a flank position on the frontier. Further, the frontier in question, being practically uninhabited, the measure would not cause a drain on the defensive forces of the country: it would scarcely reduce them by a score of sepoys to patrol the line during the summer months.

fect confidence in their power in this respect; but beyond keeping themselves prepared to put down rebellion, or to meet an external enemy, they seem to have no thought for anything. They are soldiers and nothing else. Their ideas seem centred on their military institutions, such as they are, and never to travel beyond them.* The raw Usbegs of Kattaghan may have some sort of respect for this kind of government, but the more acute-minded Tajiks have none, and their discontent is probably increased when they consider how small is the number of Afghans employed to keep them in subjection. English experience has proved that in most newly-conquered countries, a generation must elapse before the conquered inhabitants become really well affected. Those born and brought up under British rule have usually little knowledge of the old native rule which their fathers were accustomed to; and though they have no particular love for their English masters, still they have nothing else to look to, and would make faint-hearted partisans of a descendant of any former national ruler, who, if successful, might bring changed institutions which the new generation have never known, and consequently can have little longing or admiration for. So it will probably be with the provinces of Badakhshan. If the Afghans can secure peace during the next 30 years or so, and during that period make their power felt, a generation will have grown up who would probably be sufficiently well affected towards Afghan rule, as, at all events, not to form an internal danger when an enemy has to be faced upon the frontier. At present it must be confessed this is not the case. The people are are not only disaffected as regards the Afghans: it is not only that they have hankerings after their former Mirs, but in the chief province—Badakhshan proper—they have distinct leanings towards the Russians. But in taking a general view of the Amir's possessions to the north of the ranges, it is perhaps less the active discontent with Afghan rule which strikes one as the weak point, than the absence of nationality over this large area. When it is considered that the small Afghan nation, whose national home is entirely to the south of the mountains, are endeavouring to hold a long belt of provinces containing an alien population perhaps as numerous as themselves, and that this belt forms the front exposed to the enemy, it will hardly be denied

* In most of the civil institutions it is curious to note the similarity with Kashmir. The Dogras, in fact, are perpetuating in many ways the system bequeathed to them by the Afghans—a system which they found ready to hand when the Afghans were expelled from Kashmir.

that their position is a difficult one. Were their subject provinces in the rear the case would be vastly different: Russian intrigue and political aggression would have little chance of gaining a foothold, and only open war would have to be guarded against; but in the existing situation, it will be surprising if the want of nationality in the border provinces is not seen, by the Russians, to be the weak point, and if their efforts at political disintegration are not shortly directed towards these, as they have been, in similar cases, on the Caspian and in the Balkans.

12. The impression I have gained is that the Afghans do not behave badly to their subject races. One hears of no glaring acts of oppression, no executions or severe punishments, and there is none of the personal bullying that is practised, for instance, by the Chinese in Eastern Turkistan. Bad administration, when judged by a civilised standard, and measures showing a carelessness or ignorance of the interests of the people are, of course, apparent as in all Asiatic States, but when compared with other countries on about the same level of barbarism—Kashmir, China, Burma, &c.—there is little to be said in condemnation of the Afghans. How far the taxes fall oppressively, or otherwise, I cannot say precisely; but in a previous paragraph I have shown the amount of the levies made. In any case it must not be forgotten that the Afghans have delivered the country from its greatest curse—the slave trade—the one which every native complains of, and acknowledges to be an institution that no reasonable government would tolerate. Still the Afghans are strangers; they are conquerors, and, absurd as it may appear, they are Mussulmans. The Tajiks seem to regard it as a sort of national insult that people calling themselves Mussulmans, and being yet so far removed from themselves in other respects, should have the effrontery to set up as rulers over them. If they must be ruled by foreigners and conquerors, they prefer that these should be real foreigners, who are not, in fact, Mussulmans, and who need not be regarded as anything but aliens and "Kafirs." In this light they regard the Russians, and would prefer to have their government for these (to us) absurd and illogical reasons, and not because they have any cause to love the Russians, or because they expect to be better off, materially, under Russian than under Afghan rule. On the contrary, they have reason to believe from reports they have heard that taxation would be even heavier, officialism more irksome, and

the military grip a tighter one. In Europe a view of this kind would be incomprehensible; but in India it is not unknown. The Mussulman who will put up, without complaint, with what he considers injustice or oppression on the part of an English, or even Hindu magistrate, feels deeply injured if he should be wronged (in his own estimate) by one of his own people, and will go to any length to obtain redress or revenge. In this spirit the Badakhshi—the Badakhshi Tajik especially—regards Afghan Government; and if war with Russia were to happen within the next few years, it is scarcely likely that he would forego the opportunity of making trouble for his masters or of giving in his allegiance to the enemy. Whether good government and conciliation on the part of the Afghans, could avert such an issue, I cannot think otherwise than doubtful, for an unreasonable spirit of hatred is scarcely to be overcome by such reasonable means. The prospect in these regions is, therefore, not an encouraging one for Afghanistan, in view of a Russian war breaking out within the next few years.

13. It might be asked whether English influence could effect nothing towards creating a better feeling, and bringing the Badakhshi population to a more loyal frame of mind towards their rulers and our allies. My impression is that little or nothing could be done, short of direct interference with Afghan rule and promises of protection against Russian invasion, backed by the presence of a British force on the frontier of the country, as a visible guarantee that we intended to carry out our engagements in these respects. But these are measures that could never be entertained, nor would the game be worth the candle. If we take into consideration the distance of the nearest seat of British power to Badakhshan, and the ignorance of the inhabitants of everything concerning the British Government, while they are well acquainted with the proximity and power of Russia, it would not be surprising if merely the conciliatory advice of British agents, or even the expenditure of money, among the leading men of the country, were to have little effect on the general attitude of the people towards the Afghans. Asiatics, great and small, believe only in what they see, and to the Badakhshi the chief thing visible about the British is that they are friends of their hated masters. Were British agents, then, to attempt to influence Badakhshi feeling towards the Afghans, an interested purpose would be so evident, that little good could be hoped for as a result. There is probably

no active ill-feeling towards the English—at least I have not been able to discover any; and as the Badakhshis are not a numerous or a warlike people, their co-operation with an enemy would not be of any great consequence. It would probably take a very passive form, or be confined to assisting his army as drivers, camp-followers, &c. They would probably never be made soldiers by whoever might become their rulers.

14. The invasion of the Badakhshan provinces by Russia would probably be only a minor operation in a great war, and it is scarcely possible that it could be undertaken except on the extreme west and the extreme east. But the latter case is an improbable one. It would mean either that Russia would have to march a force from Khokand, across the Alai and other Pamirs, to Eastern Shighnan, or that, having acquired Chinese Turkistan and the Chinese Pamirs, a descent would be made by way of Wakhan. Both of these are improbable in the near future. In both cases the invaders would have great disadvantages in point of distance, supplies, &c., to contend with, and in neither case could a large force be employed. The only probable line of invasion would pass across a section of the low country on the west of Badakhshan proper, or through the northern part of Kattaghan, and here also the Russians would be at a certain disadvantage, though it would be only a comparative one: that is, the Afghans would be nearer their base and among a better affected population than if they had to meet the enemy on their extreme eastern frontier. Still they would always have to reckon with the rebellious Tajiks on their flank; and if the Russian objective were to be—as it probably would be—the passes leading from Zebak over to Chitral, it appears unlikely that the Afghans could stop them. Whether the difficulties presented by mountainous country and a severe climate might do so, is another matter. I need hardly go into the question of the route that a Russian force might take if invading Badakhshan, as almost any point on the Oxus, from Samti downwards, is to be crossed by ford or ferry, and roads lead from all these crossings into the heart of Badakhshan. All must converge on Faizabad,* and the advancing army could pass only by the Vardoj valley to Zebak, whence the ascent towards the passes would be made. On inspecting our maps and examin-

* There are, of course, hill tracks, such as those leading from Darsim to Jarm, from Chittah to Jarm, &c.; but these are only practicable for lightly-equipped travellers, and would probably not be passable by troops.

ing the routes recorded by native explorers, one gains the impression that an advance could be made in this direction with great ease. The valleys are represented as teeming with towns and villages, and the hills are shown to be low and open. But this view gives, in reality, a false notion of the country. Many of the places marked as villages have no existence; others refer to nullas, hillsides, or other features, where neither dwelling nor cultivation is to be found, and which can only be recognised by the villagers of the immediate neighbourhood. The hills everywhere, except at the confluence of the Sarghulán and Vardoj streams with the Kokcha, are steep and stony, and confine the river valleys to narrow mountain gorges as in Ladak, Baltistan, and other regions of the higher Himalayas. At the confluence of the three streams an opening occurs constituting the fertile, but very limited, plains of Baharak and Farhád, and this is the only opening of any consequence between Faizabad and Zebak. Such places as Khairabad and Chákerán, for instance, which are marked on the maps in capital letters, are mere hamlets of clay-plastered cottages occupying bights in the gorge, where a few acres of sufficiently level land can be secured, between the steep hillside and the bed of the torrent, to allow a handful of mountaineers to obtain a living. Zebak itself, though lying in a comparatively wide opening formed by the junction of three streams, like at Bohárak, is only a group of small hamlets, whose sparse inhabitants can do little more than keep themselves in food and clothing. Thus, supplies along the whole line above Faizabad must be regarded as scarce. Another point on which sufficient allowance is perhaps not always made in reading the maps of these regions, and in estimating from them the possibility of a Russian advance, is the severity of the climate during about half the year. The altitudes, when compared with many districts on the Kashmir and Kabul side of the ranges, appear low, but the climate, altitude for altitude, is more severe. Thus, Zebak, though only about 8,500 feet above the sea, and therefore lower than any point in Ladak, and only some 3,500 feet above Gilgit, has a winter climate probably quite as severe as that of Leh and other Ladak valleys, ranging from 11,000 to over 12,000 feet above the sea. In these regions it appears that, though a difference of latitude of one or two degrees makes scarcely a perceptible difference in the climate of places situated on one side of a main range or mass of mountains, yet, if the mountains intervene, the difference of climate becomes a

very marked one. I believe it is acknowledged, by military officers, that European troops could only be maintained in a climate like Ladak with great difficulty. Russian troops are, no doubt, well seasoned to cold and hard fare, but (without presuming to give an opinion on a military subject) I can hardly conceive it possible that any large number of European Russians could permanently occupy the Zebak valley or, indeed, any point above the Bohárak plain. If this view should be correct, it would seem that though a Russian army might be marched through to Chitral in the summer, yet, even in the event of Badakhshan falling into Russian hands, their nearest garrison of any strength would still be a long way from the highest habitable valleys on the Chitral side, and could moreover only be maintained in that position (Bohárak) by drawing the bulk of its supplies from the country west of Faizabad.

15. On the 26th January, after a stay at Khanabad of more than a fortnight, I left that place to return to Badakhshan, intending to follow up the Panjah to Sámti, or as near the Darwaz frontier as the season would allow, and from there to strike across by Cháh-i-áb and Rusták to Faizabad. Turning north from the main road at a point between Khanabad and Talikan, we skirted the east slopes of the Ambar Koh,* and on the 29th arrived at Khwája Ghár (or Khoja Ghár), a large Usbeg village about a mile above the confluence of the Kokcha and Panjah, and immediately opposite the isolated, flat-topped hill, called Ai Khánem Tágh. It is evidently the place which Wood has called "Kila Chap," a name that the inhabitants, at the present day, are quite unable to recognise. From here an extensive view is obtained to the northward, over the plain of Turghá-i-Tipa and the surrounding ranges. This plain is marked too broad on our maps. The Rusták hills are much nearer to the river even at the southern end of the plain, and abut on its banks a little above Yáng Kila. The latter place also is wrongly marked with reference to the Rusták river, or Jilga river as it is called. It is said to lie to the south of that river's junction with the Panjah, not to the north of it. Again, the Panjah does not divide into two streams forming an island opposite Khwája Ghár. The hills at this point are bold right down to the north bank of the river, which sweeps round

* This little range, or ridge, I may remark here, is placed in our maps too far to the westward with reference to the position of Khanabad. It should be placed to the eastward of Khanabad, its southern extremity abutting on the road between that place and Talikan.

them, turning from a southerly course to a westerly one, and taking in the Kokcha at the angle. But the Panjah at some distance above the Kokcha confluence—probably about 7 or 8 miles—does branch into two, and forms the island of Darkat, to which I alluded in a previous paragraph. The lower end of the island is said to be at the ford of Kákul Guzar, perhaps 6 or 8 miles north of the Kokcha junction; and the upper end, a short distance below the Jilga confluence, nearly opposite an isolated and remarkable hill on the Kulab side, called Khwája Momin, which contains a celebrated salt mine. The island may perhaps measure some 10 miles in length. Above Yáng Kila the hills close in with the river, and the road to the Sámti district, branching off from the river, crosses a pass called the Anjirak and descends into the valley of Cháh-i-áb (or Cháiáb), at the lower end of which, are the two villages of lower and upper Sámti (Sámti páin and Sámti bálá). The distance from Yáng Kila to Samti is called two fair marches, and the Anjirak pass presents no difficulties. At Samti the main road between Faizabad and Koláb crosses the Panjah, but no road other than a footpath leads up the Panjah, for the hills on the north of the Cháiáb valley abut steeply on the river bank and are said to be impassable for animals. In order to ascend the river from Samti to Rágh, therefore, it is neccssary to return up the Cháiáb valley for some distance, and cross a pass described as steep and difficult, in order to descend into the intermediate valley of Daung, and from hare again a pass of the same nature must be crossed before the Rágh valley is reached. The Dáung and Rágh valleys both drain directly into the Panjah, and the upper or northern limit of the latter is described as the frontier of Badakhshan, in this direction. The highest village on the Badakhshan side is lower Khuldusk and the next village, up stream, also called Khuldusk, is the lowest settlement in Darwáz. The former is known as Khuldusk-i-Badakhshan, the latter as Khuldusk-i-Darwaz, and the Afghan boundary line cuts the Panjah between the two. The total distance from Sámti, or Cháiáb, to lower Khuldusk is reckoned at four full marches in summer, or perhaps five. In winter this road is usually closed for all but foot traffic, horses being unable to cross the passes unless during exceptional weather. It was at Khwaja Ghar that an illness, from which I had been suffering for some time, rendered me incapable of continuing the work of exploration, and obliged me to seek medical

assistance at the camp of the Boundary Commission, then at Chahrshamba. On the 2nd February I had to commence the return journey to Khanabad, and have only noted the above geographical particulars in the body of this report, because I had scarcely come within sight of the interesting district to be explored, when I was compelled to turn back. Consequently I have no proper data for protracting on the accompanying route-sketch,* and only record them here as slight indications for correcting existing maps, because the surveyors of the Boundary Commission have been prevented from visiting the locality.

* I have since inserted them, roughly, on the route-sketch. See Appendix A.

16. On the 6th February I again left Khanabad, this time travelling westward towards Turkistan and Maimena. The route was along the skirts of the fens of Kunduz, a series of dreary swamps full of tall reeds, with every here and there a patch of half-dry land containing an encampment of Usbegs. Kunduz itself stands on a peninsula of raised ground, jutting out from what may be called the "mainland," on the south, into the sea of swamp and reeds which stretches along the river valley. It must have been a remarkable place in its day, and, in fact, a large town. The walls and gates are high and imposing, and the Baln Hissar or citadel seems, as far as one can judge from the outside, to have been crowded with buildings of a better class than are found nowadays in this ruined country. All is built of brown earth, and scarcely a tree is to be seen on three sides of the town. The walls are breached and washed down in many places by the rains, and the great gateways, with their flanking towers, are falling to pieces: in short, a scene more characteristic of ruin and desolation would be difficult to find, even in these regions, where those who construct are followed by destroyers, as surely as the day is followed by the night. We passed by the northern end of the town and near the small modern bazar which lies outside the western wall; then descended into the valley of the Aksarai, crossed the river, and camped at a reed village, or encampment, called Panjah, among the fens on the other side. The ordinary habitation of the Kattaghani is a reed hut, sometimes partly covered with reed mats. It is pitched on the bare ground without any kind of flooring, and the rain and snow are driven through the crevices as through a sieve. The Kirgah, or round felt tent, is a much better class of dwelling, but they are comparatively rare in the country, and are only used by the

few who are better off than the great majority. The shape o the reed tent is much the same as that of the Kirgah, and it is called a "gumbaz "or "dome," but it is perhaps the worst habitation for an alternately wet and severely cold climate, that it is possible to imagine; so that a village of these huts pitched in the half-frozen mud of the Kunduz fens, with a Central Asian snowstorm driving over it, makes up a picture of forbidding gloom not easy to surpass. I had always considered that in the "champas" or nomads of Tibet, who live in tents made of yák hair matting, I had seen the last degree of endurance the human constitution could attain; but I now think the Usbeg of Kattaghan is able to put up with a worse lot than even the champa. The cold of the Tibetan highlands is more severe, but it is a dry and constant cold, and the summer is never hot. The damp cold of Kattaghan, equal perhaps to that of the north of Scotland, is varied during the winter by thaws and heavy rains, and gives way in summer to heat which must be as great as, if not greater than, in many parts of India. "Civilised" domestic animals would not be able to live in this climate unless better cared for than an Usbeg. What the mortality may be among the people, I have no idea; but there is little to wonder at, if those who survive are as hard as mountain goats and as brutal-looking as their own shaggy sheep-dogs. The Kirghiz on the Pamirs, and the Mongols and Kalmaks farther north, have all arctic climates to struggle against, but they are housed in thick felt tents, clothed in heavy sheep-skins, and scarcely know the meaning of wet and damp. The Kattaghani's clothing is chiefly of cotton, though woollen coats are not uncommon, but sheep-skin is little used. Perhaps the damp climate renders it unsuitable, for certainly there is no lack of the commodity in the country. The sheep are numerous, and their fleeces fine and thick. From Panjah, the main road leads (by the Yarganah pass) across the range flanking the Aksarai valley on the west; then after descending to the first Abdán, it brings one (by a long day's march from Panjah) through an uninhabited country, to the second Abdán, which is the western limit of the Kattaghan province. Here Abdulla Ján is making certain improvements for the benefit of travellers, by leading water to the road, from the hills on the south, building a caravan-serai, &c. The spot is now called Khairabad, and it is about half-way from Panjah to Yángi Arik, the nearest inhabited spot in the Turkistan province. Between the two latter places the small pass of Sháhibághli is

crossed, at the west foot of which occurs the bed of fossil shells* mentioned by Moorcroft, and at a short distance beyond it, the third Abdán is reached. This, like the two others, consists of a tank of stagnant and filthy water, covered by the ruins of what was once a fine brick dome. From Yángi Arik (or Yángárik) the road leads along the flat plain of Turkistan, and immediately under the scarp of the southern hills, until it reaches Táshkurghán, where it joins the main route between Kabul and Turkistan.

* I made over some specimens of these to Dr. Giles of the Chitral Mission.

17. It may be useful, in conclusion, to note the strength of the various garrisons of the provinces I have now reported on. They are as follows, as nearly as I can ascertain them:—

In Khánábád . .	2 regiments infantry.
	2 „ cavalry.
	1 battery field guns.
	1 „ mule „
	Some khásádárs.
In Faizábád . . .	2 regiments infantry—about 800 each.
	2 „ cavalry— „ 400 „
	1 battery (field?).
In Rusták and Yáng Kila	About 400 infantry.
In Shighnán . . .	8 companies infantry—about 400 men.
	½ battery mule guns.
	200 khásádárs.
	30 sowars.
In Wakhán, Zebák, &c. .	A few sepoys of infantry.
	A few khásádárs—under 100 men.

A good proportion of the regular infantry in all the above garrisons are armed with new Snider rifles, said to be those presented to the Amir by the Government of India after the Rawalpindi Darbar. I have no information as to the number of horses and men employed in the Bár Kháná, or transport train. The men are nearly all Usbegs and are mostly armed with a native Usbeg sword.

18. It was my object to collect as much statistical information as possible regarding the Badakhshan provinces, but my efforts failed in almost every branch of enquiry, except in the Shighnan district. Asiatic suspicion takes many peculiar forms, and it is necessary to get experience of each separate race, before one can guess in what directions the suspicions of a people will turn. With the Chinese and other yellow races, for instance, surveying and all enquiries regarding topography and geology, are the subjects that most excite their distrust; while information on such points as the races, the

administrative divisions, the population of a country, are usually obtained without causing any great suspicion. Among the Afghans exactly the reverse takes place, as I became aware as soon as my party was taken charge of by the Mehmandars of Abdulla Ján, in Roshan. Mapping work was regarded as quite unobjectionable, and every assistance was given me, throughout the province, in obtaining geographical information. But on all subjects connected with the people, the administration, and even with external affairs, the greatest reserve was maintained. Not only would Afghan officials give no information when asked, but they took the greatest care that the inhabitants of the places visited should give none, and it was sometimes amusing to see the shifts they were put to, for excuses or for evasive replies. During the latter part of the journey, especially, much trouble was taken to keep the people from having any communication with me, with the object, no doubt, of preventing answers to enquiries; even my Persian Maulvi was to a great extent isolated in this way, as he was suspected of making enquiries on my account. This will explain the absence of a great deal of information which I feel ought to have been gathered; but it is far more difficult to account for the reason of all this mistrust on the part of the Afghans. I have grounds for believing that it mostly originated with Abdulla Ján, and was not ordered by the Amir; the reason of the freedom and assistance experienced in Shighnan being that, at that time, the Sardar's detailed orders regarding my treatment had not reached the Shighnan authorities. These indeed were left, for a few weeks, to act on the Amir's letter and their own judgment, for I was not expected to arrive first in Shighnan. But however this may be, Abdulla Ján's orders to his inferiors, enjoining mistrust, no doubt reached willing ears, for there can be no question that all but a very small minority of the Afghans hate and mistrust us as much they do the Russians. Probably few, if any, of the officials with whom I came in contact really believed that the objects of the mission were for the advantage of their country. It is more likely that what they suspected was, that under a pretence of taking measures for securing the present frontiers for the Amir, the Government of India were, in reality, collecting information which might be used against Afghanistan at any time. In such suspicions as these, probably the Amir does not share. He is perhaps the only Afghan sufficiently enlightened to understand our motives, and for this reason is the only Afghan

who can be looked upon as a friend of the British Government. While he retains the absolute power he has, his subordinates will never be able to give rein to their own hatred, but on the other hand they will never treat British officers with trust or assist them with cordiality. Their ignorance of the motives and policy of our Government is so great that they cannot understand their Amir—an Afghan and a Mussulman—placing trust in us, and they blame him for allying himself with "Káfirs." It has sometimes been hinted to me that the Afghans suspect the Amir of allying himself with our Government, in order to secure his own safety in case of an invasion by the Russians, when his position at Kabul would afford him a safe retreat, while his army on the frontiers had to face the chances of the war. This view has, probably, little foundation. But I will not pursue the subject further. I will only remark that as far as Badakhshan was concerned, the mistrust shown by Abdulla Ján and his followers was much less at the beginning of my visit than towards the end, when Colonel Lockhart's party suddenly entered Wakhan, and a large section of the Boundary Commission proposed to come up from Turkistan and survey the country. These, to us, more or less reasonable movements on the part of our officers, were regarded with the greatest distrust by the Afghans, and here again they blamed the Amir for allowing the country to be overrun by foreigners. They had already shown their boundaries to one British officer and had given him, as they considered, a great deal of information, so that the reason for sending two more missions, both on a huge scale (according to their ideas), was not apparent, and could only be put down to some sinister motive, that they were unable to fathom.

CHAPTER IV.

VISIT TO THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION; AND RETURN, THROUGH CHITRAL, TO GILGIT.

1. As the journey from Tashkurghan to the camp of the Boundary Commission was undertaken only to procure medical assistance, and as the whole of the ground had already been gone over by Major Maitland and Captain Talbot, I travelled as quickly as possible, and neither carried on any kind of survey nor made any special enquiries. I do not therefore propose to attempt a description of the country, or to enter into any details regarding matters that must have already been fully reported on by the officers of the Boundary Commission. Captain Talbot, after surveying the Házárájat, &c., as far east as Ghori, had descended into the plains at Tashkurghan, and from there had returned westward by the road I followed, which in fact is the main road. Since then the main body of the Commission has also travelled over the ground as far east as Tashkurghan, so that the region may be regarded as thoroughly explored. On my westward journey, the season was the depth of winter, and being seriously ill, I should have been unable, under any circumstances, to do any useful work. When returning in spring, though health and season were more favourable, I merely travelled through the country as a passenger, because Her Majesty's Commissioner had arranged to send on a large survey party and an officer of the Intelligence Branch, about a fortnight after me, and it was not until I had arrived in Chitral, many weeks later, that I learned that his plans had broken down, and that none of the officers, who had been nominated for the duty, had even left the Boundary Commission camp. It mattered little, perhaps, that I should have collected no information west of Tashkurghan: what was of greater importance was that Her Majesty's Commissioner had taken out of my hands the exploration of the Badakhshan-Darwaz frontier. It will be remembered that I had started from Khanabad, at the end of January, to commence the work in that direction, and that I had abandoned it temporarily on account of sickness, but my intention was to resume it in the spring, if well enough. Her Majesty's Commissioner, in the meantime, had made extensive plans for

having the whole of Badakhshan, Shighnan, Wakhan, &c., together with the Pamir regions claimed by Afghanistan, thoroughly surveryed by his own officers during the summer of 1886. The whole of this great region of snowy mountains was to be regularly triangulated, and joined on to the surveys already made in the Házárájat on the one hand, and to those of the Chitral mission on the other. Sir W. Ridgeway was good enough to offer to enrol me among his surveyors for the completion of the Darwaz frontier, but it was out of the question that I should accept the offer. I am not a trained surveyor, and should have had no knowledge of the system on which the rest of the party were working. It would have been impossible, therefore, from a technical point of view, for me to take a part in work of this kind. I considered, also, that Government had a right to the best work obtainable, and readily made over my duties to the Commissioner, in order to fall in with his plans. There is no necessity, here, to go into the practicability of this great scheme of survey. On paper it was all that could be wished, but beyond the paper on which it was projected, it never reached. If, however, only one section of it had been carried out, it would have been the one Sir W. Ridgeway offered to employ me on—the most accessible to the Boundary Commission, and the region that offered the least physical difficulties, *viz.*, North-Western Badakhshan, or the section that includes the portion of the Darwaz frontier which I had left unexamined in the winter. This section alone, it always appeared to me, might possibly have been surveyed, and, if so, it would have had the effect of laying down that part of the existing frontier, much more accurately, and with more detail, than I could have done. Up to the last days of my stay in Badakhshan, I believed that the survey party were close at hand, or had perhaps even begun the work, and (as remarked above) it was only when too late to return to Badakhshan, that I heard of the collapse of the entire scheme. In this way it happened that the question of the position of the Darwaz boundary, which I might have settled in the spring, was taken over by Her Majesty's Commissioner, and was not settled by him, while, in the meantime, I had left the country. Had it been left to me, a reconnaissance survey, like that made in Roshan, &c., last autumn, would at least have been the result, and the Government would have gained an approximate knowledge—perhaps sufficient for political purposes—of all the Darwaz frontier on the left bank of the

Oxus. As it is, the blank spot on our maps remains much as it was.

2. Perhaps the only interesting occurrence in the whole of the long journey through Afghan Turkistan and Maimana, to the border of Herat (at Kárawal Khána, on the Murghab) was the meeting, at Mazar-i-sharif, with Sardar Mahomed Ishák Khan, the Governor of Turkistan. I saw him the first time, on the outward journey, in February, and was not impressed with either his ability or friendship. The second occasion was, on my return towards Badakshan in the spring, when the impression gained at the first interview was fully confirmed. He appeared to have no friendly feelings towards the British, though he spoke in disparaging terms of the Russians, and though he expressed himself grateful for the asylum he had found in India, when he took refuge there in the time of Shir Ali.* On the latter subject, however, he spoke with some reserve, and appeared to wish to convey the idea that he was grateful to the British Government for his safety, but for nothing else. This indeed may very likely have been his intention, for it is said that he has a grievance against the Government, for attaching conditions to the terms on which he was granted an asylum. One of these, I was told, was that if he wished to remain in India he would always receive a pension or allowance, but that he would not be allowed to return to Afghanistan without first obtaining the permission of the ruling Amir, through the Government of India. I am not aware how far this story is correct, but this and other conditions are reported to have been so distasteful to Ishák Khan that, after a short stay at Rawal Pindi, he determined to leave India, and accordingly went first to Persia (by sea) and afterwards from there to Bokhara. Here he lived the life of a religious devotee for some years, and with him was his brother Mahomed Sarwar Khan. Soon after the death of Shir Ali at Mazár in 1879, Mahomed Sarwar crossed from Bokhara into Turkistan, in the hope of gaining the province for himself. He had scarcely any followers, beyond mere personal attendants, but believed that the people would welcome him, as a son of Azim Khan, and as a deliverer from the unpopular rule of Amir Yakub's Governor of Turkistan, one Ghulám Haidar Khan, Wardak. He soon found, however, that Ghulám Haidar was too firmly seated to be moved, and he had scarcely landed on the south bank of the Oxus when

* Probably in company with his father, Azim Khan; but I do not know the date of his coming to India.

he was killed by the Governor's order. Ghulám Haidar remained in power till Abdur Rahman was made Amir in 1880, when Ishák Khan, it is said, was permitted by the Amir to cross the Oxus, in order to take revenge on his brother's murderer. By this time Ghulám Haidar's power had waned; he regarded the Amir's action as, practically, an order to Ishák to come and turn him out, and thinking the latter, as a cousin of the Amir, would necessarily relieve support from Kabul, he fled to Bokhara, where he lives to the present day. Ishák was then appointed Governor and has never since, I believe, left the province. He is above all things a bigoted Mussulman; he has no connection with the Wáhábis, but is more a Sunni fanatic of an old-fashioned type, and belongs probably to the Nakhsh-bandis of Bokhara. Whether he gives himself out to be Nakhsh-bandi or not, I am not aware, but he is said to be a "murid," or follower, of one Ir Nazar Khoja of Samarkand, who is the greatest Nakhsh-bandi "Pir" in Bokhara, at the present day, and a descendant of the original Nakhsh-band, Khoja Baháudin. The Sardar's manner is pompous, but undignified; he puts on a leather glove to shake hands with a European, and affects learning and sanctity in his style of conversation. He is a good-looking man, with a very un-Afghan countenance, due, doubtless to his mother having been an Armenian Christian, the daughter of a trader at Kabul. He has one son, Ismail Khan, about 18 or 20 years of age, whom I did not see, but who is described as of weak character, and more likely to be acceptable, as a leader, to the mullahs of Turkistan than to the Afghans. The Sardar evidently regards Russia as the greater power; his communications are all with the Russian side; he arms his troops with Russian rifles, clothes them in a semi-Russian uniform, and, as far as one can judge, encourages a belief in Russian power. Still I should not regard him as an enemy of ours on account of friendship with Russia, but rather on account of religious fanaticism, which he seems to consider the true key to power among his own people. Should he ever become Amir, it will be this fanaticism, and the general ignorance and narrow-mindedness which always accompany that quality, that will make him a bad successor to his cousin Abdur Rahman, and one that our Government will probably find difficult to deal with. He is known to be disaffected towards the Amir, and has always, on one pretence or another, avoided complying with the Amir's frequent invitations

to visit him at Kabul. His life is at least safe at Mazár-i-Sharif, but if the Amir suspects his loyalty, as is possible, it would not be worth a week's purchase when once within the walls of Kabul. But however this may be, a visit to Kabul would mean, in the eyes of his followers, absolute submission to Abdur Rahman, and he is said to have avoided making complete submission, with a view to building up a true Mussulman party of his own in Turkistan,—a party which he believes he may be able to rouse, one day, against his Kafir-tainted cousin. The two points on which he is said to be ill-affected towards the Amir are: firstly, the latter's allying himself with the English; and, secondly, the Amir's action in regard to Maimana. The first is a matter of pure fanaticism, but on the second point the Sardar may perhaps have some reason to show. The present Usbeg Walli of Maimana, Mahomed Hussain, is one of two brothers; during Shir Ali's reign, Mahomed Hussain was intrigued against so successfully by his brother, then at Kabul, that the Amir sent Alam Khan (known as the Naib-i-Alam), then Governor of Turkistan, against him to turn him out. The Naib took the place and sent Mahomed Hussain a prisoner to Kabul, after which Shir Ali sent the brother to Maimana, as Walli. Shortly after the accession of the present Amir, his suspicions fell on the Walli, who, in his turn, was removed, while Mahomed Hussain, the original Walli, was reinstated. It is this man that Ishák Khan is said to regard as a traitor, and to have often recommended the Amir to remove. The Amir's refusal he looks upon as mistrust of himself, and as a desire, on the Amir's part, to keep the Walli as a check upon the growth of his own power. He is also said to believe that the Amir considers him (Ishák) already too powerful, and that his accusations against the Walli are prompted by interested motives—that he wishes, in fact, to have Maimana included in his own government. There may be something in this view, but the Amir's own agent at Maimana, one Aulya Khan (since dead), spoke openly of the disloyalty of the Walli, when I was there in February, and wondered what design the Amir could have in leaving him in power. Again, the Sardar is said to be impressed with the idea that the defection of the Walli and the weakness of the defences of Maimana, are well known to the Russians, and that these count more on making a breach in the frontier of Afghanistan there, than at Herat. In support of this, it is reported that constant intrigues go on between the Walli and the

Russians, and that the Russian General at Panjdeh is attended by a permanent deputation of Usbegs from Maimana, whose presence is thought to be an earnest of the Walli's good-will towards the Russian cause. Thus it is probable that the Usbeg Walli is not loyal to the Amir, but, on the other hand, it is not impossible that Ishák Khan may covet Maimana for himself: though not especially loyal himself, he may be willing to cause the downfall of his neighbour, in order to increase his own power. Even in Badakhshan there are to be found enemies of Ishák Khan, who not only attribute to him designs on Maimana, but also credit him with ambitious views regarding Kattaghan and Badakhshan. He is said to be jealous of Abdulla Ján, and to consider that the whole of the latter's jurisdiction should be added to Turkistan. I know of nothing to support assertions on this point, except, perhaps, the presence in Abdulla Ján's province, in the winter of 1885-86, of one Sardar Shams-ud-din, who had been sent by the Amir, from Kabul, to investigate Abdulla Ján's administration. Shams-ud-din travelled from place to place in the province, enquiring of the people if they had any complaint to make against their Governor, and personally investigating charges of corruption, &c., brought against various officials; during a stay of some six months in the province he never once saw Abdulla Ján, but he caused several subordinate officials to be removed from their posts, and in the spring returned to Kabul, to make his report to the Amir. This mission was often reported to have been the outcome of charges brought by Sardar Ishák Khan against Abdulla Ján, which the Amir set himself to investigate in this thoroughly oriental way.

3. On returning to Khanabad, in May, I was welcomed by Abdulla Ján with much the same hospitality as he had shown me in the winter, but there was less real cordiality, and I could not avoid noticing a certain irritation, on his part, on account of the number of British officers who were just then expected to arrive. Sir W. Ridgeway had sent up a native official, belonging to the Boundary Commission, to act as his agent. This person—one Shir Ahmad Khan—was a Kabuli, a distant relative of the Amir and known as a "Sardár." On the other hand, he held an official post in the Punjab under the Government of India, and spoke English. He assumed a high position, on account of his Afghan rank and relationship to the Amir, but at the same time was in the service of "Kafirs." This combination alone had a galling effect on Abdulla Ján, and it

was much increased by the circumstance that Shir Ahmad's mission was, chiefly, to ask Abdulla Ján to make arrangements for the main body of the Boundary Commission to travel about Badakhshan, Shighnan, Wakhan, &c. Enormous depôts of supplies were to be made at four or five different points in these provinces, extensive arrangements regarding transport were asked for, and, in fact, general preparations were to be made for the country to be examined by a party of about nine or ten British officers, a guard of nearly 100 sepoys, 200 followers, and some 300 horses and mules. Out of this party, three survey officers, each with a following a good deal larger than the whole of my mission, were to travel in various directions, and were to be provided for in the most distant and desert corners of the province. Again, the main body of the Commission, together with the survey parties, on completing their work, were to cross from Wakhan into Yassin, where no supplies were to be expected, and the Sardar was asked to carry out supplies to the confines of Wakhan, to enable the Commission to stock the road across the frontier, in territory which was not even under Afghan jurisdiction. No sooner had these demands been made, than news arrived from Wakhan that Colonel Lockhart's mission, consisting of four officers with a total following (guards, carriers and others) of nearly 300 men, were about to enter Afghan territory, from Hunza, and required supplies to be laid out for them for a journey to Káfiristan, through Upper Badakhshan. The advent of the Boundary Commission had been expected by Abdulla Ján, though he had never thought of having to provide for it on the scale now put forward, but Colonel Lockhart's mission was wholly unexpected. Under these circumstances, it is scarcely to be wondered at that the Sardar should feel that he had been asked to do too much, and that the arrangements required of him were all but impossible in a wild hill-country, such as Badakhshan and the Tajik States. He saw that the great depôts of fodder, provisions, fuel, &c., which Sir W. Ridgeway had asked for, would have to be transported from the lower districts of Badakhshan and from Kattaghan, so that, in some instances, they might have to be carried for nearly 200 miles, by the villagers and others on whom the requisitions were made. He saw, too, that all this would happen at the season of the year when the cultivators were most busy with their fields, and that the sequel would probably be short crops, and inability to meet the usual yearly levies made for the support of the garrisons. In short, the province was unable to stand the strain of such demands, with-

out dislocating the ordinary administrative arrangements. In an open country with fair roads, or even in a hill country with a well-organised system of administration, an extra strain of this kind could be met with more or less ease, but in a hill country like Badakhshan and with an Afghan provincial Government, it is otherwise.* Though the resources of the land may be sufficient to provide for parties like those described, there are no facilities—no organisation—for collecting or distributing them, and there are no contractors or traders who would undertake anything of the sort as a matter of private enterprise. In fact private enterprise does not exist in such regions, and in consequence everything falls upon the Government, whose machinery is at all times weak. In this instance, the pressure to be put on his machinery no doubt alarmed Abdulla Ján, and he appealed to the Amir to prevent both Sir W. Ridgeway and Colonel Lockhart's schemes from being carried out. It is of course possible that his alarm was tinged with jealousy at having the country "spied out" by foreigners,† to whom he is at no time particularly friendly. But it is fair to say that it must have been chiefly genuine for the reasons given above, and I may mention here, that I found Abdulla Ján quite unable to see why so many officers and such large followings should be required to fix the boundaries of his province. He knew that no joint demarcation was to be undertaken by our Commission and the Russian, and he thought that I had ascertained all that was necessary, except the western end of the Darwaz frontier. Still, in spite of his irritation and alarm, at this time, he made no attempt to place obstacles in the way of my movements, but offered to send me in any direction I wished to go. My light party gave little trouble, and as I had come, originally, with a direct letter from the Amir, I believe that even after the open quarrel which subsequently broke out, on paper, with Colonel Lockhart, Abdula Ján would not have interfered with any movements of mine, provided they had fallen within the scheme of exploration on which he knew me to have been engaged.

* Ladak—a much better organised province than Badakhshan—was nearly eaten up by the passages, out and home, of Sir D. Forsyth's Mission to Kashgar in 1873-74. It took four years for the province to recover the strain, and many concessions in revenue, &c., had to be made by the Government to the inhabitants. Yet Sir D. Forsyth's party was not more than half as large as that section of the Boundary Commission which was to explore Badakhshan.

† The Khan Mullah (chief priest) of Badakhshan, who, I believe, wrote, or assisted in compiling, Abdula Ján's report on my visit in the winter, told my Munshi that the Sardar had warned the Amir that "it was not well to allow foreigners to travel over the country and spy out everything."

4. On the 17th May I left Khanabad and went on by the direct road to Faizabad, being fully persuaded that the survey party of the Boundary Commission were then only about eight or ten days behind. Immediately after this, communication from the Boundary Commission stopped, and during the whole of my stay in Faizabad and Bohárak, *viz.*, from the 24th May to the 9th June, I always belived the survey officers to be close at hand, though I could not account for their delay. Accordingly, I made no attempt to explore in any direction, though I was most favourably situated and had the open season before me. About the 8th June, at Bohárak, I heard, from Colonel Lockhart, that he had arrived at Zebak, and moving up at once, I joined him there on the 11th. Some two months previously, I had written to the Mehtar of Chitral, foreshadowing the possibility of passing through his country on my way to India, and he had sent me, in reply, a cordial invitation to do so. On arriving at Bohárak, about the 5th of June, I had written him again to say that I would avail myself of his invitation, and that I intended to go on almost at once. As there was some uncertainty about the Duráh pass being open for pack animals, I sent a man of my own with the letter, who was to bring me back the Mehtar's answer and to report on the state of the pass. After a stay of nearly a week at Bohárak and several days with Colonel Lockhart at Zebak, I received an answer from Amán-ul-Mulk which almost determined me to abandon my intention of passing through Chitral, and to take, instead, the Pamir route to Yarkand and Ladak. The Mehtar, while professing friendship, &c., advised me not to pass through his country, because the roads were bad, the rivers high, and supplies scarce. If I was determined to come, he would give me a daily allowance of provisions, on payment, but he recommended me to send all animals and followers by the Baroghil road to Yassin and Gilgit, and to come on alone. He also sent two persons to accompany my messenger back, and to dissuade me from visiting Chitral. It was clearly impossible to take the last part of his advice, and very undesirable to return through Chinese territory. The pass was reported practicable, so I decided to carry out my original intention and started, accordingly, with Colonel Lockhart's mission, who were taking the same route to Gilgit. After crossing the Durah pass, the road became so bad for baggage animals, that I only arrived at the fort of Chitral two days after Colonel Lockhart, who had

coolie transport. In this way, the ground had been prepared to some extent for my arrival, with the result that I was received by the Mehtar with probably less inhospitality than would otherwise have been the case. Having come from Badakhshan and Turkistan, he showed some curiosity to hear what I had to say about the Afghans, and to ascertain, by private enquiry from my followers, how I had been treated by the Afghan authorities. It soon became evident that he stood in fear of the Afghans, and wished to imitate them in the matter of the treatment to be given to my party. The only people he feared, must not be offended by hearing that he had received with honour, a person whom they, in their wisdom, had seen fit to slight: or, on the other hand, if he should ascertain that an honourable reception had been given by the Afghans, he would be justified in doing the same and would, at the same time, perhaps propitiate the British Government, from whom favours were to be expected. Thus enquiries were made whether I had been treated as a guest of the State, whether salutes had been fired for me, what guards had been appointed, &c., &c., and while these enquiries were being made, no reception of any sort in particular was determined on, a series of excuses being made to do duty instead. On the day of my arrival the Mehtar had to pay a visit to Colonel Lockhart, and as he told the latter that he desired to see me, my first interview with him was in company with Colonel Lockhart. I had scarcely exchanged salutations, when he asked me pointedly: "Why did the Afghans turn the Colonel Sahib out?" I assured him that they had not done so, but he had evidently been led to believe that the return of the mission to Chitral was the result of the dispute between Colonel Lockhart and Abdulla Ján, and from enquiries he made through his Wazir, Anáyat Khan, a few hours later, it appeared that this unfortunate incident had been interpreted to mean that the alliance between the Amir and the British Government was at an end or, indeed, that it had never existed. The Afghans with whom Amán-ul-Mulk had been in communication—Abdulla Ján and his emissaries—had, no doubt, made a point of never acknowledging such an alliance, in their intercourse with Chitral. It is more probable that they had conveyed to the Mehtar the idea that no friendship even existed on the Amir's part, but was only talked of, and claimed, by our officers for the purpose of raising their own reputation. The Mehtar, therefore, scarcely made a show of believing my assurances that

friendship still existed, and that Colonel Lockhart had not been turned out of Afghan territory. He had not even the decency to avoid showing that he disbelieved Colonel Lockhart's account of what had taken place, though sitting in that officer's presence. It was almost immediately after taking his leave, on this occasion, that Anáyat Khan was sent to learn what I had to say. I had already written that I had no duties in the country, and that I had nothing to discuss with the Mehtar, but was merely marching through his territory as a passenger. Still, it required some explanation to convince Anáyat Khan that this was really the fact, but when once done, and he went on to other subjects, it was easy to see how unwelcome my visit was. Great scarcity was said to exist all over the country; the people were averse to labour and must not be asked to work for us, or they would leave Chitral and go over to Kafiristan—these and a number of other excuses were brought forward to hurry me on towards Gilgit, and to give me to understand that I must not expect much on the road, either in the way of supplies or assistance. Anáyat Khan showed nearly as much distrust as his master, though he is a more intelligent man, and, having been in Kashmir and India, has seen more and has had better opportunities to enlighten himself. If in the service of a different master he would probably behave differently, but in his present position he has, no doubt, to adopt a tone of suspicion and disbelief towards Europeans, in order to pass for a true servant. Like the Afghans, he must take the opportunity of the presence of a foreigner, to show his loyalty and not his enlightenment: he is well aware that the latter quality goes for nothing in comparison with the former, in his master's estimation, and he also knows that he is responsible to nobody for the treatment the foreigner may receive. He professes only to carry out his master's orders and naturally makes all the capital he can out of them for himself. If, on the contrary, he were to show any trust in us—any belief in our word or confidence in our intentions,—he would expect to incur the suspicion of his master, and lay himself open to the accusations of his enemies, while he would gain nothing more than he gains at present from our side. With Anáyat Khan I negotiated the terms of my departure, and treatment on the road to the Gilgit frontier. Certain presents were to be given and payments to be made, in return for which I should, no doubt receive as much grain and grass for the animals and flour for, the men, as would keep them

alive; if not,—if in some places these trifles were not forthcoming,—I was not to mind, and was not to be angry with the Mehtar, because he was a well-wisher of the British Government, and because he was very much obliged for all the arms and money he had received. In any case, the Mehtar would issue orders for supplies to be furnished at the different villages, and if the people did not obey these orders, why it would be just like them—the Chitralis were a "yághi" (rebellious) barbarous people, and were not accustomed to "pádsháhi" (government), but as the Mehtar was a well-wisher, &c., he would be sorry if I should be put to any inconvenience. As this arrangement seemed somewhat incomplete, I demurred, but was unable to obtain better terms from Anáyat Khan, and it was, at length, arranged that the matter was to be referred to again, whenever I might see the Mehtar. Later in the day, Anáyat Khan returned to say that the Mehtar wished to have a private conversation with me, apart from Colonel Lockhart, and the next morning was appointed for the interview, because, during the fast of Rámzán, the Mehtar was less exhausted in the morning than later in the day. On arriving at the fort, I was taken to one of the Mehtar's private rooms, and after a short time that worthy appeared, clad in a long shirt and a skull-cap. After some little conversation, he said he wished to know all abut the strength, &c., of the Afghans in Badakhshan, but while this was being explained to him, he fell asleep and had to be awoke by Anáyat Khan. He then complained that all the three chairs he had were broken, and uncomfortable to sleep in, and hoped the British Government would send him another, together with a "sannad," or agreement, engraved on copper, engaging that Chitral should always remain independent, and that the succession of his house should be recognised. The camp chairs which Colonel Biddulph and others had given him, were, as he pointed out, rickety, and had been rather extensively repaired by not very skilful workmen; while as to the independence of Chitral, it was true, as I had just remarked, that the Government of India had assured him, through Colonel Lockhart, that they had no intention of interfering with his country or his house, but what if, one day, they were to forget their assurance, or if the paper on which it was written should be burnt? A sheet of copper could not be burnt, and an agreement on copper always had an air of "pukhtagi" (ripeness, permanence) which paper had not. I promised to send him

a chair from Gilgit, if one was to be had there, and to report his wish, to have a copper "sannad," to the Government of India. Encouraged as to these two important points, he was not slow in putting forward another request, to the effect that the British Government should pay him a regular subsidy, or that they should cause the subsidy he now receives from Kashmir to be increased. I replied that I had no power to go into a matter of this kind, as I was not accredited to him, but merely a passenger through his country. But he urged, at great length, that something was due to him for all the hospitality he had shown to British officers (Biddulph, McNair, the Lockhart Mission), and in consideration of the fact that he had made enemies, all round, by showing friendship to the English. Here the buttons of my coat seemed to attract his attention, and he wished to know the reason of my wearing different buttons to Colonel Lockhart. Were we not serving the same Government; and if so, why wear different uniforms? These were quite common buttons and were to be had from Pesháwar traders, but Colonel Lockhart's were not. What was the cost of buttons? what kind of buttons did the Amir use? &c., &c., &c.; until another fit of drowsiness gave Anáyat Khan an opportunity to remind him, gently, that he was wandering from his subject. On the cue being given him, he continued to the effect that the Afghans were displeased, the people of Dir and other States in "Yághistan" were envious, and brought accusations against him for having dealings with us: he did not care in the least for either Afghans or Yághistanis, because, as a well-wisher of the British Government, he looked only to them for approval. Was the Amir of Afghanistan a greater well-wisher than he? Yet did not the British Government give the Amir a large annual subsidy and great quantities of arms. The Afghans were nothing to him—he was a poor man who wanted nothing for himself—but he thought it hardly looked well for his dignity that he should recieve so little, and they so much.* Good wishes he evidently considered to be not only a marketable commodity, but the only product of his country that need be offered in exchange for ready money, or arms, or agreements, or anything else he might require. Eventually this matter was disposed of, by my promising to send him some gold from Gilgit, if he would undertake to send down my

* These were not the Mehtar's words, but they convey the sense of his remarks. He generally alluded to the Afghans and to the Amir as "digarán," or "others."

party safely, and see that it was properly supplied along the road. This he promised to do, and would send a man of his own to see me through and bring back the gold, but he wished to know how much he was to receive, so that he might check any dishonesty on the part of his man. On this point I could give him no information—all would depend on the way his orders were carried out; while the honesty of the messenger could be checked by my sending back a letter, through the Kashmir authorities, stating the amount that person had received. The Mehtar then went on to the question of the Boundary Commission passing through his country on their way to India. He showed the greatest reluctance to receive them, and paraded the stock excuses (which have done duty since the visit of Colonel Biddulph in 1878), of scarcity in the country, bad roads, a disobedient people, &c. On this subject he seemed, perhaps, more in earnest than on any other, and hinted that if his people should once become alarmed lest their crops should be eaten up, they might bar the Durâh pass, and so prevent, by force, the Commission from entering the country. He had already lavished so much hospitality (the Chitrali for keeping people from starving, in return for heavy payments) on Colonel Lockhart's mission and on mine, that he could hardly be expected to do any more. The discussion that ensued, on this subject, need not be reported here, as the Boundary Commissioner shortly afterwards changed his plans, and no part of the Commission was sent through Chitral. The Mehtar, however, maundered on the subject for some time, till at length melons seemed to enter his thoughts, and he passed from Sir W. Ridgeway to melons without any break in the conversation, yet without indicating any special connection between the two. Finally he fell asleep for the third time during the interview, when, thinking I had given him opportunity enough to say whatever he required, I asked Anâyat Khan to wake him, so that I might take my leave, but not to restore to him the thread of his last theme. During the next two days I saw the Mehtar several times, but always in the company of the officers of the mission, which prevented him from making any further attempt to talk about things that he considered important. He pressed me several times, however, to stay as his guest for two days after the departure of the mission, as he had not yet shown me sufficient hospitality. During my three days' stay at his fort, the Mehtar's hospitality had resulted

in my baggage animals being half-starved, and in my followers having a daily wrangle with the officials for their provisions. I thought it best, therefore, to accept as little of it as possible, and, declining his invitation, left Chitral on the same day as the mission, though by a different route. The difficulty in getting fodder and provisions continued along the whole line to the Gilgit frontier at Hupar, above Gakuch. Every day more or less trouble was experienced, and at some places nothing was to be had. All remonstrances were met with the stereotyped answer that the country was too poor to support strangers; but as the Mehtar was a well-wisher of the British Government, there was really nothing to complain of. Everybody had been primed with this answer, and had it ready for all occasions. The country, as a matter of fact, is not particularly poor, in comparison with other hill countries: it is certainly more productive than Ladak and has nearly four times the population.* Yet in Ladak no difficulty is found in providing for large caravans of traders and pilgrims and numbers of European visitors, with their followers. There is, of course, no organisation capable of laying out supplies, or arranging for the march of a great expedition, like the Boundary Commission; but this was not required in my case, and as I had taken, at the Mehtar's request, a line of road separate from the Lockhart Mission, chiefly in order to avoid putting a strain on one set of villages,† there was no excuse for all the obstruction and ill-will that was displayed. Scarcely any part of the road between the Durâh pass and Gilgit can be described as fit for baggage animals, but as all the roads have been fully described and reported on by the Lockhart Mission, I do not propose to enter into any particulars regarding them here. I succeeded eventually in reaching Gilgit towards the end of July, but only after losing a number of the baggage ponies on the way, and rendering the remainder unfit for further service.

* Captain Barrow's estimates give a total for Chitral of 80,000. Ladak has about 22,000.

† From Chitral to near Mastuj, I travelled by a high level track, leading chiefly over the spurs sloping down from the Tirich-mir mass to the river, while the main road lies along the gorge of the river. I took this line partly because it was more practicable for pony traffic, and partly for the reason given in the text. From Mastuj I followed the main road (over the Shandur pass, &c.) solely for the latter reason. The mission was going by the Tui road, and required all the supplies that were to be had. I believe the Tui road is nearly, if not quite, impassable for pack animals.

5. From what has been described in the previous paragraph, some estimate may be formed of Aman-ul-Mulk's character.

In 1878 Colonel Biddulph reported him "a very shrewd man, avaricious, unscrupulous, and deceitful to an uncommon degree. He seemed utterly careless of what he said, so long as it served his purpose for the moment, and he was ready to deny his own words and ignore his own orders, as it suited him. He trusted nobody and believed in nobody; he was not of a warlike disposition, but preferred working by fraud rather than by force." With one exception, this is still an excellent description of the Mehtar's character. The change that has taken place in him, during the past eight years, is that he has lost his shrewdness. He appears to have dropped into a second childhood. He has lost his teeth, so that his speech is scarcely intelligible, and seems incapable of thinking continuously on any subject. I can imagine nothing more painful than to have to transact business with him, for he is still, probably, as avaricious, as unscrupulous and as false as ever; yet has not sufficient shrewdness left to make his plans consistent, or to understand intelligibly any representation or remonstrance that might be addressed to him. It was evident, during the interview mentioned above, that he is now unable to separate in his mind the most serious affairs of his state, from trifles affecting his personal comfort, while, when trying to gain an important advantage, his reason fails him and he wanders off to some irrelevant subject. Yet any action that results, is founded as much on fraud and deceit, as in the days of his greatest shrewdness. In this condition he must be regarded as quite irresponsible. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a more dangerous state of mind for a barbarian chief to be in, who is absolute master of his own affairs, and yet has political relations with more civilised neighbours. He has no advisers who can guide him, and all that is done in his name, is done by him. Fortunately, we have as yet no direct engagement with him, and it is to be hoped we may never enter into any, for it is impossible to expect that any engagement should be respected. No guarantee given by an irresponsible barbarian of this kind, could ever be effective, and no semblance of a reasonable or continuous policy could ever be hoped for. In short, he cannot be reckoned with as a serious personage, and the same would no doubt have to be said of whichever of his sons might succeed him. As an actor in any political game that may hereafter be played on these frontiers, the Mehtar would have to be omitted from our calculations. He could only be used as a tool or left out of account altogether. If any two motives

may be said to sway him more than others, at present, they would probably be fear of the Afghans* and hope of gain from us; but the latter could never be placed in the balance against the former, if our present friendly relations with Afghanistan were to be changed. Co-operation bought from Asiatics is never worth much; it is far less trustworthy, even, than when compelled by fear. For these reasons, if Badakhshan were to fall to the Russians, during the Mehtar's lifetime, the hope of pecuniary gain from us would never keep him from siding with the nearer and more dangerous neighbour. The only way, therefore, of appealing to him is through his fears, and not through his cupidity. To do this, we should have to place ourselves as near him on the south, and make ourselves as dangerous to him, as any enemy of ours could be on the north. The Mehtar's power of resisting an advance of the Russians from Badakhshan, even if used in our favour, would not be worth consideration, and his co-operation with them would only be dangerous to us, in so far that they might be given a footing in Chitral, which would afford them an open road to India. In order to prevent this in due time, it would seem that some preparatory move, on our part, should be undertaken, with a view to gaining the best defensive position, whenever an advance on the part of Russia should render it necessary. What operations a move of this kind might involve, on the Boner side, need hardly be gone into here—that is a question for military authorities; but it is obvious, from a political point of view, that any measure for obtaining a grasp on Chitral and the approach from Badakhshan, must be undertaken from the Punjab frontier and not from Gilgit. Once in a position to seize the Chitral valley, and use it as a defensive base whenever required, the loyalty or hostility of the present, or any future Mehtar, would be a matter of no account; he might be brushed aside at a moment's notice.

* He pays regular tribute to the Afghans, in spite of professions to the contrary. In December 1885, at Faizabad, I met one of his tribute missions returning from Khanabad; and while at the latter place, in the following May, another mission arrived with slaves, gold, &c., as tribute from Chitral.

APPENDICES.

ROUTE SKETCH of a JOURNEY
IN THE
PAMIR AND UPPER OXUS REGIONS
by
N. ELIAS
Political Agent

Scale 1 Inch = 12 Miles.

REFERENCES.

Darwaz Frontier

Chinese do.

Mr. Elias' route

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NOTE.

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Drawn in the Survey of India Office, by Moonshi Nabi Baksh. November 1886.

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APPENDICES.

A.

NOTE ON THE ROUTE-MAP TO ACCOMPANY REPORT.

This route-sketch—for it pretends to be nothing more—is based upon a traverse survey commencing at Ighiz-Yár in Eastern Turkistan, the position of which is taken from Major Trotter's map, as fixed or estimated* by him in 1874. The distances for the traverse were estimated by the pace of baggage ponies, whose marching, over measured ground in Ladak, &c., I have been accustomed to for many years. At intervals, wherever possible, the traverse was checked by observations for latitute with an 8-inch sextant and mercurial horizon. In most cases, meridian altitudes of stars north and south of the zenith were employed for this purpose, but sometimes it was only possible to get altitudes on one side of the zenith. The difference of latitude shown by the traverse, was always corrected to the difference of latitude shown by observation, and usually (*i.e.*, when not travelling nearly due west) the difference of longitude by traverse was corrected in the same proportion; on the assumption that the traverse distances had been under-estimated or over-estimated, as much in difference of longitude as in difference of latitude.† I had no chronometer. At Karakul a longitude was obtained by prismatic compass bearing of the 25,350 feet peak fixed by Major Trotter‡ and the observed latitude of my station.§ From Karakul westward, the almost constant bad weather I encountered prevented any observation for longitude, except at Bar Panjah, where a single occultation of a fixed star by the moon was obtained. It was the re-appearance of a 6th magnitude star at the dark limb, the prediction of the event having been computed beforehand. Having no recorder, the observation may be in error about 1 second in time, and the local time of observation (as determined immediately afterwards by stars east and west of the meridian) may be in error about the same amount. The resulting longitude for Bar Panjah, of 71° 30′ 30″, I have computed, of course, from the Nautical Almanac place of the moon, but the observation will be sent to Greenwich for recomputation with the Observatory corrections. The above position, therefore, must be regarded as preliminary only. The weather prevented more than this one observation being obtained even at Bar Panjah. The previously assumed longitude of

* Major Trotter's list of *fixed* positions does not contain Ighiz-Yar.

† That is, that an error in estimating the length of the hypothenuse of the right-angled triangle would, in practice, affect the two sides in equal proportions.

‡ See Sir D. Forsyth's *Kashgar Mission Report*. Geographical Appendix.

§ The figures used are—

Trotter's lat. of peak .	38° 35′ 15″
Trotter's long. of peak	76° 23′ 47″
Observed latitude of my station, near south shore of lake, by stars north and south of zenith	38° 25′ 10″
Magnetic bearing of peak from station . .	N. 33E.
Magnetic variation .	5½°E.
Resulting longitude of station	75° 13′ 50″

Ishkáshim,* I have altered in accordance with the above position of Bar Panjah and my own traverse between the two points. I could not observe there on account of bad weather, but as my traverse latitude agreed with Captain Wood's to within about ½ mile, the latitude of Ishkáshim remains practically unchanged—*viz.*, 36° 42′.

* *Viz.*, 71° 43′.—See *G. T. Survey Report* for 1874-75, page 42 of "Trans-Himalayan Explorations."

2. The altitudes given must be considered, like the longitude of Bar Panjah, as preliminary, until the instruments used can be sent to Kew and their errors be redetermined. They are all from boiling-point thermometers, except those marked as uncertain, which are from aneroid interpolations between boiling-point readings. All are dependent on Yarkand having an elevation of 3,923 feet.† The boiling-point errors used in computing the values now given, are those determined by the Kew Observatory authorities in March 1874, and the thermometers have, no doubt, come to read too high during the 12 years that have elapsed since that date. All elevations now recorded, therefore, are probably a little too low, but I have marked them on the map to the nearest 50 feet of the actual calculated result. The altitudes marked at Bar Panjah and Darmárokht are those of the River Panjah at the places named. An altitude is also marked for the river where it flows under Ishkáshim.

† See *Kashgar Mission Report.* Geographical Appendix.

3. Magnetic variation was observed (by east and west azimuths of the sun) at two points within the limits of this sketch map—at Bar Panjah and Faizabad. The results were practically the same for both places, *viz.*, 5° 50′ E. at the former station, and 6° E. at the latter; and these values have been used over all that portion of the sketch to the west of the Pamirs. For determining the longitude of Little Karakul station, 5¼° E. was employed, as being nearer (in position) to Kashgar, where Major Trotter found the variation, in 1874, to be 5° 1′ E. It is unlikely that any great change has taken place since 1874.

4. At Faizabad the moon gave me no opportunity of observing for the longitude—a fact much to be regretted, now that the Boundary Commission surveyors have been unable to reach that important point. The latitude determined is 37° 6′59″: the station is the bank of the Kokcha. For the longitude I have adopted the value given in the Great Trigonometrical Survey Report above quoted, as deduced from Wood, the Mirza, and the Havildar.

5. With reference to what has been said in paragraph 15 of Chapter III of the Report, I have endeavoured to show on the sketch, as far as possible, the few geographical details described in that paragraph. From Khánábád to Khwája Ghár, I had a route traverse, and at the latter place obtained a round of prismatic compass bearings to distant points; but beyond these I have nothing to go upon. The position adopted for Khánábád is that given in the Survey Report, before quoted, and on this position the route traverse is based. Khwája Ghár (Wood's Kila Chap) I have placed in the latitude and longitude resulting from the reviously adopted position. ...on, but I have used it as a radiating point for the bearings, for want of anything better. Rusták Cháiáb, Sámti, Yángkila, the Ambar Koh, &c., are all somewhat change, in position, in accordance with the bearings obtained; but as the rays had

no intersections, and the distances are only estimated from local information, the whole of this part of the map must be looked upon as a *mere approximation* to the truth. I have drawn it in the most sketchy way possible, in order to show how uncertain it is.

6. I need not remark, here, on the discrepancies between the accompanying sketch-map and Mr. Beddeley's map of the Russian Pamir Expedition of 1883, published in the Royal Geographical Society's Proceedings for March 1884, but I may point out one very misleading feature in that map. The village of Sardim has been placed at the junction of the Ghund and Shákhdara valleys, and as the text shows (page 140) that the Russian explorers reached Sardim, and were turned back from there by the Afghans, the map would make it appear that the Russian expedition reached to nearly the centre of Shighnan. But Sardim, instead of being the lowest village on the Ghund, is the highest—some 50 miles above the Shákhdara junction. Thus the Russian explorers did not (as I know independently of Mr. Beddeley's paper) descend into the inhabited regions of Shighnan at all, either by the Ghund or the Shákhdara valley: they arrived at Sardim from Yeshil Kul, and were sent back to the Pamir by way of the Koh-i-Tezek pass.

B

ITINERARIES.

I.—From Ighiz-Yár to Bar Panjah, Shighnán.

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
1	GHIJAK . . .	19	At 6 miles enter ravine at Uruk Karáwal, frontier post. Road passes through fortification. At 11 miles Kirghiz Karáwal and village; also ravine, right bank leading to Kukerán Jilga and Khusheráb. At 14½ miles road branches from main ravine up Ghijak ravine on left bank. Main ravine to Kinkol and Sarikol. Cultivation, wood, good grass, &c.
2	KARATASH CHAT .	18	At 7 miles leave Ghijak ravine and turn up nulia towards pass. At 12½ miles cross Ghijak pass, about 11,000 feet, very steep on both sides and difficult for baggage animals. Then descend to valley of Chimgán or Yángi Hissár river. Kirghiz village. Grass and brushwood.
3	SHARGHUT . .	19	Up Chimgán, 4 miles. Then up ravine, left, bank. Track up Chimgán ravine leads over a pass to Káskásu. Grass, artomesia (for fuel); no habitations.
4	Camp on GAZ above KANG-SHIWAR.	15	At 5 miles cross Káratásh pass, 14,100 feet to valley of Gaz river. Ascent easy, descent a little steep. At ½ mile from camp very bad, descent of about 200 feet, where baggage animals must be unloaded. Grass in small quantities and artemesia. A few Kirghiz in neighbourhood usually.
5	KÁRÁKUL, south end of Lake.	12	At 2½ miles cross to left bank of Gaz; then wind through low hills to valley of lake Kárákul. Grass, artemesia, and Kirghiz. [Alternative route down Gaz, past Kangshiwar (Kirghiz encampment), about 6 miles, then up valley of Kárákul outlet, to north end of lake about 5 or 6 miles.] Camp about ¾ mile south of lake.
6	Foot of TOKHTEREK PASS.	13½	At 8½ miles Su Báshi, Kirghiz graveyard, &c. Track to Sarikol branches off. Then up ravine to foot of pass. Little grass; no fuel. Water scarce in autumn; none in winter.
	Carried over	96½	

From Ighiz-Yár to Bar Panjah, Shighnán—continued.

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
	Brought forward	96½	
7	KÁRA SU . .	13½	At 1 mile cross Takhterek, a low and easy neck, about 13,800 feet, then down easy valley, gradually widening into open Pamir above Kára Su. Several Kirghiz encampments. Grass, water, artemesia. Track to Taghárma and Sarikol.
8	RANGKUL, east end of Lake.	20	Down open Pamir valleys all the way. Kirghiz all the way. Grass, water, artemesia, and Kirghiz camps.
9	MURGHÁBI . .	31	Road down south shore of lake. At 11½ miles lower end of lake. At 15½ miles strike Ak Baital river (dry from about end of September to end of May). Then down Ak Baital valley to within 2 miles of confluence with Murghábi, and camp in bed of latter about 2½ miles below confluence. Grass, artemesia, water, and fish. Kirghiz in neighbourhood. Road good all the way. In summer, when Ak Baital is flowing, this march would be divided into two by camping on the river.
10	YEMAN-TAL . .	8	Down Murghábi valley, flat and grassy, for 5 miles; then over spur and strike Kára Su valley, about 2½ miles above its mouth. Camp in deep valley sheltered by cliffs. Willow jungle, grass, &c.
11	OROS BULÁK . .	26	Up Kára Su valley. At 24 miles top of Nezátásh pass or water-parting, 13,400 feet. Almost imperceptible slopes on both sides. Grass, artemesia (rather scarce), and water. This march can be divided in summer; or last march (No. 10) can be lengthened at any time of year to point on Kára Su, about 4 to 5 miles above Yemán-tál, where grass and artemesia are obtainable, but no willow wood.
12	ABDULLA KHAN'S RABAT.	17	Down Alichur valley, wide and open. At 9 miles pass Chádir Tásh (isolated rock). Camp at mouth of Básh Gumbaz ravine. Water, grass, artemesia, and fish. Level road all the way. From camp, pass up Básh Gumbaz ravine to Great Pamir, in summer.
13	BUNZILLA . .	17	Down Alichur valley. Level road all the way. Water, grass, and little artemesia.
	Carried over .	229	

From Ighiz-Yár to Bar Panjah, Shighnán—concluded.

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
	Brought forward	229	
14	On BULUNKUL stream	21	At 5 miles, south end of Sassik-kul (fresh water) about 12,600 feet. Then along spurs above small lakes. At 11½ miles pass Tuz Kul (salt water). At 13 miles cross mouth of Khargosh ravine, up which track leads over pass to Wakhan in summer. Water, grass, and little artemesia.
15	West foot of KOH-I-TEZEK PASS.	15	At 9 miles cross Koh-i-Tezek, 13,950 feet. Ascent gentle; descent into ravine a little steep. Road good. At 14 miles opening of ravine leading to Kukbai pass and Joshángáz. Water, grass, and willow jungle in abundance.
16	Camp . . .	16	Down valley. Willow and thorn jungle all the way, and sometimes difficult for loaded animals to pass through. At 10 miles deserted Shighni villages. Camp in jungle. Water, grass, and wood.
17	SARDIM . . .	14	Down valley. At 8 miles ravine, left, leading to pass to Joshángáz. Jungle troublesome in places. At 12 miles junction of Alichur river. Camp on left bank opposite Sardim. Village of 3 houses. Supplies scanty.
18	CHAHESIM . .	14½	Down left bank. At 12½ to 13 miles, half a mile of bad road over rocks by side of rapids. Ponies mostly require unloading. Camp at village of about 7 houses. Supplies.
19	DEH BASTA . .	20	Down left bank. At 7 miles Wir, village of 7 or 8 houses. At 10 miles cross to right bank; by ford. Village with supplies. A bad ascent and descent 1½ miles below Wir.
20	SUCHAN . . .	15	Down left bank 1 mile; then cross to right by bad bridge. At 4 miles Revak or Go-Revak; re-cross to left by bad bridge. Village and supplies.
21	BAR PANJAH . .	16	At ½ mile cross to right bank. Road a little difficult for baggage animals. At 8 miles Shakhdara confluence at Khárok village. At 12 miles emerge on Panjah valley; then down Panjah on right bank and cross by ford, or boat, according to season, to Bar Panjah on left bank. Fort and supplies. Afghan garrison, &c.
	TOTAL .	360½	

II.—From Bar Panjah to Ishkáshim.

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
1	DARMÁROKHT . .	18½	New road, made by Afghans; follows left bank of Panjah all the way. Some steep ascents and descents, but practicable for loaded ponies and mules throughout. Villages with supplies for small party at intervals: thus distance of 66 miles may be divided into 3, 4, or 5 stages.
2	ANDAJ . . .	21½	
3	ISHKÁSHIM . . .	26	
	TOTAL .	66	

III.—From Ishkáshim to Faizábád.

(Approximate only.)

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
1	ZEBÁK . . .	18	At 5 miles top of watershed (pass) about 10,050 feet; easy slope. Then down easy slopes to Zebák valley, passing villages of Zarkhán, Dán, &c. Camp near Abdur Rahim's house. Village and supplies.
2	TIRGARÁN . .	17	From Abdur Rahim's, crossing plain and Zebák river in *low-water season*, to Gaukhána (small village), about 2 miles. In *high-water season* a detour up valley must be made, in order to cross Zarkhán river, bringing distance to Gaukhána to 4 miles. From Gaukhána along jungly bed of Vardoj stream, 4 miles, to Rabát-i-Chahil Tan; small village, and shrine. Thence 11 miles to Tirgarán village; about 30 or 40 houses. Road from Gaukhána all the way along right bank of Vardoj. From Chahil Tan rough in places, and one strong torrent to cross in summer, but always practicable. [Thus about 17 miles in winter and 19 miles in summer.]
3	CHÁKARÁN . .	17	At 1 mile cross river to left bank by fair wooden bridge. Ascent from bridge on left bank over and through difficult rocks. Animals with large loads must be unloaded. At 9 miles re-cross by bad bridge after passing two small villages on left bank. At 14 miles Yomul village; about 20 or 30 houses. Chákarán village about 30 houses. Road fairly good all the way from first bridge.
	Carried over .	52	

III.—From Ishkáshim to Faizábád— concluded.

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
	Brought forward .	52	
4	BAHÁRAK . .	15	At 12 miles ravine opens out into Bahárak plain on right bank and Jarm plain on left bank. Bridge across Vardoj. Bahárak, large village or group of villages on Sarghalán stream. Road up Sarghalán to Yágurda pass and Ghárán. Also road to Shiwa and Bar Panjah up Zardeo valley.
5	KHÁNKÁH . .	17	Cross Sarghalán stream by bridge at starting. Road along Bahárak and Farhád plains to bridge over Kokcha; 10 miles. Cultivation and villages at intervals. At bridge cross to left bank. At 15 or 16 miles re-cross by bridge to right bank. Rather bad ascent from bridge to road. Khánkah village about 10 houses. Gorge, or "Tangi," begins at upper bridge on this march and finishes at Faizábád.
6	FAIZÁBÁD . .	7	At 2 miles Shorákwak village. At 4 to 6 miles, Chittah, string of villages about; 2 miles long on left bank. Faizábád, town of about 4,000 inhabitants, on right bank. Bazar twice a week—Monday and Thursday. Afghan garrison. One bad sarai. Two bad wooden bridges, one just above town, the other at lower end. Altitude 3,800 feet.
	TOTAL	91	

IV.—From Faizábád to Khánábád.

(Approximate only.)

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
1	ARGU . . .	14	Cross Kokcha at starting. Road along plain on left bank. At 3 miles leave Kokcha valley and ascend steep hills to Argu plain. Large village, but poor.
2	DARAIM . . .	15	Road over rounded hills. Good all the way. Daraim in deep valley. Bridge. Road to Jarm up valley, practicable for ponies.
3	TESHKÁN . .	12	Road over steep but rounded hills, good all the way. Teshkán in deep valley. Bridge.
4	MASHAD . . .	16	Rather steep hills, but easy road. Bridge. Kishm, large village, 3 miles up valley.
	Carried over .	57	

IV.—From Faizábád to Khánábád—concluded.

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
	Brought forward .	57	
6	KILA AOGHÁN .	15	Road good, but nearly all up-hill: steep in places. Small fort and village on open plain with good grazing. Altitude about 4,950 feet.
3	AHAN DARAH . .	20	At 3 miles commence ascent of Lattaband. Easy pass over soft spurs. Altitude about 5,500 feet. Road good all the way. Ahan Darah, large village, in Tálikán valley.
7	TÁLIKÁN . .	13	Road flat; all the way, along right bank of river. Town of about 2,000, with bazar once a week. Small fort.
8	KHOJA CHANGÁL .	15	*Winter road.**—Across plain and swamps, crossing branches of river to left bank by ford. Flat all the way.
9	KHÁNÁBÁD . .	13	*Winter road.*—Down valley of Tálikán river, then over spur into valley of Bangi. At 6 miles cross Bangi by ford, then down valley of Khánábád river. Open town, about 3,000 to 4,000 inhabitants. Bazar twice a week. Afghan garrison. One good sarai.
	TOTAL	133	

* *Summer road* from Tálikán to Khánábád when rivers are in flood:—(1) To Bohárak, 9 or 10 miles near foot of Ambar Koh and on right bank of Tálikán river. (2) To Khánábád, 20 or 21 miles. At 19 or 20 miles, old Khánábád fort and town in ruins. Road along right of Tálikán and Khánábád rivers (Khánábád river formed of united Tálikán and Bangi streams). At Old Khánábád cross river to new town on left bank, partly by bridge and partly by ford. *Total* from Tálikán to Khánábád, in summer, about 30 miles.

V.—From Khánábád to Táshkurghán.

(Approximate only.)

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
1	PANJAH . . .	22	Road chiefly along edge of fens to Kunduz, 16 miles. Ruined city with few inhabitants, and small bazar outside walls. At 20 miles cross Aksarai (or Ghori) river to left bank, by ford in winter only. Panjah, reed-hut village in fens in bed of river. [Alternative road used generally in summer, over low grassy hills skirting fens on south, and striking river about 1½ miles above winter ford. There cross by ferry—skin-rafts towed by swimming horses.]
	Carried over .	22	

V—From Khánábád to Táshkurghán—concluded.

Marches.	Names.	Statute miles.	Description.
	Brought forward .	22	
1	2ND ABDÁN (KHAIRÁBÁD).	24	At 8 miles cross Yarganah pass over hills bounding Aksarai valley on west. Ascent and descent steep, but easy road. Then flat all the way. At 14 miles 1st Abdán. No water. Khairábád, small sarai, newly built. Water and good grazing.
3	YÁNG ARIK . .	25	At 16 miles Sháhibághli pass, low and easy. Near west foot of pass, 3rd Abdán with pool of bad water. Road flat all along, except pass. Large village and supplies.
4	TÁSHKURGHÁN (KHULM).	12	Road flat all the way, swampy in rains. Town of about 15,000, with bazars, sarais, &c.
	TOTAL	83	

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