

William Moorcroft

**Ninth Fasciculus of a Journal from Sep^t. 16th to Oc^t. 21st 1820 in
the Country of Ladakh**

British Library, London

India Office Records

MSS/EUR/D244

FILMED DECEMBER 1993

Transcribed by Janet Rizvi, February to May 2016

**Published in the Mountains of Central Asia Digital Dataset (MCADD) on
the www.pahar.in website on July 7, 2016**

THE BRITISH LIBRARY
ORIENTAL AND INDIA OFFICE COLLECTIONS

1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1	1	1	1	2

Reference

MSS EUR D 244

Copyright photograph - not to be reproduced
photographically without permission of the
India Office Library and Records.

FRI

MSS. EUR. D. 244.

*Ninth Fasciculus of a Journal
from September 16th to October 21st
1820 in the Country of Ladakh*

I
IX

9th Fasciculus of a Journal
from Sept 16th to Oct 21st 1820 - in
the Country of Ladakh

William Moorcroft

Sept 17 - The name of our last night's encampment was Room-choo or che for each termination is used indifferently and is so called from a village of that name the first we have seen since we quitted Lehmy on the 3rd inst - so that we have travelled in the chain-tains of Tatory for fourteen days without having found a fixed habitation of man - Room choo consists only of a few straggling houses of stone whitened of their stones with flat roofs and appears to have for inhabitants the Priests of the red order who cultivate the Deo-jin or Tatory wheat in patches of flat land surrounded by loose stone walls and well watered by trenches led from convenient levels in the Roullets at a great distance - The bottom of these cuts are uniformly covered with large stones and the sides are of earth covered with an elastic thick but short sward - This rough having I presume has been found to prevent the water striking against the earthy bottom with such force as to cut it up as is observed in mountain streams where there are few stones - The force of the water is spent upon the sides of the stones and their interspaces serve as channels to carry it off silently and without injury to the bank or bottom - Some of the corn was pulled up by the roots and laid in heaps but more was standing and nearly 3 feet high - many of the heads were nearly purple but though the stems were green and seemed to require sun for at least 3 weeks more of the plants appeared to have been injured by the cold or piercing winds - This variety of wheat ^{Barley} seems very hardy and ought to be sent to the western Tals and
+ *Triticum hexangulare*? *Hordeum nudum*?

1

Sept. 17 – The name of our last nights encampment was Room-choo or che for each termination is used indifferently and is so called from a village of that name the first we have seen since we quitted Lubrung¹ on the 3d instt. so that we have travelled in the Mountains of Tatory for fourteen days without having found a fixed habitation of man. Roomchoo consists only of a few straggling houses of stone whited of three stories with flat roofs and appears to have for inhabitants the Priests of the red order who cultivate the Awa Jao or Tatory Wheat in patches of flat land surrounded by loose stone walls and well watered by trenches led from convenient levels in the Rivulets at a great distance. The bottom of these cuts are uniformly covered with large stones and the sides are of earth covered with an elastic thick but short sward. This rough paving I presume has been found to prevent the water striking against the earthy bottom with such force as to cut it up as is observed in mountain Streams where there are few stones. The force of the water is spent upon the sides of the stones and their interspaces serve as channels to carry it off silently and without injury to the bank or bottom. Some of the Corn was pulled up by the roots and laid in heaps but more was standing and nearly 3 feet high. Many of the heads were nearly purple but though the Stems were green and seemed to require Sun for at least 3 weeks none of the Plants appeared to have been injured by the cold or piercing wind. This variety of Wheat? Barley? seems very hardy and ought to be sent to the western Isles and

* Triticum Hinangulare? Hordeum nudum?

[2]

to the northern parts of Britain where it would succeed much better than Barley or Oats. I will procure some at Leh and forward it to Dr. Wallich and request a sample may be sent to Tho^s. Scarisbrick Esq^f. for trial on Martin Meer² as provided the Plant meet only with moisture enough it can resist a great degree of cold hence would well suit those situations in which our harvests are very late.³ I went into the fields and beckoned to some Priests who were going from me to stop which they did. I saluted them and repeated the phrase “Om ma nee put me hoon” which I knew would excite their attention. The oldest of the Priests apparently about 80 plucked a handful of ripe Ears of Corn and offered them to me. I took one Ear and thinking he might take Snuff made signs to him to send a person on to our Camp and I would return some by him. On the road I shot some wild Pigeons with a white belt round the backbone [?] of the body and with the upper surface of the tail feathers mainly white. This variety I saw in the Mountains of Gurhwhal. It is at least only two thirds of the size of the blue Pigeon. For some days past I have observed a variety of Lark in vast flocks, and the Snow Cock with a brown head and band under the neck beginning to puck[?], an indication of the approach of hard weather. The road crossing a rivulet of the purest and cold water reaches two large white sepulchral buildings with a long and thick pile of stones roofed with others taken from the river and covered with inscriptions. The erections were above

3

25 feet high of better workmanship than I had before observed in this kind of edifice. On a square basis formed of three or four heights [appar. sic] receding inwards each by the breadth of a brick stood a square Pillar of about 14 feet on a side and about 8 feet high, this was surmounted by several heights of receding steps and upon the uppermost was a large compressed urn the smallest part downwards and surrounded by a belt of simple but large

foliage. The upper part was rounded and a pole of about 6 feet projected upwards through the middle of the roof. On the northern side was a hole by which a person could ascend through the top of the urn to the pole. The roof seemed to be covered with a grouting or rough cast of lime. The water in flowing from the Snow had dissolved some of the lime and carrying it down along the sides of the Urn formed projecting ridges and grooves from top to bottom with reticulations crossing them. Some of our party pulled off the stalactic drops from the Eaves and thought they would answer as pencils of Chalk. The Priest of Room choo is said to be the Carver of the Stones of the Pile which is stated to be the Register of the Village. At present I cannot safely be very particular in my enquiries but gradually I will procure a clear explanation of many circumstances connected with these Piles which puzzle me at present. There are several Walls of Stone about 8 feet high 2 feet thick and from 50 to

[4]

a hundred feet in length some placed abreast of the road, others along the summits of the verge of ravines, turreted on the top and calculated to serve as stockades to defend the frontier, the interstices of the turrets serving as loop holes to fire from. Some of these presumed defences are judiciously placed to command the road but others may easily be turned. The stream which had conducted us to Room Choo was now become red from containing the earth of the red [illeg. ?pitts] I yesterday observed. In my last journey I was informed by the Gold washers that they frequently found Gold in the same kind of red Earth but I held it imprudent to ask any questions on this subject here. On turning a corner I observed the town of Gah before me and at a short distance from the left bank of the Rivulet. I was about to pass it but was prevented by one of our Carriers who requested that I would order the Camp to be formed on the right bank of the Rivulet and short of the Town and stay there three days. As I observed many fields of corn unripe on the left bank and all those on the right bank cut I saw reason for complying with his wish as far as regarded the locality leaving the period of stay for farther discussion. The old Priest sent a few handfuls of Turnips, about the size of Walnuts as a present. I divided them with the Meer's Party. Two small bundles of dry Furze cost two Jous or half a rupee and their weight did not exceed

5

ten pounds. However the Country seems wholly destitute of both Timber and Brushwood save five or six Trees in the Town. Towards evening the person whom I had seen at Rookchoo came to our Camp and addressed himself first to Meer Izzut Oollah Khan. His name was Abdool Lateef and he proved to be an Agent of Kuloon Wuzeer of Leh. He arrived at the moment when the Lahoul carriers declared their intention to leave our Baggage at Gah and to return to Lahoul instead of carrying it on to Leh as they had agreed and for which they had received the full hire. Meer Izzut Oollah appealed to Abdool Lateef as a person acquainted with the customs of the country from his official situation and showed him the agreement of Rama Kanungo and of Ram Dhan the Agent of the Lahoul Chief with their receipt for 1500 Rupees for the conveyance of the baggage to Leh. He enquired if the writing was theirs and they acknowledged its correctness. He then said that the matter ought to be brought before the Raja of Gah Kagma Tunzeen the Son in law of Kuloon the Wuzeer of Leh. After this Abdool Lateef took the Meer aside and addressed him in the following manner "You are a Moosalman and a Sueyud [apparently sic, ?Syed] and a friend of Khwaja Shah

Neas* and I am his pupil swear to me that you will truly disclose the motions of Europeans in this country. Meer Izzut Oollah complying with his request stated that the intention of the

* A Peerzada or Moosalman Priest of great respectability who had resided on a Jagheer granted him by the Dooranees of Kashmir but deprived of it by the Sikhs had taken refuge in Ludagh . Meer Izzut Oollah had pleaded his case with Runjeet Singh and obtained a promise of a reversal of the sequestration pronounced. [appar. sic]

[6]

Europeans was to proceed to Bokhara to buy Horses that the legitimate Govt. of Kabool being overturned and the country in disorder and having learned that the roads in Tibet were safe and the inhabitants well disposed they came here. And having consulted the Raja and the Wuzeer on the best road to be taken would follow their advice. Having heard this Abdool Lateef said that it was proper for the Meer to pay his respects to the Raja and Kagha Tunzeen taking with him a Ser of white Sugarcandy to each. Abdool Luteef then came to me & after some conversation I gave him a Ser of Sugar Candy a pound of green Tea and a large Roll of [illeg. ?Pristine] Virginia tobacco with which he was highly satisfied. The distance of our march ths day was 7673 paces and the direction roughly to the W of North. The^r. 33 Min [?] 77 – N - 50 Night. Lat 33°.30'.9" Alt. 116.55.40.

Sept. 18. The Meer visited the Raja and found with him Kagha Tunzeen after mutual compliments tea was brought and the attendants dismissed. The Raja and Kagha said you formerly were at Leh, by what road did you come?— By that of Kashmeer. — Where did you go from Leh? To Yarkund, Kashgar, Khokhun, Sumarkund to Bokhara. — On your return by what route did you proceed to Hindoostan? By Kabool. What is the native place of your family? First Bokhara now Dehlee. Are there any persons with you now who first accompanied you to Leh? No. How long have you been with the European Gentlemen now here.

7

A year. By your former journey and residence amongst us you must have known that our religion prescribes not enmity to those who follow different faiths and that we have a particular respect for those who profess that of Islam and as a proof Quaja Shah Neas has resided 13 Months with us. Now relate your intentions and we will forward your report to Kuloon the Wuzeer. I yesterday under the formality of an Oath fully explained the object of this journey yesterday to Abdool Luteef and I have no alteration to make thereon. We ask more particulars of you that when we meet before the Wuzeer along with Quaja Shah Neas there may be no difference of facts. The first report that reached us that an Army was on the march towards us and Kuloon sent me to ascertain the truth. — You have now seen with your own eyes the actual state of things. “shoonede qace bowud mancuide deede”. [apparently sic] - With Runjeet Singh what are your relations? Friendly or inimical? Friendly. Do the borders of the English and of the Sikh territory join or are they separated by other countries? The River Sutlej separates the two territories the right bank belonging to the Sikhs? Does the country on the left bank appertain to the English? No It belongs to the Sikhs but an English Military force is permanently encamped upon it. How does it happen that an English Army is established upon the Sikh Demesnes? The Peasantry are the subjects of the English but they pay revenue to the Sikhs. The object of the Army is to prevent their being oppressed and to preserve the relations of peace for the intentions of the British Govt. are not to take Countries

[8]

unless the Governors of countries act with hostility against them. The Traders of Yarkund, Bokhara Kashmir and of other places have commercial intercourse with this country and go backwards and forwards but heretofore no English or Europeans have ever come and this being a new occurrence we have much anxiety respecting it. Within a short period this also will be an old occurrence everything has a commencement. There was a moment when you had no communication with Yarkund but when this was established and your good faith known other tribes came into your country and by degrees established commercial communication. People say that Europeans first visit a country under pretence of establishing commercial relations and afterwards take it from the Nation's rulers. This is false as was the case in respect to the report you had heard of an Army being on the march towards your country. Exaggerations constitute the character of reports. Well so far we will relate what you have stated to Kuloon and acquaint you with his answer. How long did you remain at Kooloo? Ten or fifteen days. How long at Lahore? At the first period ten or fifteen days and at the second when Runjeet Singh being sick recalled the Sahib who is a Medical Man to his assistance we stayed eight days. We have heard that the Rajas of Munde and of Katoch opposed your coming. The Raja of Munde wished to have the concurrence of Runjeet Singh to our passing through his territory and the latter on this being represented directed all the Rajas on our course to give us assistance and they have furnished Porters &c. And men

9

from the Rajas of Kotoch and Kooloo now accompany us. Have you any writing from Runjeet Singh to the authorities of Leh? No and for this reason when I saw Runjeet Singh he asked me if Leh was tributary to Kashmir I answered that the Raja of Leh held some land as Jagheer under the Sooba of Kashmir and as an acknowledgment sent annually some presents to the Governor of that country. I was induced by the question of Runjeet Singh to believe that he was ignorant of what relations of policy or custom existed between Kashmir and Leh and therefore thought it unnecessary to ask him for any letters to Leh, but I have letters from Runjeet Singh to the Soobedar of Kashmir of which the object is to direct him to furnish carriers and other facilities to the Sahib should he on his return from Leh wish to pass through Kashmir. We are in some degree tributary to or politically [illeg.] connected with three countries viz Yarkund, Lhasa and Kashmir and therefore hope that no disturbance will arise with any of them in respect to the Sahib's journey. But as you have sworn so will we write. You need not entertain any apprehension with regard to our intentions and you have two witnesses or [illeg.] in the letters of the Raja of Kooloo to the Raja of Ludagh and of the Wuzeer Sobha Ram to the Wuzeer Kuloon. Here Meer Izzut Oollah read the letters in question the purport of which was—That we by good luck have an opportunity of doing business for the Sahib and we wish that you should

[10]

do him good offices and as you have friendship towards us that you should bear also towards him. The Meer then related our embarrassments in respect to the demand of the Carriers and they stated that the conditions should be performed according to the terms of the Agreement. They enquired the name of the principal City of the English Answer London. There resided the King and the Marquis of Hastings was Governor General of India. They asked particulars about the Small Pox. The Meer answered that if they would send two proper persons to

Almora they would be instructed in a mode of preventing that disease proving fatal. How many days journey is Almora from hence. It is about twenty days journey from Gurhdookh. Did the Sahib ever go to Gurhdookh. Perhaps he did. They then examined the agreement with the carriers and wrote down the name of the Meer.

Sept. 19. I was desirous to meet the Raja and Kagma Tunzeen and directed the Meer to adjust this matter with Abdool Luteef who accordingly despatched a messenger to the Raja. An answer was returned that it was expected I should first go to them. If there was any form of ceremony to be observed I requested Abdool Luteef to apprise me of it in the first instance that no misunderstanding might occur afterwards as from Meer Izzut Oollah I understood that they both according to his conception appeared to him exceedingly punctilious and proud having neither of them returned his salutations of respect on entering and leaving the room

11

by rising or other mark of acknowledgement. Some talk took place about seats on which I observed that I was disposed to observe the ceremonials practised usually in the country and not to prescribe new ones. This principle being adopted I proceeded along with Mr Trebeck, Meer Izzut Oollah, his Son Meer Hajee Nujuf Ulee⁴ on horseback to the house of the Raja which is at the upper end of the town by a stony narrow winding path between low flat roofed Houses of two or three Stories on the right hand and small walled enclosures for Cattle on the left open at the top end of irregular forms suited to the unevenness of the ground. The inhabitants not numerous had resorted to the roofs of their houses to see the strangers and the women huddled behind each other peeped with diffidence and as it were by stealth. Having ridden into the small courtyard defended by two low and stout woolly haired dogs with heads much resembling those of Bears we passed through a short dark and narrow entry up a narrow short flight of steep stairs making our way more by feeling than sight. At the top was an Antichamber open above except on one side where it was shaded by a slip of roof serving as covering for a passage from rooms on one side to others on the opposite side of the house and indicating by the irregularity of the beams the scarcity of timber in the Country. From the top of the Door of the Raja's apartment was suspended a narrow valance of white and red plaited Cotton Cloth.

[12]

On entering the apartment I found the Raja sitting on one of my two Chairs at the farther side of the room with his feet on a white felt and on the side facing a small Veranda. Kagma Tunzeen was seated on a Camp Stool. The other Chair placed on the edge of the felt directly opposite the Raja was reserved for me and the other stools &[c.] on a line with it. After saluting these personages who neither spoke nor moved I took my seat and enquired after their health. Meer Izzut Oollah interpreted in Persian to Abdool Luteef who spoke Kasmmeeree Persian and he conversed with the Chiefs in the language of Tibet. The Raja hoped that the roads had not been very bad nor the weather very cold. Our progress to Leh he said would not be difficult as the road was level. Salted Tea without milk was introduced and served to the Raja and Kagma Tunzeen and to us out of a Tea pot which would hold about two Quarts. The Raja pulled a small yellow China Tea cup out of a packet before his breast and the Kagma displayed one made of the knot of the Horse Chesnut lined with a Silver and having a small ornamented knob or projection in the middle of its bottom. We came prepared with our own Cups. The Tea was not very strong and tasted something like weak broth. The

teapot appeared to be of silver. The sides were convex gilt and of a shield like shape but plain. The top bottom handle and spout were curiously wrought in filligree work.

13

Below the shield was a medallion hanging by chains and the embossed figures on which were executed in good taste. [sic] The spout rose out of the throat of a Dragon. I had but a cursory view of this Utensil as I had not become so fully reconciled to the Tea as to take a second cup full but it appeared to me both in general form and in detail to be one of the most splendid Teapots I ever saw and I much regretted that I had not a drawing of it as I am convinced it would have had many admirers in Europe. I asked some questions about the Grain, Harvest &c. which were answered with complacency. I regretted that the shortness of the day imposed on me the necessity of so soon taking leave but trusted to have the pleasure of another interview with them at my tent in the course of it. On their expressing their acquiescence I took my departure and observed that the crowd in the Antichamber had their countenances brightened with smiles and by gestures expressed their satisfaction at what had passed. The women too emboldened as it seemed by our interview with their Chief salaamed freely to us on our return. The apartment of the Raja was tolerably spacious but low. It contained little furniture save a few wooden chests a small wooden Temple in which was a figure of the Lama with the face exposed the body wrapped in a Tunic of Dove colored silk and another statue entirely shrouded by a covering of the same material. The side of the Wall[?]

[14]

near to the Raja was decorated with several colored drawings of Lamas in attitudes of devotion but I was too far from them to be able to form an opinion of their execution. In about an hour after we reached our Tents the Raja and Kagma Tunzeen arrived preceded by Musicians. I received the former on alighting from his Horse and led him by the hand to a Chair whilst Mr Trebeck went through the same ceremony with Kagma Tunzeen. They both expressed themselves pleased with the neatness [?] of the Tent. Tea was served accompanied by sweet Cakes, Sugar and Milk. The principals drank Tea and ate the Cakes but did not choose Sugar or Milk though these were taken by Abdool Luteef and the Moonshee of the Kagma. After tea a Glass of Crème de Noyau was offered to each. The Kagma just tasted but declined drinking making signs that he feared it would affect his head. But on my taking a little the Raja tasted the Liqueur coughed and made wry faces but took off half the contents of the Glass and would I believe have finished the whole had he not been deterred by the example of the Kagma. The Attendants at the door begged to have the liqueur rejected by the Kagma divided amongst them and drank it from the palms of their hands. They afterwards requested to be indulged with a little more and expressed their satisfaction with its flavor by gestures and smacking their lips. After some little conversation the Kagma said that report had propagated strange things respecting us but that having seen, talked with us and observed our behaviour he found we had been grossly misrepresented, and that he should immediately

15

forward a true account of all the circumstances he had observed and learnt respecting us to the Kuloon Wuzeer. I presented the Raja with a dress of superfine Scarlet Cloth [and the Kagma] with one of a dark blue color but of the same quality. The Kagma said that the present was as unnecessary as unexpected and that at all events it could only have been merited by a series of friendly offices which had not yet been performed. That for his part he was

distressed at not having it in his power to make any return at this place but he hoped to have this opportunity at Leh. I replied that we desired no further return than his friendship and that I trusted all parties would be benefited and pleased by farther intercourse. Both the Raja and the Kagma appeared gratified with the treatment they had experienced and departed. The Raja sent two men's loads of Sattoo and a Sheep and a Goat which I ordered to be divided amongst all the Servants of the party after having rewarded the bringers with money as also the Musicians who began to serenade after the departure of our Guests. To Abdool Luteef who as I before remarked acted as interpreter and to the Moonshee of Kagma Tunzeen I gave each a very handsome Punjabee Loongee purchased at Umritsir. In the evening an examination was made of the quantity of our merchandize by persons deputed by us and by the Raja in order that the frontier duties might be levied by him. But a difference arising in the estimate the Assessors for the Raja declared that they would be satisfied with what might prove to be the net weight of the merchandize when taken at Leh and for doing which here facilities were not at hand. With this just and handsome

[16]

proposition I assented. The Carriers were ordered to proceed to Leh according to the purport of their agreement. The Raja's name was Tsimma Puchook. He was a man of low stature about fifty. Had a short thin clipped [?beard], his complexion was dark and his features were rather ordinary except by smiling they became particularly expressive of complacency. Kagma Tunzeen was about the same size and differed not much in character of feature but was a few years younger and had the unembarrassed air of a man used to society. The Raja carried a dagger and a knife in his girdle and this day he had in addition a Starheaded Mace with a silvered top and a silver filigree worked handle.

The Raja wore several coverings over each other of which the outermost was of Chintz in the form of a wrapper or gown fastened by a girdle round his waist. He had on boots of Russian Leather the toes of which were thrust into narrow pointed slippers of green Morocco Leather the grains of which were particularly prominent. His Cap was of black Velvet made in the shape of a long Sack a little rounded at the end. It had a small facing of silver flowered Brocade turned up in front and the end fell down on the shoulder. The dress of Kagma Tunzeen differed little from that of the Raja except that his Coat was of Mooltan Chintz. The Chintz of the Rajas Coat was of a yellow color and had small flowers of different form and tints so composed as to compose groups of a pine shaped figure similar to those worked on the pullu or end of Kashmeer Shawls. These flowers in embossed silk were handsome but must have cost a large sum in the material and trim.

Such cloths were doubtless the Cheets originally

17

made in China imported into (Calicut) India there imitated by printing with blocks and latterly much excelled by our Calico printers. The Meer was called upon to sign a kind of certificate of our intentions and that we had no hostile designs. Geah is a small town containing not more than twenty houses and six or eight trees of a variety of Poplar with broad and pointed leaves and a tree with a white bark and a willow shaped leaf white underneath having many red berries adhering to the branches. Fuel is very scarce and the discovery of a mine of Coal in this neighborhood would greatly conduce to the comfort of the inhabitants.

All of us were much affected by a difficulty of breathing which compelled us to pause for some seconds before we could speak even after ascending only fifteen or twenty feet. Requiring an effervescent mixture it boiled over the vessel as soon as the ingredients came in

contact with more quickness and more force than I ever before saw from the union of the same materials.

Sept. 20th. Left Geah following the left bank of the Geah River. On a stream which fell into it on the left hand was a small stone building which at first view appeared to be a water mill but which proved to be a religious cylinder carved and painted turned by water in honor of the Deity. Opposite to Geah on a lofty ridge of rocks shelving down towards the river was a large pile of houses formerly inhabited by the Raja and lower down one belonging to the Lama. The situation of these buildings perched upon the rocks was picturesque and reminded me of the situation of Kien-loong.

[18]

Close by the road were several monumental Urns of large size and probably belonging to the deceased members of the Raja's family and on the registral piles several figures carved in outline on stone. One represented three two of which appeared to have a masculine and the third a female expression. There was also a representation of the punishing Deity as figured on the door of the temples of Lama. Here was likewise a sketch of a temple and the rose like flower which has been observed on every pile. The rocks on each side of the river were high peaked, rugged and consisted almost entirely of Plum pudding stone. In general the color was reddish whilst seen in the entire rocks but when detached the Matrix or uniting medium was of various colors as red, green, grey, brown and almost white and the rolled Pebbles were of all kinds of colors and sizes. Some of the masses were very beautiful and would have formed very valuable slabs for tables. A small patch of cultivated land on the left was called Lato and belonged to two or three houses almost concealed by overhanging rocks. The valley of Meeroo with its large cultivation principally fine barley its poplars and a considerable town with good sized houses formed a great relief to the scenes of barren desolateness that had characterized this march but this was in a degree compensated by the goodness of the road. There were here many black Cattle smaller even than those of the blackest Counties in Wales [??]. We passed through a doorway under a religious

19

building the sides of which were ornamented with flowers and figures of boys striking Cymbals and surmounted with a tapering Pillar ornamented with a brass coronet[?]. Near our encampment was a plantation of Poplar trees surrounded by a stone fence to keep off Cattle a precaution very necessary in a country where no other Timber is to be found than what is raised by man near streams of water. The Kagher Tunzeen here informed us that he had received a letter from the Wuzeer stating that there was another road to Yarkund besides that of Leh and we were requested to take it as the Small Pox was in the villages on the road to the City and it was feared we might by communication with the villagers bring with us that disease to the City. Abdool Luteef could not devise whence this blow to our hopes originated as he had orders not to molest [us] but Kagher Tunzeen said he would write in our behalf. I addressed a letter to the Wuzeer explaining our motives for taking the road of Leh in which a compliment was passed on the reported good government of the Country and the good disposition of the inhabitants and this was accompanied by a dress of superfine blue broad Cloth. The Meer wrote also to him and sent a Kaleidoscope inclosing letters recommending me to the Raja and Wuzeer in the warmest terms from the Raja and Wuzeer of Koolloo. The Meer likewise desired Quajah Shah Neras to use his interest with the Wuzeer to avert the mischief with which we were threatened

[20]

and Kaha Tunzeen advised our pressing forwards. Abdool Luteef took our letters and promised to use his utmost exertions in our behalf which he was assured would be rewarded in case of success. Kaha Tunzeen sent me twenty Apples from his Garden at Nobra. They were exactly like our first Summer fruit. The distance of our march has been [blank] the direction roughly [blank].

Sep^t. 21. The road continues along the banks of the same Rivulet sometimes crossing from one side to the other when the rock was too precipitous to admit of a path but every where labor and ingenuity were displayed in taking advantage of ledges and slopes and in very few places was the road dangerous. Six feet seem to be sufficient for a horse with as much load projecting from each side as ever is proper for the Mountains and as it was customary in the time of the Rajas for the landholders to make and keep in good order the roads and as the same usage still prevails at Joshee Muth it would be no difficult matter to re-establish the custom along such lines as still retain their former populousness. And in others a remission of part of the annual land rent on the land actually cultivated would be sufficient. This sacrifice of a little labor for the service of the community would be much less onerous than the corvée under the former Govt. of France or than our Highway work and in a few years would be abundantly repaid to the inhabitants by the demand for the produce of the land by travellers and the road from Almora to Neetee might be rendered safe with scarcely any expense to the Govt. but the first measure to be taken is to induce the Tatar Chinese

21

Govt. to allow of a free commercial intercourse and to this point I will direct all the influence I can raise. I remarked that when a Stone of a breastwork of the path was displaced by the foot of a horse the man who next came forward made a point of replacing it or of supplying its place with another so that during the time when the road was traversed no repair was required from the villagers and their labor would only be wanted after the melting of the Snows of each season. Reflection on this matter will however be most advantageously employed when the consent of the Tatars shall have been obtained to a less limited communication than now exists. The first two Kos of the present road was remarkable for the surface of the plates and veins of white Quartz running into shoots of Rock Chrystal the points perfectly transparent the base obscure. I saw no Chrystals of considerable size but every piece of Quartz glittered in the Sun so as to dazzle the eye from the multiplicity of points of reflection. The Rocks on each side but particularly those on the left hand presented an aspect of novelty. Long lines of wall with mainly straight & upright but with a peaked and rugged upper line stretched from the level of the River for several hundred feet up to the top of the Rock. These were generally parallel and preserved mainly an equal distance from each other in the whole of their run Taken together they formed a great number of avenues running from the base to the summit of the Mountain where they appeared to be met by similar avenues and ridges from the opposite side.

[22]

The walls were in great measure composed of Plum pudding stone, the pebbles round or oblong as if rolled and the matrix principally of a red color and excessively hard. In some parts a hard clay stone interrupted the vein of Plum pudding stone but the latter structure generally ran upwards as high as the sight could distinguish clearly the composition of the Rock. The Avenues were floored with fragments from the Walls and a reddish Earth. It would seem that the Rocks were composed of perpendicular leaves of Plum pudding Stone separated by a softer Material. On the annual melting of the Snow, the descent of the water brought down with it the softened parts of the softer material and this diminution gradually

produced the lanes or avenues just mentioned the walls of harder material standing fast or only falling in blocks or in fragments so that its waste was much less than that of the softer substance. Yet the Plumpudding stone hard as it is resists not wholly the vicissitudes of the seasons. The surface of blocks that have been recently detached is irregular & marked with the convex projection of rolled pebbles in the mass in some parts and with depressions of cavities from which others have been torn in the separation and have remained adhering to the living rock. But in blocks which have been long detached and the surface of which is either sloping from the perpendicular or perpendicular the whole face appears as if it had been shaved

23

or planed smooth the pebbles as well as the cement having undergone equally the influence of the moisture of the water which fell on it in snow and of the weather. But when a block has so fallen that a surface happens to be defended from the weather that is the Snow cannot lodge upon it the irregular superficies remains whilst the exposed surfaces become smoothed and as it were glazed.

Following the whole of our route the course of the Rivulet we reached the town of Ookshee where the Rivulet of Geah and Meeroo falls into a River which comes from the East and runs to the West. It varies much in breadth but its medium was about 50 yards. Its color was greenish, it was not fordable but seemed to run at about four miles an hour. It was here called Yooma and I apprehend is the Gurdhdokh branch of the Indus but I could not learn particulars of its origin. The distance of our march has been [blank] and the direction roughly [blank]. Kaghā Tunzeern sent word that he wished to purchase a Razor and one from Mr Trebeck was sent for his acceptance.

Sep^t 22^d. It was much warmer in the night than we had felt it for some time. A little rain fell on our Tents and new Snow had whitened the tops of the neighboring Mountains. Ookshee contains about ten or twelve houses tolerably well built and its small walled gardens have in them Apricot trees of large size, yellow Willows and Poplars. We were all on horseback at an early hour to advance as near as possible

[24]

to Leh that we may negotiate with greater speed than at two days march distance should our first advices from thence be unfavorable. The direction of the road is W of N along the left bank of the Yooma on a high plain which flanked by a line of Mountains on each side descends to the river the left side being by much the broadest. The whole surface covered by blocks of Stone, principally Plumpudding fragments presents an uninterrupted view of barren desolateness. The furze and compact moss have long been left behind and nothing of the vegetable kingdom is observable save a dwarf Artemisia and Chenopodium with a few tufts of thin and stunted Grass notwithstanding there were many fields of Barley near Ookshee but there was much water judiciously employed and here all is a dry waste. The road, however, is good, where there is a flat surface the large blocks are removed to each edge and the angles of ravines guarded by breastworks. These obligations are due to the commerce carried on upon it. In a Valley that comes down from the Mountains on the right in a right Angle to the Yooma at about two Miles from Ookshee is a small town surrounded by cultivated lands and plantations the name of which I could not learn. The Mountains before us are covered with Snow and long dark pillars descending from the clouds which hang over them and one while resting upon one peak and at another stretching to a second or third are rapidly increasing [?] their covering. After running from between 14 and 15000 paces along this barren

plain which in breadth seldom exceeds a mile the road descends to the edge of the left bank of the River at the foot of the cliffs of a ridge of rock composed of compact sandstone in the lower stratum or that on a level with the path and about a hundred feet in length, then broken by lines of rolled Pebble stones and afterwards by layers of Pebble and sand stone. The holes whence large pebbles had fallen formed convenient asylums for the Ravens, Choughs and Pigeons which frequented these almost desolate tracts. With the greatest attention I examined the large blocks of Pebble masses that had fallen near the road but saw not the slightest indication of organic remains. On the opposite bank at a short distance in a retiring Angle betwixt Mountains is a small cultivated tract and some houses and a Sanga of two parts is thrown across the river in a place where its stream is divided into two channels by a large fragment of Rock. The framework of the principal of the two bridges is formed of Trunks of Poplar Trees laid over each other horizontally and overhanging & of a platform covered with flat stones. After having skirted the left bank for some distance under high cliffs of loosely connected Sand & Pebbles the road gradually rises and from an eminence the eye is delighted by the sight of an enclosure of Poplar trees which at the distance of two miles looks like the belt of a Park surrounded by a stone Wall. On a nearer approach several of these belts are seen communicating with villages and corn fields interspersed. In some places the Corn is on the ground but ripe, in others persons

[26]

are busied in cutting it, in others Cattle are treading it out and in others again men and women are engaged in throwing up the thrashed heaps that the Chaff may be blown off by the wind. This they do with a willow Staff cut at the end and spread into four diverging fingers whilst they keep time by singing an Air which to our Ear contained not much of harmony. The Bullock driver in forcing his Cattle in a line around the post to which they were tied whilst treading out the Grain chanted the same Air without ceasing as if to encourage them whilst pursuing the same dull circle. Here I saw four Magpies the cries, plumage and habits of which were exactly those of this bird in Europe. The road crosses a watercourse which proceeding from the left falls into the River Yooma on its left bank. From this source trunks are carried so as to supply an extensive stretch of cultivated land with water. Having crossed the Rivulet I was met by a Servant of Kagma Tunzeen who by holding his right hand clenched with the Thumb upright indicated his wish that I should attend him and following [him I] was led into an enclosure from which the grain had been lately cut. Here I found most of my party. Meer Izzut Oollah Khan was in low spirits. An Answer had been returned to our letters and the intimation to assemble and encamp in one spot whilst Kagma Tunzeen had pitched his Tent close by seemed to him an indication of care that bordering on an appearance of guarding [?] us in his opinion boded us no good. This appeared to me a matter of indifference

27

and might just as easily be considered as an act of civility as of precaution and if of precaution to prevent intercourse with villagers who might have the Small Pox. In the absence of information I was disposed to see a favorable indication for if there had been an intention to arrest our progress it would consistently with prudence have been manifested at an earlier period and we should not have been suffered to proceed unmolested to within one days march of Leh. Shortly afterwards a person came to say that we might turn our Cattle into the plantation and the Meer was invited to Kagma Tunzeens Tent and to the house of the Chief of the village where he was regaled with salted Tea. On his return learning that he was a Lama and the spiritual Director of Kuloon the Wuzeer I expressed my wish to pay him a visit. He however rode past our Tent accompanied by two Servants on horseback. He was a

portly, jolly looking Priest about forty wore a crimson cloth dress and had on a hat like that of a Cardinal with a more flat Crown with cross ribbands with a broad Rim covered with red cloth. The hat was tied under the Chin had two broad Ribbands flowing behind and two cords and Tassels of white Silk. His Servants wore white Hats without decorations but little differing in shape from that of the Lama. I prepared a present consisting of a suit of orange colored broad Cloth, a fine red woollen cap, some Knives, Scissors, Thread, Thimbles, Needles and a Crimson Moirée Snuff Box filled with Snuff.

[28]

I went accompanied by Mr Trebeck, the Meer, his son Meer Nujuf & Hafiz. Seats were taken for five and our party was received at the door by a Geloon who taking my hand led me up Stairs through an open square into a low apartment open on one side in which the Prelate was sitting having before [him] one of the same kind of small long low painted table or bench which I had seen preparing at Sreenuggur as it was said for the market of Tibet. He received us very courteously and ordered Tea which was served round by a Priest from a teapot of the same kind and dimensions but of inferior design and execution to that of the Raja of Geah. Our interpreter a Carrier though apparently proficient in the Tibet language did not in some instances succeed in exactly communicating our sentiments. He succeeded however so far as to convince us that we had subdued the greater part of the apprehensions first entertained when a report reached Leh of an European armed force being on its march against that town. The Lama directed a large Tray of Apples, a double Wallet of fine Rice and a large Sack of Flour to be set before me. He was he said unprepared for such civility but hoped in some way or other to be able to return it. I would have limited his present to the Apples but found it impracticable to decline taking the whole. The flour I directed to be divided among all the Servants and a Goat and a Sheep to be taken for the use of my party and that of the Meer.

29

In the evening Abdool Luteef arrived with a letter from the Wuzeer to me & one to the Meer. That to me explained the apprehensions of the Raja on the reports spread by traders from Koolloo and other places and expressed much civility accompanied by a piece of red China Silk and a white [illeg.] Scarf as a cover to his letter. The letter to the Meer was less formal but very civil. A Messenger from Qwaja Shah Neas brought a letter which informed the Meer that a reference was made to him as to the expedience of our being allowed to visit Leh and of the nature of his answer. All apprehensions on the score of our reception at Leh were now removed and twenty Rupees were directed to be given to Abdool Luteef for his good offices on this occasion.

Sep^t. 23rd. We waited on the Lama to take leave. He stated that he had forwarded his sentiments respecting us to Kuloon Wuzeer and convinced as he was that I was a Merchant of great respectability and not a person come to make preparations for taking the Country he had made such representations as he hoped might have some weight towards gaining for us a favorable reception. We expressed a wish that he would permit us to visit a Gompha or Temple not far distant from the road and in which were several Statues of great value from the materials of which they were reported to be composed but he replied that the sight of them would not repay the inconvenience of our being so far taken out of the road proposing as we did to reach Leh that day. Feeling that there existed

[30]

some disinclination on his part after having tried to discover whether our intention was fully understood we no longer persisted but after some further expressions of good will on both sides took leave. A Goom-[illeg.] was sent to my Tent and after rewarding the bringer, the

Priest who officiated as Tea-bearer and the Gardener [apparently sic] we mounted our Horses. The Lama the day before had reconnoitred our party through a telescope which I was desirous to see. It proved to be an old one made by Pyefinch London and numbered No. 27. Its glasses had become loose by the rotting of the Brass wires which retained them in their places and the surface of the object Glass had undergone a little of that decomposition which is the result of the action of the Climate in Hindoostan. Without promising to replace it by a better I expressed a hope that in future visits this might happen. The Lama said that this instrument had been given by the Great Lama to one of his predecessors and had descended to him. It is by no means improbable that this Glass was given by Mr Bogle the Surgeon to the Grand Lama of Lhasa when he was deputed by Mr Hastings to visit this personage. The name of the residence of the Lama is Marsilla, its grounds under cultivation are large, the houses good and externally neat and clean. But the lands in plantation are still more extensive. The outer belt consists of the broad leafed and Lombardy Poplars the next of the yellow or black stemmed Willow on the edge of the watercourse which at a short distance from

31

the outer wall generally runs parallel with it in its whole outline when practicable. From this shallow broad ravines descend towards the river and in these are planted Willows and a variety of prickly Gale⁵ called Chutha thickly beset on all its branches with a small yellowish red fruit extremely acid much relished by the carriers but of which I requested our Hindoostanee Servants to eat cautiously. The whole of the ground that receives any water is covered with tufts of Lucerne of spontaneous growth which has just been cut and packed on the tops of the houses. Marsilla from the extent of its cultivated lands its plantations and the apparent neatness of its houses is by far the prettiest place I have seen since I left Hindoostan and this it principally owes to the abundance of water it enjoys and the ingenuity and assiduity with which it is distributed. On the right bank of the River and opposite to Marsilla is the village of Choomri which in the extent and pleasing appearance of its plantations is little inferior to Marsilla. A watertrench is taken from the Rivulet which divides the grounds of Marsilla and led by a serpentine course on the right hand side of the road to the grounds belonging to the village of Chunga. It is about five feet broad and two deep. As the grounds of Chunga are greatly lower than the source of the water though two miles distance some contrivance was necessary to diminish the rapidity of the current and this is advantageously effected by the interposition of several water corn mills. The edge of the stream is

[32]

belted by a fringe of fine short grass about two feet in breadth on the outer border of which is placed a line of sand about a foot in breadth and height [sic] and a range of heavy stones extend as a backing to the outer part of the grass. The waterway is perfectly free from weeds and the roots of the grass bind the edge so much as to keep it firm. The object of the grass and stones is clear and perhaps that of sand may be to fill up any chinks formed by the side straining of the water and to [illeg.] the spreading of the herbage. I never saw so long a line so regular as this was without cleft or breach.

Between Marsilla and Chunga were two Temples with Geloons houses. That on the right bank of the River is called Hemicé [apparently sic] and the one at the foot of the Mountains on the left bank but distant from it at least a mile is named Gompha is [sc. if] this be not the general appellation for a Temple containing the figure of a deity of which I have some suspicion. The Crops on the lands of Chunga had been cut and were either piled or on the thrashing floor. They appeared to consist of Barley and a small but sweet green Pea. After leaving Chunga and passing over a barren plain we came in sight of the village and fort

of Takna with its grounds, the village of Gompha and that of Mashoo. The road skirted the watercourse that surrounded the lands of Tuksee and in the Mountains on the left was the village of Mashoo distant above a Mile. Opposite to Mashoo and distant from the road about half a Mile was Tikse which may be divided into upper and lower. Upper Tikse is situated along the upper

33

ridge of an insulated rock. One of the Houses is high has an extensive front and is said to be fortified. Adjoining it to the West is a Monument or place of worship and still further West are some houses of respectable appearance. These edifices appear to be about two hundred feet above the land of the plain and the road to them is circuitous. Lower Tiksee on the plain at the foot of the Mountain contains many more houses and several whited sepulchres. Many neat cattle of a small kind a few Jubboos some Horses and Asses were grazing in the newly reaped fields. The River divides the lands of Tiksee on its left bank from that of Gompha on the right.

The Buildings in the town or village of Gompha seem to ascend in stages to a considerable height and near the base is a long plain structure like a high wall without door or window discoverable on the front towards the road. Gompha is said to be the residence of great numbers of the religious order and of the relations of the Raja. At the eastern end of Tiksee begins the extensive valley of Jubboo covered with villages and farm houses the roofs of which covered with a thick bed of fire wood and of dry lucerne whited without and furnished with balconies have a comfortable appearance.

We were met on the road by a Messenger from Qwaja Shah Neas who resided at the town of Sheh situated at the foot of the Hills on the right bank of the River and who desired to see us. We crossed two branches of the Stream by fording on an Island

[34]

between the second and third branches were received by the Qwajah who had provided a small low tent for us to prevent the necessity of our crossing the third branch. This was done that we might not communicate with the inhabitants of Sheh amongst whom it was suspected there were some affected with the Small Pox. Qwajah Shah Neas is about sixty years of age of rather low stature and somewhat corpulent. He has an expressive and prepossessing countenance and appears healthy and active. He was dressed in a large Gown of new and fine snuff colored broad cloth lined with Woollen Chintz. He had prepared for us a repast of sweet and salted Tea with wheaten Cakes Yarkund Biscuits apples fresh Apricots and green Grapes from Kashmeer. The salted Tea was by far the best we had met with, the cakes were good the Yarkund Biscuits were almost as hard as pebbles and were intended to be soaked in Tea, the Apricots were tolerably good but small Grapes sour. Our Repast was spread on a Carpet and partaken with a relish that was heightened by the frank manners and attentive hospitality of our Host with whose manners I was highly pleased. He said that he had been for seven Months as it were a prisoner at Sheh having not once been at Leh during that period on account of the small pox having been common in the former town. He had been accused by the Kashmeerees of having invited us to come to Ludagh. On a reference being made to him by Kuloon Wuzeer stating that a new occurrence had taken place on

35

which he wished for his advice viz. That Feringhees a people only known to him by report had entered the country of Ludagh and he desired to have his opinion on the propriety of allowing them to come to Leh the Qwajah answered that if he had not wished them to come it was his duty as Governor of the country to have signified his dissent and disapprobation

before they had crossed the frontier. But that as they were now within a short distance from Leh he thought the best plan would be to not only to allow them to come but to treat them with civility. If they came as friends he would get a bad name by stopping them and if as enemies he doubted whether they would suffer themselves to be stopped by him. We departed soon after our repast and left the Meer to converse with his friend. Our road lay along the plain of Jubboo overspread with houses and enclosures of dry stones or of stones with mud cement. The Crops were all cut and the grain in the Straw was piled in low cones. The women without caps with under garments of woollen and wearing a Sheepskin on their backs with the wool inwards seemed to do almost the whole of the outdoor agricultural business whilst most of the men seemed to have no other occupation than attending the thrashing floor lounging or smoking – at least this is the impression made on me from what I have hitherto seen. Having crossed the River by a bridge to its right bank we encamped. The distance of this days march has been

[36]

[blank] paces and the direction roughly [blank]

Sep^t. 24th Much sleet fell during the night & continued till one o'clock when Mr Trebeck and I began our march from [blank] in a northerly direction towards Leh the Meer and Abdool Luteef having preceded us by a few hours to prepare a house for our reception. The road led over a sandy ascent on a surface wholly destitute of vegetation between two ranges of low and barren rocks by which Leh was so concealed that a stranger would not have been led to suspect the existence of a town in that direction. It then turned a narrow defile by the side of a long low pile of inscribed Stones to the westward towards two of the largest sepulchral Towers connected by the longest range of pile [?] we had seen which was upwards of a thousand paces. From this we reached a second line of stones still longer connecting two smaller towers on the square sides of which was represented in relief a monstrous Quadropede with large goggle eyes open mouth the tongue hanging out and one large tooth in each jaw twisted like a Parrots beak. The fore legs of which the feet were armed with monstrous claws seemed in the attitude of striking and the hind [legs] supported the body. Some locks of hair divided surrounded the face and breast of the animal which distantly resembled a Lion. Some of the Monuments we have seen have been surmounted by an Urn somewhat resembling a large

37

earthen oil jar others by a conical pillar of well burnt brick. The former had generally a pole projecting from the summit the latter were crowned by a kind of double Coronet of Copper joined in the middle and cut in filligree and gilt. The upper one was always the smallest and its largest circumference upwards whilst the reverse was the case with that below. In the bowl of the upper one was a crescent of brass or copper-gilt in the concave part of this was lodged a circular form flatted on the sides and exactly resembling in form and size a cheese and on the top of the whole was a still smaller figure like a short pear with the stem upwards. All these ornaments or emblems were gilt. The cheese part of one at Marsilla had a circular knot of Rock chrysal inserted in its centre like an eye and a small wire projected from each horn of the Crescent and from the tail of the Pear[?]. The vicinity of every town was decorated with these monuments of mortality but the urn like buildings were most common and at Sheh I mistook them at a distance for a Camp. We experienced a driving Sleet with a very cold wind in our journey to Leh which was [blank] paces distant from our last nights encampment direction [blank]

The streets and walls of Leh were lined and covered with Crowds of Men Women and Children to witness the entry of the Feringees into the City.⁶

[38]

[blank] had kindly ordered a house of his own to be made ready for us. This was two stories high and was sufficiently capacious to contain our whole party with the merchandize and a yard extending along two sides of the building commodiously held our Horses. The walls consisted of large unburnt bricks the outside whitened the inside of the original color of the earth. The Roof was formed of rafters or small Trunks of Poplar Trees over which a layer of Willow-shoots, this was covered by a coating of Straw and this by a bed of earth. The rafters were only half the breadth of the Apartments and rested upon a square beam of Poplar which reposed on the cross walls and was supported by two square Pillars of the same wood of which the capital was composed of two horizontal crutch heads, the lower about 3½ feet and the upper about five feet both stretching under the beam. The Pillars stood upon a cross wall. The Doors were of Poplar plank united by a cross bar let into their substance crosswise and secured by wooden pins. The light was admitted by an open Balcony containing a Window frame about ten feet in length in four compartments but without curtain or cover and by a small slit at one end guarded by a thin frame of Poplar. This principal room was 24 feet by 18 and 7 feet high. The floor was of earth beaten. My bed was about 7 feet broad and 10 long. The Stairs were formed of rough Stones and the Mansion altogether though not elegant was spacious and though in style not equal to a common English

39

Farmhouse was to us a most comfortable asylum when contrasted with our long residence in Tents so injured by the weather as to give entrance to every blast as well as to every smart shower of rain. We rested comfortably without hearing the rush of torrents or the crash of avalanches which indeed for the last five or six days have not been either great or frequent. Sep^t. 25th. Abdool Luteef attended with the Custom Master here called Chooghzuth and some subordinate Officers to weigh our Merchandize in order that the duties might be levied upon them. This business was performed with civility and apparent fairness. During the whole of the day a Crowd has surrounded the door and the roof of a house opposite has been covered by Kashmeerees unmistakable for their Jew like countenances, their dirty woollen clothes and large muslin Turbands.

Sept. 26. This day was appointed for the Kuloon's audience of the Meer. As it is customary for a Stranger to take a present when he pays a Visit in this Country to a man of rank I furnished the Meer with a Sportsman's Knife, a Penknife, and a large pair of Scissors which were received and admired. Instead of giving the general result of the conversation between the Kuloon and Meer Izzut Oollah Khan I think it preferable to recite the particulars as taken from the Meer. After mutual compliments of civility and salted Tea the Kuloon entered upon business by the following enquiry. This is a small country of little produce. What inducements can a resident of a large and greatly productive country have to visit it?

[40]

Meer – Our intention is to go to Bokhara to purchase Horses. By the overthrow of the sovereignty in Kabool [travel] through that country is made dangerous to Merchants. The country of Tibet is represented as safe and you have the reputation of being a just man. The coin of every country differs in value and is of limited currency. That of Hindoostan little known in Bokhara would not preserve its original value there and thus loss would ensue but from the reports of Merchants the manufactures of England and of India would ensure profit in that City and we have therefore brought it meaning to employ its proceeds in the purchase of Horses. It is customary [to bring] into countries which produce little merchandize such

articles as are desirable in them from those countries which possess them in superfluity. Kuloon – I understood from reports during your march that you had a great body of men and that all the Natives on your route fled at your approach. - This is not true. All the Rajas through whose country we have passed have furnished Porters and sent presents as indications of friendship. Kuloon – The people here have imputed to you different intentions. Meer – If you will examine our numbers you will have an opportunity of forming a judgment for yourself of the probability of our entertaining intentions of conquering countries with such a force. Besides it has never been the practice or intention of the Sirkar (the British Indian Government) to take

41

Countries without just cause. This Govt. has had no intention to take countries but has given countries which produce millions of revenue to several native Princes for instance to the Nawab of Oude, to Raja Doulut Rai Sindeea to the Geekwar &c. And they have never attempted to deprive their rich Neighbors of any territory as the Nizam Eelee Khan or Raja Runjeet Singh. If they were desirous of acquiring territory they would have closed with the offer of Shooja ool Moolk or more lately with that of Muhamud Azeem Khan when he tendered Kashmeer to their acceptance. If they had consented to take Kashmeer the whole of Tibet must have fallen within their power as a matter of course. As they have no lust of conquest so have they no desire to attack others unprovoked. When the Goorkhas invaded the domains of Raja Sansar Chand he requested the British Government would assist him to repel the invaders but they replied that as the Goorkhas had not acted as enemies towards them they could not wage war against the Gooorkha Govt. But when the Goorkhas did act hostilely towards the British Govt. the latter punished them in a manner that must have come to your knowledge. Kuloon Are the Ooroos (the Russians) and the English on terms of friendship? Meer They are. Some years back Buonaparte

[42]

the Sovereign of the French invaded the Empire of Russia and took Moscow. He was afterward compelled to retire by the rigorous cold of the climate and by the resistance of the Russians. Afterwards the English in conjunction with the Russians invaded France and after many sanguinary battles in which many Lakhs of Troops were engaged Buonaparte was defeated and he is now held in confinement by the English. Kuloon Are the English in friendly relations with Kutha (China)? Yes and Metcalfe Sahib (Mr Metcalfe) resides on the part of the English in some city in China the name of which I have forgotten. Kuloon We are tributaries of China. What is the name of the Country to which these Firingees belong and what that of their principal City? Meer Inglistan (England) and London. Kuloon. What fruits are produced in their Country? Meer – The English raise the fruits of hot Countries in houses constructed on purpose, roofed with Glass and filled with heated Air. Kuloon I have heard that contrivances of the same sort are also applied to the same use in Russia. Kuloon. These English people are said to possess a knowledge of all sorts of workmanship and arts and make Telescopes, Watches and Magic Lanthorns. The construction of Magic Lanthorns is not very difficult but the English excel in making Telescopes and Watches and the other

43

valuable works of art. Kuloon. What trade does this Sahib follow? Meer. He is an Hakim or medical man and possesses great skill in his profession. Here the Meer touched upon the subject of the Small Pox, the discovery of a new medicine which prevented it ever proving fatal to those to whom it was properly administered and the benefit its introduction might produce in this Country. The Kuloon listened with much attention but made no reply to the

Meers observations. Kuloon. I have heard that the Sovereign of England is a Woman. Meer. That is as it may happen. I understand that the first born to the reigning King whether male or female succeeds to the Throne. Kuloon Do the English follow the religion of Eesuee (Christ) Meer Yes. And I understand that your religion resembles that of the Christians. Kuloon. Perhaps; by seeing the books of the Christians this point may be determined. Meer. I know that in one circumstance there is a similarity. You say Kunchogh Sum and the Christians say there are three persons in one God viz Khoda, Raool [?] Kuddus and Huzrut Eesa. How is it that you make out the Kunchogh Sum? Kuloon we call one God, another the Book or Word, and the third the Heart or Understanding, as the Meer conceived for the Interpreter was not clear and he was at a loss to determine whether the obscureness arose from the later not understanding the Kuloon or from the

[44]

the Kuloon not understanding the subject. Kuloon - How many Goorkhas are with you? Meer - Fourteen. Kuloon - Are they Servants? Meer - Yes. They are the servants of the Government by whom many have been entertained since the commencement of the war with that power. Kuloon - You were here before. How long is that ago? Meer Eight years. Kuloon - You did not then come to see me. Meer - No. I had not at that time any business that required it. Kuloon - when did you form an acquaintance with Qwajah Shah Neas? Meer At that time. Kuloon - You are a Moosulman and a Sueyeed [sic]. On your oath as such tell me what are the intentions of the Sahib? Meer - I have before explained to Abdool Luteef, to Kagha Tunzeen and just now to you under the same sacred obligation the intentions of the Sahib and you may moreover at this moment record in writing as from me that from this visit of this Gentleman no mischief and much good will result to you. The Meer then took leave of the Kuloon but in the evening forwarded for his inspection a letter from Mohummud Azeem Khan the then Ruler of Kashmeer to Meer Izzut Oollah in which he stated that the Kazee Mohummud Hassan would explain fully his sentiments and that whatever should be agreed upon by them should be binding upon him. The object of the Kazees mission was to tender Kashmeer to the British Gov^t through the Meer to the Resident in Dehlee and though the contents of the letter went not into particulars

45

yet as its originality was recognized by the seal and it was given for its reference to the business of the cession mentioned by Meer Izzut Oollah and tended much to tranquillize the mind of the Kuloon.[this sentence sic].

Sep^t. 27th. The Carriers of Lahoul having delivered my property at Leh were desirous to depart and I rewarded Faqeer Singh the Commissioner from Koolloo, Rama the Kanoongo and Ram Dhan the conductor of the Cattle from Lahoul with a sum of money that would considerably exceed their expenses on returning. I had furnished to them and their attendants Provisions during their whole journey so that with the profits they would derive from the hire of their Cattle and the customary compliments from the owners of the other Cattle this trip would prove more lucrative than any in which they had been heretofore engaged.

The Kafila Bashee however found a deficiency in the flour to the amount of near forty Rupees and of about twenty Bags delivered to the carriers. He had insisted upon them making good the value of the flour as they had been paid for its conveyance & as it could not have been lost by any accident in the journey but must have been taken by the persons to whose charge it had been given. However considering that to render every person concerned in the transport of our baggage satisfied with our conduct and so be the more willing to lend their aid at any future time was of more importance than the value of the money I ordered the sum refunded

[46]

to be restored after a reproof. Thus they all went away perfectly contented. I had purchased as much wheat flour and P-[illeg.] &c. as I conceived would meet the consumption of our Party for two months. The original cost was reasonable enough but with the expense of the transport to Leh the Provision cost me Rs 6.4.5 per Maund. At Leh owing to an increased importation from various parts and a plentiful home harvest the market price was reduced unusually and all kinds of Grain were to be had at ten Sers for a Rupee. Considering that the cost price if charged to the Sipohees would bear hard upon them and the Servants I ordered the charge to the whole to be at the bazar price that is 4/- per Maund instead of Rs 6.4.5 by which up to this time the loss is Rs 273.4.

Sep^t. 28th and 29th occurred without any incident.

Sep^t. 30th. Meer Izzut Oollah went to visit Qwajah Shah Neas having previously in reference to the Small Pox notified his intention to the Kuloon and obtained his concurrence. Kagma Tunzeen sent for some Chintz and I returned a piece for his acceptance which I had thought to be handsome. He wished it changed for one with a white ground which could be worn by him for Chintz with a colored ground was only proper for women and he had lost two wives and was now without one. He expressed his surprize that I had not yet paid a visit to the Kuloon. That if Merchants from a distance arrived at Leh at night the following day they waited on the Kuloon and afterwards

47

departed if they were in progress to any other place. Hafiz Fazil in reply observed that we were strangers and unacquainted with the customs of the Country, that we conceived we should be informed when it would be agreeable for the Kuloon to receive us and should be ready the moment we should be apprised thereof. He said that he would signify this to the Kuloon but being told that it would be proper to wait the return of the Meer he enquired the motive of his visit to which it was replied that the Qwajah stood in the same relation to the Meer as the principal Lama did to him. With this answer he appeared to be satisfied.

A letter from the Meer desired me not to hurry [?] the visit [to] the Kuloon and in the evening he arrived. The Qwajah had informed him that the Kashmeerees pressed the Kuloon to hasten our departure and endeavored to persuade him that we were capable of purchasing all the Shawl Wool of Tibet and desirous of so doing by which both Ludagh and Kashmeer would be ruined. He advised that we should not make any proposition but endeavor so to act as to induce the Kuloon to make a proposition of intercourse to which object he would most willingly lend his aid as soon as he should have a suitable opportunity. He had prepared to go to Leh but learning the state of things had postponed his visit until he should be sent for by the Kuloon which he thought would soon happen as he knew that he was laboring

[48]

under extreme anxiety on our account. If he were to go to Leh without this invitation and communicate with us it would be said that we acted in concert and his influence would be diminished if not wholly lost, but if sent for by the Kuloon expressly for his advice he could forward our interest more effectually. The Raja he said had lately received a letter from Russia written in Nogae⁷ Toorkee which was not thoroughly understood but this circumstance added to our arrival had raised so much anxiety in his mind as to have caused his bulk to have diminished most notably according to common report.

Oct. 1st. This morning I sent a few yards of Chintz with white ground to Kagma Tunzeen; he wished to pay for it but was requested to retain both pieces as trifles which indicated friendship but not worthy the form of a money transaction. After making some difficulties he

said that the District under his management was on our road to Yarkund and he hoped there to shew that he was not ungrateful for the civilities he had received from us.

About twelve a Courtier on horseback announced that the Kuloon would be glad to receive us and deputed him to conduct us to his house. Mr Trebeck, Meer Izzut Oollah and myself on horseback followed this Master of Ceremonies and were respectfully saluted by spectators of all ages and of both sexes who lined the streets and filled the windows of the houses by which we passed. The Kashmeerees who were very numerous made an obeisance of the head

49

saying Salam Aleikum which we acknowledging [sic] by returning the bow and repeating Wa Aleikum as Salam. The Ludaghees touching their forehead with their right hand called out Joo which signifies Salutation. We went through several narrow winding passages up to a door where our conductor dismounted but made signs to me to proceed until I reached another door close to which was a shed into which my Groom was directed to take my Mule. On entering the door Music struck up and continued playing till after we had ascended two flights of Stairs we had reached an Antichamber full of Attendants. Here Kagma Tunzeen apparently in waiting took my right hand led me into another room and followed by our Party presented me to the Kuloon who was seated. When I was stepping back to a Chair placed in front of the Kuloon on a line of felts he desired to shake me by the hand and placing it between his slightly bowed his head.

The Kuloon with a person whom I understood to be the second Wuzer and the *Son in law of the former was seated close to the Wall as I presume on a Bench but which was concealed by a long table with a wooden front reaching from nearly as high as the Ministers breast to the floor. I seated myself and enquired after his health after returning an answer he said that he feared our health might have suffered from the long and fatiguing journey he understood we had had.

*Kagma Tunzeen is Brother in law to the Kuloon & not son in law as I had understood.

[50]

I replied that our health had not suffered and that our fatigues were repaid by the pleasure of having an interview and of forming a friendly intercourse with him. Salted Tea was then presented to us and the Kuloon his Coadjutors and a line of Courtiers seated cross legged on Felts on the right hand side of the door also partook of the libation which even we now began to relish. A row of Servants stood between the seated Courtiers and the Wall and betwixt us and the door was a large body of Attendants but Tea was given to all by one Servant from a huge ornamented Teapot of the same material but less handsome than that of the Raja of Geah. The Kuloon asked the names and ages of Mr Trebeck and myself the names of our Country and King and the distance and direction of the former. Whether I had ever visited Roum, (Constantinople). On a pause taking place I observed that I regretted to hear the Small Pox had lately visited his country and destroyed many lives. That I hoped, if it were his wish, to be able to put him in a way of employing a Medicine which if properly managed would prevent the Small pox ever destroying life and I conceived that the introduction of it into this Country would ensure to the Ruler who should first patronize it a reputation more extensive and more durable than ever appertained to any other individual that had filled that station. He answered me with great fluency and without the smallest hesitation for a considerable time, speaking

with animation as if interested. But our interpreter Mohsin Baba who spoke the Tibet language freely but the Persian indifferently and in the Kashmeeree dialect obviously compressed the Kuloons speech rendering only the substance and that as it seemed to us imperfectly. Customs he remarked differed much amongst different Nations. The Customs of Ludagh were of long standing, founded on those of Kuthá (China) and Lhasa. He could not on his own authority adopt new ones, nor could he receive any of novel cast [?], however apparently advantageous unless they were previously sanctioned by them. I mentioned the national rewards received [?] by Dr Jenner, the general propagation of the medicine which had now received universal suffrage, the diffusion of it in Hindoostan and the philanthropic principle on which it was founded. But finding that conviction was not likely to result or to lead to the measure of two persons being sent to Almora where they might learn the practice of vaccination and by Mr Traill's hospitable and attentive conduct learn also to uproot the prejudices of the Chinese Tatars I dropped the subject. And indeed during the latter part of the discussion I was not without apprehension lest the will against the introduction of novelties might be applied against us as well as against our doctrines and practices. Meer Izzut asked for an explanation of the picture of a female whose

[52]

complexion was green and who had red eyes but whose features though somewhat stiff were handsome, regular and mild. Her upper garments were green also but her Trowsers or stockings for they were apparently continued from the waist to the ankle were light colored and the part below the knee was secured to the leg so as to be made to sit tight by filleting.# She was represented as sitting cross legged in the cup of a flower and one side of her head was decorated by flowers and leaves. It was said that she was a Fairy but as the interpreter was a Moosulman who probably possessed neither the curiosity nor the liberality of the Meer the accuracy of his translation upon a subject that generally calls forth the indignation or the contempt of the Moslems is open to question. The Kuloon asked if we did not follow the religion of Eesa (translated with the addition of Huzrut). Being answered in the affirmative I remarked that circumstances which had fallen under my observation led me to conclude that there was some affinity between the religions professed in Tibet and Christianity, to which he said that it was enjoined by his religion to act justly to all men in order that its followers

Some of our Carriers tied their leggings of woollen with red filleting or garter crossed lozengewise. Had our English Ancestors the same custom before knit Hose were common and is this what is meant by cross garters continued after the use of Stockings rendered it unnecessary & still practised by the Highlanders? [This sentence sic]

53

may be happy in the world to come. I stated that to do good to all men was or ought to be one of the fundamental rules of all religions. That in my possession was a book which professed to treat in part of the religion of Tibet and contained also some of its forms of prayer as well as of those prescribed to some classes of Christians. That if he thought the sight of it would afford him any gratification I would sent it. He expressed considerable desire to see it but immediately asked if we had any Wine and on being told that we had and that some should be forwarded to him forthwith he observed that though he did not drink wine he was rather curious to see that we drank. He enquired if we had also Atar. I said that we had Atar of Roses and also European Atars of which specimens should be submitted. I then offered to take leave on which he remarked that business of an urgent nature required his attendance elsewhere or he should have been happy much more considerably [sic] to have prolonged the interview but that he was in hopes we should soon meet again.

Before leaving the room I shook hands with the Kuloon and his two friends and was led out of the apartment and to the head of the Stairs by Kagma Tunzeen.

Our present to the Kuloon consisted of superfine scarlet BroadCloth, of green Merino Cloth—English white long cloth—Chintzes of three patterns—a very handsome single

[54]

barreled Gun with apparatus complete in a case An elegant enamelled small Telescope—a Kaleidoscope⁸—a Razor with ornamented blade. Needles and fine thread in balls. An oil painted Snuff Box Filled and a large bottle of Hoffmans colored Comfits[#]. He looked slightly at the different articles whilst we remained but one of our servants having stayed after our departure reported that he then examined them separately and expressed his surprize and satisfaction to his Courtiers at their beauty. The Kuloon whose name is Tsiva Tundoo appears to be about sixty years of age. He is thin and of middle size. His countenance is marked by an expression of shrewdness and his manners as far as may be determined by the first interview which is ordinarily more formal than subsequent ones are such as arise from much intercourse with mankind and were less stiff than those of the Raja of Geah. His outer dress was a large loose brown colored woollen Coat with an under Garment of Brocade and his black velvet Cap was without ornament. During the interview he smoked from a small but handsome Hooqqa much ornamented but drank tea from a wooden Cup lined with Silver and differing in nothing from the cups of his courtiers. The second Wuzeer called Noona Kuloon somewhat younger than the first differs not much in countenance. His outer Coat was of Brocade, and his Cap

[#]During the time the Customs Officers were examining our Merchandize a subordinate thinking he was not observed made a sly snatch at the side of one of the Comfit Bottles and looked exceedingly silly at finding the Glass of the nature of which he was ignorant offered [not] the completion[?] of his wish.

55

was bedecked with a profusion of flowers amongst which the African Marigold was most conspicuous. The youngest man about 25 years of age wore a Chinese Chintz Gown decorated with embossed groups of flowers on silk. The Kuloon's apartment of audience was of a good size but rather low and had only one large window to the South without glass or Talc[†] but over this was drawn lightly a curtain of Pink brocade with small silver flowers. Its roof was ceiled with compartments composed of triangular pieces of wood disposed in lozenges and separated by projecting bars painted with green and vermillion. A Row of wooden pillars supporting the roof ran along the greatest length of the room. Their shafts were painted with vermillion and the capitals ornamented with flowers, fruit and foliage carved in low relief in green or gold appropriately and the whole surface varnished. A deep cornice of foliage intermixed with strange figures ran round the room and one of these grotesque forms held a handful of flowers over the seat of the Kuloon. Below this and surrounding the apartment was hung a series of Tatar Bows Arrows and Shields intermixed with Matchlocks. Immediately above the head of the Kuloon a small canopy consisting of amixture of fine woollen cloth and silk on which the Chinese Dragon was represented was suspended from the roof and

[†]Mohsin Baba a Kashmeeree had the Windows of his house made of small squares of [illeg.] each containing a lozenge or square of Talc. Other Kashmeerees had the same frame work but no Talc.

[56]

surrounded by a hanging flounce of about a foot in depth of variously colored cloth. On the wall above and behind him was a large square of patchwork apparently of broad cloth in

squares resembling a checquer board. A very beautiful Persian Carpet of silk spread on the floor extended for nearly the whole length of the Room in front of the ministerial bench but was only about two yards broad. On this sate Kagma Tunzeen and between it and the range [?] of Felts on which were our seats the plaster floor of a chocolate color appeared as if lately polished. This kind of floor I before observed in the Apartments of the principal Lama of the Monastery of Daba. A few painted Chinese Chests with brass Clasps formed a line on the left side of the room and round the shafts of the pillars letters [appar. sic] were tied by cords. Small long red perfumed tapers little thicker than rushes laid along the Ministers bench and resting against the feet of the pillars were kept burning whilst we were in the room. I dare not scrutinize too deeply the origin of this custom but am not without suspicion that the perfume is intended to counteract other odours which in a numerous assembly of persons not delicate in their food sometimes derange the olfactory Nerves and discompose the features of the party. At the same time I must observe that the same kind of taper was burnt in some of the temples I formerly visited.⁹ A remarkable difference exists between the observances of decorum of

57

Moosulmans and Tatars in regard to Carpets. A well bred Moosulman takes off his Slippers when he is about to seat himself upon it; a Tatar keeps his on and considers it improper to follow the example of the former. The persons in attendance behaved with similar decorum. On my return I forwarded a very beautiful cut glass Decanter filled with Noyau¹⁰ and accompanied with a large Goblet of the same pattern with a bottle of Cherry and Raspberry Ratafia¹¹, Rum Shrub and Gin. Having before noticed the fondness of the Tatars for spirituous liquors I brought a small quantity of each expressly for presents. To the above were added two bottles of French Essences, a bottle of Eau de Cologne and an elegant enamelled French Essence bottle with gold top filled with Atar of Rose of Ghazipoor. The Kuloon as I learned from the Servant who took these articles was highly gratified with this present and poured a little of the Noyau into the palms of the hands of his Courtiers who manifested their satisfaction with its flavor.

Oct. 2nd. The Kuloon sent a messenger to express his satisfaction with our visit and to inform us that he was about to leave Leh for three days. And Kagma Tunzeen borrowed two horses to accompany him as his Attendants exceeded the number of his horses at this place. We this day received information privately that an express arrived yesterday from Gurdokh with advice from the

[58]

Garhpun that a Firingee had entered the District under his jurisdiction from Busehur. That a body of his Zumeendars armed had opposed his progress although he was accompanied by seven hundred Attendants. On being questioned as to his motives for entering their territory he replied that he had brought merchandize for sale, to which they observed that they did not want and should not purchase any from him, but that if he wished to fight they were ready to meet him. After this he returned. There is in this report almost as much extolment of personal valour and exaggeration of numbers as in that of Sir John Falstaff. Mr Gerard had informed me when I was as it were a prisoner at Hoshiarpoor that in the beginning of June he purposed to set out on a geographical tour meaning to trace the Sutroodra [sic] to its source, then to proceed from the source of the Gurhdokh River to that station and thence to Leh where he hoped to meet me. At Kooloo a discharged Servant of his said that Mr Gerard did actually commence his journey in June, that he had nine personal servants and that forty porters were employed in the transport of his baggage making in all fifty individuals whom the Ooneas had converted into seven hundred. In the evening we heard from the same informant that an

Express had come from Undeleh [sic—?Hanle] to the Kuloon stating that a Firingee Sahib had arrived at that place and stated his intention to go to Leh, but that he was stopped by

59

the authorities of Undeleh until they should learn whether it was the will of the Kuloon that he should proceed to Leh or otherwise. An informant said that the messenger had returned with an answer but that he knew not its purport. Undeleh is said to be 4 days journey to the [blank] of Geah. It would seem that Mr Gerard has skirted the northern foot of the Mountains without repassing the Ghats.

Oct. 5. The Kuloon returned last night and invited Meer Izzut Oollah to partake of an entertainment in a garden consisting of Poplars and Willows about a Kos distant from the town. He was in high spirits and good humor played at some game on horseback with a stick more resembling trap [sic]¹² than exercising with the J—[illeg.]. He had he said a title from China which he called Ginak and one from Dehli which latter he promised to shew the Meer along with the letter he received from Russia as he now stated about a year ago. The Meer took occasion to mention that he presumed the title had been conferred on the Kuloon by Orangzeb at the time his troops cleared Tibet from the Kalmaks and the Raja became a Moosulman. The Kuloon said the Kashmeerees endeavored to poison his mind against us by telling him that I should ruin both him and them in a short time by giving a double price for all the Shawl Wool raised in Tibet. Meer Izzut Oollah again assured him that in proportion as he shewed friendship towards me his interest instead of being injured would be benefited

[60]

by the connection. He rode with the Meer to our door and the impression made on the Meer's mind is that his apprehensions are greatly diminished. Amongst other conversation he enquired whether the Armies of the Emperor of China or those of the English power were more numerous to which the Meer replied that numerically those of China greatly exceeded those of the British Government but that in military effect he might estimate a thousand British Troops as equal to a lakh of Chinese Soldiers. The Meer pointed out the borders of the British Indian Empire the extent of which excited his astonishment. We have just heard that a Son of Qwaja Shah Neas 25 years of age has died after twenty four hours illness of the Cholera in Kashmeer. This bears hardly as the Kuloon had just told the Meer that he should speak to the Raja to request the Qwaja would visit Leh. This occurrence would certainly delay his visit and the adjustment of our business for some days. I have been in daily and anxious [anticipation?] of hearing from Mr Gerard for the last three days as he might without difficulty despatch one of his Busehur Servants to Leh without inciting any suspicion and an explanation from him would enable me to apply to the Kuloon in his behalf if he wishes to visit to Leh but pending his silence I cannot take any step.

Oct^r. 6th to the 10th. Nothing particular has occurred but the Kuloon has sent a present of flour, wheat salt and 3 Sheep and a Goat. The Meer went to condole with the Qwaja

61

and found him in great mental distress. The Kuloon has sent for him and he will come in a day to Leh. In pursuance of some forms of religion he cannot partake of the accommodation of a house which had been provided for him and our tents will be lent to him. It appears that the Raja had expressed some surprise at our stay and apprehension for its consequences to which the Kuloon observed that he must be aware that it was not in his power to furnish Cattle for the transport of our merchandize to Yarkund in a short time and that our conduct shewed us to be Merchants of too much importance to be sent away without having received all the assistance possible. The Qwaja says that the Kashmeerees are waiting for the Yarkund

Kafilah to arrive to furnish them with money and that he fears none can be raised by Bills. He was sent for about 18 months ago by his disciples at Yarkund and money was offered to defray his expenses but that it did not suit him then to go. I had hoped by reaching Leh in May to have had sufficient time to send for the remaining merchandize from Furokhabad and either to have raised money there by Bills on Calcutta or at Leh by the sale of some of our goods but the delay experienced by the manoeuvres of the Singhs has broken my measures and placed me in an awkward dilemma. A messenger could not reach Furokhabad in less than 50 days and the Ghaths of Neetee and Kooloo will be

[62]

closed by snow in December, that of Busehur is practicable the whole year but no carriage cattle for hire are procurable upon it and by this road as well as by that of Neetee a portion of the country tributary to China must be passed. The road from Shoojanpoor [?] to Chamba is impassable for Cattle and its Ghaths are also closed in winter. The lower roads to Kashmeer are infested by robbers supported by the Moosulman Chieftains in its neighborhood since Kashmeer has been captured by the Singh or else this would have been the easiest route. But again delay might again take place in Kashmeer through the operations of the Sikhs. And we have no accounts of the state of the roads in Kabool that can be depended upon though I am in daily expectation of receiving letters from Mohummud Azeem Khan and the sons of Meer Quleeck Ulee Khan. Till these come to hand I can do nothing in reference to the goods at Furokhabad although they are particularly desirable. I hope to be able to raise money here for our journey to Yarkund by disposing of some of my merchandize but a much larger sum is required than I [illeg.] for the hire of a Horse being 50 Rs for the journey. Formerly and for many years past several Kafilahs from Yarkund reached Leh every year but not one has arrived during the last seven months which has produced great consternation amongst the Kashmeeree traders whose wares have

63

accumulated at Leh and they are now preparing to carry them to Yarkund themselves. Various reasons have been assigned for the extraordinary interruption to the normal commerce but the most plausible is the following. Omar Khan the King of Ferghana or Khokhan sent an Ambassador annually to Yarkund. The Chinese Custom House Officers finding that for many years back there was a great diminution of the duties on articles imported from Khokhan without an apparent scarcity or diminution of the articles themselves in the market entertained a suspicion of the Ambassador being in the habit of bringing great numbers of Merchants with their wares as Servants it not being usual to search the baggage of Ambassadors. On a more minute enquiry they saw such reason for believing their conjectures founded on fact as to represent the matter to the Governor who requested the King of Khokhan to omit the ceremony of sending an Ambassador annually. Omar Khan offended at the message directed all his subjects to withdraw from Yarkund and the Chinese territory generally or to abide by such consequences as might befall them. The principal traders from Yarkund to Leh are persons called Indujanees from the District of that name subject to the King of Khokhan and it is presumed that they have obeyed the summons of their Sovereign though no hostilities have been

[64]

heard of. I have had another interview with the Kuloon who treated our party with salted Tea, a good Broth thickened with Rice, apples, sweet Cakes and sugar figures of men on horseback, Elephants &c. from Kashmeer, with white and black Grapes the produce of the vallies [sic] of Ludagh. He was extremely attentive and even kind. My present for it is not

customary to approach the Minister empty handed consisted of a Tiara of white Bugles [sic] for a female headdress, a roll of Virginia Pigtail tobacco, two strings of Rock Pink Pearl beads, and a Ceylon Amethyst for a Ring, with about half a dozen Knives. He desired to have the history of the author of the Book I had lent him and I gave it him representing that he and others had interfered more with the religion of the country than the [illeg.] Government approved and were ordered to leave it which they did and on their return to their own Country made the book he then had. He said that the contents of the work printed in the Tibe[tan] character were most exact and evinced great labor and ability on the part of the Author. As it had been strongly reported amongst the Natives that Alexander the Great had visited Leh I enquired if there were any testimonies of the fact in their books. He answered that he had seen a book at Lhasa which stated that Alexander had conquered China

65

but he could not refer to any records or monuments that bore evidence of the truth of that report. He observed that on comparing the Gun I had given him with the Arms that had been brought to Leh by Kashmeerees and others he found it far superior and a very valuable present and he wished me to look at some Matchlocks in his possession. These were from various countries but one rifled with an embossed barrel from Sind was the best. He admired the Knives especially the Clasp ones and also some well finished fine Scissors. I requested that he would oblige me with a drawing or a pattern of a Knife and of a Steel for striking fire that would be approved in this Country and I would cause some hundreds to be made by my countrymen who were particularly expert in works of this kind and would bring or send them to Ludagh. This he promised. He had heard he said of my having the portraits of Runjeet Singh and of Alexander the Great and that I had a convenient apparatus for writing, these he could wish to see if convenient. Having sent for and shewn them to him I observed that it was esteemed by us a mark of friendship in the Chiefs of countries we visited to give us their portraits and I should think the possession of his portrait as a proof of this nature. He said that it should be prepared on which

[66]

taking off a ring of no great value I begged he would wear it as remembrance of me at the same time telling him that the stones were only imitations of diamonds. I shewed him the patterns of merchandize I had brought as samples. He said that Scarlet, Grass Green, Popinjay and Blue if fine were suited for this market with Orange for the dresses of the Lamas, Brown Yellows and Greens for Yarkund but he rejected all demi tints and gave a preference to fine cloths. Chintzes and light [illeg.] of silk and cotton would answer for Yarkund. He wrote my name in the Tibet character and admired a black hard Pencil and some French embossed and ornamented green writing Paper which I gave him. I had purchased some beautiful artificial flowers for the market but have the mortification to find that they have been left out of the Bale in which they were invoiced. I mentioned them to him as both his Cap and that of the other Wuzeer were ornamented with Marigold &c. He enquired the nature of the material and seemed to approve of the article. He was however most pleased with patterns of French silks and brocades and said that one of the former would make a beautiful curtain. The women of this country have very fine hair which they disperse in

67

small tresses and mix at the end with false hair and wool till it reach the ground. What he said would be the effect on the growth of the hair if it were dressed with the contents of the bottle before him Crème de Noyau. I said that I did not expect any benefit from such an application. He then enquired if I had any thing used to increase the growth of the hair and recollecting

some French Pomatum I told him that at our next meeting I would bring something used for this purpose.

I have observed that the Custom-House Officers had examined and weighed our merchandize and had brought an account of the amount of the duties nothing being charged but [what] was represented by us as articles for sale but on being asked for a receipt for the money had gone away saying it was not customary.

11th. This morning Abdool Luteef came for the amount of the duties which was given to him the account being made out in the following manner. The weight of a hundred and twenty Muhmood Shahee Rupees makes one Munwuttee and for seventy Munwuttees amounting to 2 maunds and 25 Sers a duty of thirteen Rupees was levied. My merchandize when weighed amounted to eleven hundred and three Munwuttees for which I paid Two Hundred and Five Rupees. The payment of this duty has caused us to be acknowledged by the Authorities of Leh as Merchants and I consider all farther

[68]

doubt upon this point removed by this transaction. Yesterday Chubbes, as they here call Traders from Lhassa brought many Yaks laden with Tea and this morning Mohsin Baba the Kashmeeree requested permission to see any Corals and Pearls we might have. As ready exchange into cash I had brought red Coral for the Ludagh market and crooked Pearls and light or Almond colored Coral for Yarkund. It appeared that he had been sent by the Kuloon and I apprehend that he wished to purchase and resell to the Chubbes rather than to allow them to apply to us which it is probable when they shall hear of us they will do. I remarked that the larger the Coral the more it attracted his attention and that he preferred the middle sized Pearls either to large or small ones. On enquiring the price he was told that I wished to do business in the large way and in such a manner as to render it advantageous to Traders to deal with me in future. That I knew that more than these prices were asked and obtained for these articles that is three times more than they had cost in Calcutta. That I would shew him the Invoice price and be satisfied with two & a half that is Fifty per cent as a compensation for interest, difference in the value of Rupees, servants wages, carriage & loss on other articles and Cent per Cent as profit. He admitted that the principle was fair but preferred on the

69

whole to choose and agree upon a price for though he entertained not the slightest doubt as to the truth of my accounts as we had not had any dealings he knew not at what hand or rate my purchases were made. The Meer wished me to put these prices at once upon the articles that there might be room for diminution as he conceived these people would be more gratified by effecting this by bargaining than if the diminution proposed were to be made in the first instance and not departed from. I wished to establish a principle to be acted upon in future and would have reduced the returns to 1 and $\frac{1}{4}$ profit at which a valuation of the Coral had been made by Uhmud Joo. Mohsin promised to call again.

Oc^t. 26th. In the hope of having to insert the accomplishment of some commercial arrangement with the authorities of this country I have thus long neglected my journal however the incidents within the period of omission have been neither numerous nor particularly interesting. The Kwajah Shah Neas had been invited by the Kuloon to come into the immediate neighborhood but the former aware of the fears of the latter lest the Small Pox should be introduced by him from Sheh preferred remaining in a Tent until all reasonable ground for apprehension of infection existing should have passed. I sent him mine which however are almost rotten from being exposed to the whole of the last rainy season.

[70]

As a trifling acknowledgement of the very valuable service he has rendered to me in my attempt to introduce British Commerce I offered to the Shah some specimens of British manufactures as Broad Cloth for a dress purchased by me expressly for gifts, green Cotton Velvet particularly valuable from its being the produce of a vegetable and its color, a piece of green Chintz, Snuff Box filled with the Prince Regents mixture, Spectacles, Penknife, Boots and two Behar[?] Turbans. The use of Silk Velvet (as being the excrement of a worm) is interdicted to Moosulmans during the time of prayer but that of Cotton Velvet is not objectionable. This is the first specimen that been seen and from what I learn I think it likely to be in great demand in Moosulman Countries. The Qwajah spoke of his loss with feeling but with resignation. As he had other Sons in Kashmeer he had requested that some medicine the efficacy of which had been greatly extolled by Meer Izzut Oollah might be given to him for transmission and this had been indulged as largely as my much diminished stock would admit. I found the Qwajah possessed of strong understanding cultivated more highly than I expected in a Peerzada and of a friendly, benevolent and apparently liberal disposition.

A Kafilah of about 25 Horses has arrived from Yarkund and has brought Shawl Wool, Felts, Tea and China

71

Silk-goods but no Yamboos or Ingots of Silver which latter circumstance has much disappointed the expectations of the Traders of Leh. The Kafila Bashee reports that other Kafilahs were preparing to come when he left Yarkund. No hostilities had taken place between Omar Khan the King of Khokhan and the Chinese nor was there any stop to commercial communications. The interruption to the Kafilahs coming from Yarkund arose from the market of Yarkund not having had a quick demand for the Brocades and white Cloths &c. purchased by the last Kafilahs at Leh and from the Traders having taken them to Bokhara to which the report of Tea being dear at the latter place was an additional inducement to carry that article to that Capital rather than to Leh where it was said to be cheap. All the Horses were Geldings except two and there did not seem to be any difference in their condition. They were all very low and the points of their Shoulders and upper parts of the ribs were galled from the bad constructions of the pack saddle the inconvenient pressure of which produced galling on prominent parts when the fat of the animals is absorbed. The Horses are of two breeds differing more in size and strength than in form as they are both ugly and of coarse proportions but remarkable for the great depth and length of the Chest and the great strength of their fore legs. The smaller kind are of the Kirghiz and the larger of the Kosak breeds. Both are

[72]

more fit for burthens of merchandize than for the saddle. Mares are not used because when mixed with Geldings or Horses they are troublesome. Eewees[?] Mahummud a Merchant of Tooran but who has bought in the Punjab a large investment of Cloth has purchased the whole lot of the Kafilah Horses at 50 Rs a head, two have died but the rest though poor will recover. He feeds them with Lucerne Hay, Wheat Straw & whole Barley. They will require six weeks to be recruited but he thinks that he shall by means of these Animals be sufficiently early in the market to repay him for his speculation. The Qwajah has sent me some small lead Canisters of fine Tea, two pair of felt Boots, four large felt Blankets and two Melons which he has received from his friends at Yarkund. The Melons are large green and yellow, slightly corded. One contains green pulp and is of the kind called Sucrée in France, the other approaches to the Musk variety. Both are well flavored and have been well preserved considering they have been carried on horseback during a journey of six weeks. The Melons

pulled in Autumn are said to keep good through the whole winter. Although inferior to a good Apple yet as it is said they grow freely in the open Air at Yarkund I will send the seeds to Britain as they may grow in the Garden of the Cottager and afford him a variety that has not yet reached his table. The quantity of Tea now ac-

73

cumulated in Leh is large as that brought by the Chubbe amounted to five hundred Maunds. All Tea from Lhassa to Leh is carried by the peasantry belonging to the former up to the frontier of the latter from one station to another. The peasantry of Leh then bring it forwards without expense to the Merchant.

It also enters the Country of Ludakh free of duty. The Chubbe has not been able to sell his Tea as no Yamboos have arrived from Yarkund and he does not receive Rupees in payment. The Kashmeeree Merchants apprehensive that I am desirous of purchasing Shawl wool have set forth the ill consequences that may on this account befall the income of the Kuloon in the strongest colors. And by representing that we can take it off by the road of Neetee diirect from the Country of Gurdokh without its passing through his hands have considerably excited his fears. To the Raja they have stated that our designs are not commercial but that they are of this complection [sic] merely for the purpose of seeing the Country and subsequently of taking it. Their most active advocate is an Officer called Lompa whose business I have not learnt .It was recommended that all articles of food should be with-held from us and for one day nothing could be procured in the Bazar but the following day the order was retracted and no further difficulty ensued. I have most carefully avoided giving ground for their harbouring suspicion in regard

[74]

to purchase of Shawl Wool neither having made any enquiry respecting this article nor countenanced it in others. The Kuloon much alarmed vacillates in his opinions he has not yet dared to visit Qwajah Shah Neas for fear of the Small-Pox which he has not had and amongst all adults that contract this disease in the natural way die. But he has sent Kagha Tunzeen and the second or Noona Wuzeer at different times to the Qwajah to learn his sentiments and to receive re-assurance of confidence from him when his belief in our motives and objects has been shaken. Kagha Tunzeen sent for Meer Izzut Oollah Khan and informed him that reports were propagated in opposition to our having mercantile operations in view. Much discussion and the Kagha appeared convinced of our objects being commercial only.

On the 21st the Kuloon, the Noona Kuloon, the Kuloon's Son in law Kagha and another Officer who was not known to us proceeded with Mohsin Baba and Abdool Luteef to the Tents of Qwajah Shah Neas and requested his attendance at a house in the Neighborhood where a dinner was prepared in honor of him. After the repast the Kuloon represented that he had received cautionary letters from Gurdokh respecting the Europeans now at Leh that a Kuloon from Lhassa had come to Gurdokh to enquire into the cause of the visits of Europeans

75

to that country having been so frequent of late years. That the Malik of Kashmeer had cautioned him against the designs of the Europeans and reminded him of the offence he might give to Raja Runjeet Singh by countenancing their projects and promised soon to come to his assistance, and that Ahmud Shah the Malik of Balti had written to him for information regarding the designs of the Europeans. By advice from Gurdokh as well as from Peetee he had learnt that an European with forty attendants had reached the latter place by the Busehur road but that the Authorities of Peetee having refused to permit [him] to advance into the

interior he had returned. And information was sent to him from Undeleh that thirty Strangers had lately come there, that on being questioned as to who they were and their business they replied that they were Sikhs and they were come to purchase Wool but that on being told they might begin to purchase, they could only muster the sum of Forty Rupees and went away. That under all these circumstances he wished for the counsel of his old friend. The Qwajah replied that the Kuloon's conduct was wholly within his own power being as he was an independent Chief. That he the Qwajah saw not what ground Runjeet Singh or the Malik of Kashmeer had to interfere in his concerns unless he meant to acknowledge himself a Tributary to the Sikh Chief and if so he

[76]

thought advice superfluous. That he considered the interference of the authorities of Gurdokh just as uncalled for and as impertinent as that of Runjeeet Singh or his Servant. On the appearance of the Sikhs he could form no conclusion but he thought a refusal to the English Gentleman was as unfriendly as it was ill judged, however he would confine his sentiments to the matter in which he had accidentally, though at the request of the Kuloon become a kind of party. When the Kuloon had before by letter applied to him for his advice on the subject of permitting the Europeans to visit Leh he had recommended him to receive them and to treat them as friends. He had received them it was true but as yet he had not learnt that he had given them any proofs of friendship and he had so far neglected to follow that advice he had shewn himself anxious to obtain.

It had been imputed to him the Qwajah that he had sent for the Europeans that they might take his Country. The imputation was as untrue as absurd. The Kuloon must recollect that when Moohummud Azeem Khan had actually completed his preparations for the invasion of Ludakh he the Qwajah had gone to him and through his personal influence had prevailed upon him to abandon his design.

It was not likely that he should act with such inconsistency

77

as to avert an invasion of Ludakh at one time and to invite it at another. But the absurdity of the reports was obvious. He was a person of no political importance. He had no connections with the British Govt. nor could any reasoning of his be supposed of consequence enough to influence their Councils. They acted from their own views of things which from their results seemed to be founded in wisdom and prudence. He knew not nor was known to any Englishman save the two individuals at Leh and this as the Kuloon was aware in a very cursory manner. He had heard that the British Government was a mighty Power that had overspread almost the whole of the former Mogool Empire in India and that the vigor of their rule was only equalled by its justice. That they had lately punished the Goorkhas by taking away part of their conquests and that by this acquisition they had actually become Leh's Neighbors through occupying Busehur where he understood a portion of their Army was also stationed. This circumstance he conceived ought to have considerable weight in influencing the Kuloons decisions and in bestowing upon them a conciliating and friendly character That in his the Qwajahs view of probable events other changes might take place which might bring the British even still nearer than they now were. However availing [?] these considerations he conceived that the benefits Ludakh would secure from an increased commercial communication

[78]

with the subjects of so great a Government ought in common prudence to induce the Kuloon to encourage the intercourse by acts of friendship. The Kuloon recognised him as an old

friend; he was now about to leave his country but he wished not to depart without giving him a solid testimonial of his friendship through recommending to him a line of conduct which might prove as creditable to his judgment as beneficial to his interests.

Meer Izzut Oollah was then called in and desired by the Kuloon to state the nature and extent of my wishes or expectations in regard to him; to which he answered that they were as follows, viz

First Free liberty to trade with Ludakh and through it to other countries

Secondly. That in consideration of the great distance whence British property was brought there should be some remission of duties upon it.

Thirdly. That a House should be hired in Leh to be occupied as a British Factory.

Fourthly. That the good offices of the Kuloon were required to be exerted with the Authorities of Gurdokh to open the Neetee Ghat to British Commerce.

The three first points were specially discussed and agreed to. On the subject of Gurdokh the Kuloon observed that he had no power there and he much doubted whether the local authorities had the power to decide upon a point of so much importance as that

79

intended to be agitated. It was remarked that his friendly aid alone was desired, which would be suitably acknowledged whatever might be the result of the discussion. He promised to write but this was declined as insufficient, he then proposed to direct Ahmud Khan his Agent to employ his interest. This was also objected [to] and it was proposed that some person in his confidence as Kagha Tunzeen or Mohsin Baba should accompany me to Gurdokh. Kagha Tunzeen remarked that though the British might not act with hostility towards Gurdokh so many Europeans might enter the Province as by their influence might annihilate the power of the present Government and gain possession without force. It was observed in reply that if this objection were made by the Gurdokh Authorities it might be met by limitation of numbers. It being also agreed that a suitable person on the part of the Kuloon should go along with me to Gurdokh the Meer desired to know whether he was to consider himself authorised to report to me the points discussed as agreed upon to which the Kuloon replied that he would lay the whole matter before the Raja the next day and inform the Meer of his decision. It being thoroughly known that the whole business of the Government is in the hand of the Kuloon and that the Raja is a mere Cypher Izzut Oollah remarked that under [the] circumstances [it seemed] to him that no progress had been really made if he were not permitted by the Kuloon to inform me that the points

[80]

discussed had been finally settled. A pause occurring here Qwajah Shah Neas desired the Meer to withdraw. He then told the Kuloon that he was sorry to see an indecision in his sentiments which he had not expected but that in the same spirit of friendship towards him by which he had hitherto been actuated he would set before him in few words the danger to which an undecided conduct would expose his interests. If you do not said the Qwajah avail yourself in a friendly and decided manner of the opportunity now offered to you of receiving the benefits of British Commerce it is the intention of the Sahib to proceed to Balti. Ahmud Khan the Chief of that Country will receive him with open Arms. You know full well that Balti was the ancient line by which Commerce was carried on from the eastern part of the Country with Yarkund and Budukshan and you may readily foresee the consequences of its revival. You will have the mortification to see Kafilahs pass through your Country to enrich your Neighbor and Rival without being able to prevent them except by an appeal to arms of which the event is uncertain. By degrees you will see your present prosperous trade decline

and slide into another Channel. The Kuloon did not permit the Kwajah to proceed further but seizing the skirt of his Robe desired the Meer might be called in again. He then requested the Qwajah to come to

81

Leh that he might have the benefit of his farther advice in finally settling the business. This was agreed to and the meeting broke up.

We have been called upon to pay rent for the House we occupy which has been settled at fifteen Rupees per Month. I had heard from Ahmud Khan at Gurdokh that the Country of Ludakh had once been rescued from the power of an invading Horde of Tatars by the interference of the Mogool Sovereign of Hindoostan and the following are the particulars. During the reign of Arungzeb the Kalmaks invaded the principality of Ludakh and dispossessed the Raja of his country who flying to Kashmeer implored the assistance of its Soobadar Ibrahim Khan the son of the public spirited Alee Murdan Khan. The Rajas application was forwarded to the Emperor who directed that aid should be afforded provided the Raja would become a Moosulman which he immediately did taking the name of Akbut Mahmood and doing homage to Arungzeb for his dominions. Under the command of Ibrahim and Fidaee Khan the imperial forces entered Ludakh and gave battle to the Kalmaks. The engagement lasted several hours and night parted the combatants without any decided advantage having been gained on either side The hostile forces encamped in sight of each other with a determination to renew the fight on the following day, but accident ordered it otherwise. In the night it was customary to illuminate

[82]

a large space round the tents of the principal imperial Officers with a species of fire work, which by the kind of light it diffused was called Mahtabee or Moonshine. The object of this light was to prevent thieves or assassins entering the tents unperceived. When the Kalmaks beheld the unusual object of the sky illuminated in a very dark night over the enemy's camp struck with astonishment and terror they abandoned their own and fled precipitately, exclaiming that it was impossible for them to contend against an Antagonist who by the force of his enchantments could change night into day. The Mogools replaced the Raja on his seat and the Emperor to confirm the Chief in his new faith and attachment ordered a tract of land in Lahore worth seven thousand Rupees a year to be granted to him in Jagheer. The converted Raja built and endowed a Mosque at Leh and soon after died. His Son and Successor fell off from the faith of Islam and returned to that of his ancestors, which being reported to the Emperor he deputed an Officer to proceed to Leh and enquire into the fact. Information of his approach being carried to the apostate Raja he attempted to avert the threatened danger by an apparent conformity to the worship prescribed by the Koran. But as the interval to the period of the expected arrival of the Moslem Inquisitor was too short to admit of his becoming thoroughly acquainted with all the ordinances prescribed to the

83

disciples of Moohummud his instructor recommended him generally to follow the example of the Imam and imitate all he should see him do appearing also to repeat prayers. During the first part of the service the Scrutineer observed no difference between the conduct of the Raja and the demeanor of the most attentive and devout Moosulman, but when after certain prayers the Minister stood up to say the Kootbah, and the congregation remained in the attitude of prayer the Raja imitating the movements of the Imam placed himself in an erect position and thus betrayed his ignorance of Mohummedan forms. The discovery of the deception was immediately made known to Arungzeb who learning that the Mosque was kept

in good order, that Moosulmans were settled in Ludakh and were allowed to practise all the ceremonies of their religion unmolested directed that the Raja should be punished for his apostasy by the loss of the Jagheer granted to his father but that he should be allowed peaceably to pursue his own religion and be considered as under the protection of the imperial power. The Mosque and its appointments have ever since been maintained by an appropriation of a certain proportion of the tax imposed on every load of merchandise imported into Leh and the Raja is nominally a dependant upon the Throne of Dehli. From the time of Arungzeb to the present time annual gifts have been sent to the possessor

[84]

of Kashmeer as representative of the Sovereign of Dehli.

Memorandum respecting Rhubarb¹³

“All the Rhubarb of Commerce is brought from the Chinese town Sini or Selim¹⁴ by the Bucharians. It grows on the neighbouring chain of lofty Mountains which stretches to the Lake Koko Nor, near the source of the River Chorico between 35° and 40° North Lat.” Dun: Ed: Disp: An 1816. Page 232 & 3 Art: Rh cum:

This information is given on the Authority of Professor Pallas, but with whatever deference the testimony of this great Man may in general be regarded it would appear from the evidence of Merchants who have lived at Yarkund and of those who have resided at “Sini” that in these particulars he has been misinformed. That the Rhubarb plant is of most extensive growth is obvious from the accounts of Marco Polo, Du Halde, De Guignes and the Authors of *les Lettres Edifiantes*, and I may venture to observe, that it was met with by me on the Garhwhal Mountains near Joshee Muth, and in various parts of the road from that place to Gurtope or Gurhdokh in the Country of Chanthan called by me by the Hindoostanee appellation of Oondes or the Country of Wool in the year 1812. In 1820 specimens of the roots of Rhubarb with fresh leaves attached dug up two days before at the southern foot of the northernmost Mountains of Kangra were brought for my inspection by the orders of Raja Sunsar Chund, at Shoojanpur Teera his present residence. On the Pass of Rutanku [Rohtang], at Tandee the Capital of Lahoul, at Lubrung and on several other Mountains

85

I also found Rhubarb and traced it into the country of Ludakh. The roots of this plant in this journey were smaller than those I formerly saw on the Mountains of Neetee and in Chanthan. But all the roots seen in both journeys that were of a considerable size were rotten in the core or centre, the sides alone being sound and fit for medical purposes. And if the purgative quality of the sound parts was not impaired by its contact with the diseased core, the drug itself, if suitably dried and prepared, would have appeared very inferior to that imported into Britain from Russia and Turkey. But from course trials made on both I think a larger dose of the Himachal Rhubarb is required to produce a complete evacuation of the intestines than that of Russia. I have examined much Rhubarb in the Shops of Druggists in many of the principal Cities in India but have never found any pieces as good as those which are usually brought into Britain from Russia and Turkey. And from their shape and their being covered with the skin as cut up without being rasped as well as from their color I am led to believe that the China rhubarb does not come into Hindoostan in any considerable quantity by land and that the whole of the Rhubarb I have seen in the Druggists shops has been the produce of the Himaleh, Tibet and Mountains of Afghanistan. I have met with it growing in such abundance that two men have dug up in two hours more roots than three men could carry but none of the large ones were wholly free from rottenness.

Perhaps the existence of the same disease in the Rhubarb that grows in the Russian Mountains may have induced the Empress Catherine 2^d

[86]

to depute Mr Sievers, Apothecary to that part of the Russian frontier adjoining the border of China from which Rhubarb is brought, for the purpose of procuring that variety of the plant, which yields the Drug most fit for medical use or as it was entitled “the true Rhubarb plant[”]. But this Gentleman, though he “travelled for several years in the countries contiguous to that whence Rhu[barb] is brought” was not successful in his efforts to obtain the plant itself or even to determine its botanical characters. He “is of opinion that the botanical characters of the plant which furnishes it, are still unknown, excepting that it is said not to grow to a great size and to have round leaves, which are toothed on the edges with almost spinous points.” Dun:Ed: Disp.

Considering that the trade in Rhubarb is open to all the Chinese, who may wish to engage in it, and referring to the venal character of this race and the great quantity of the article, it is somewhat extraordinary that success should not have followed an offer of reward to any Trader who should have brought to the Commissioner, a Rhubarb Root with the Root-stalk, Leaves and parts of fructification attached, and this expedient was so very obvious that one can scarcely suppose it to have been overlooked, or neglected. Mr Sievers thought that the Rhubarb of Commerce is produced by a variety of this plant not known to Europeans but the grounds of this opinion are perhaps not wholly conclusive. In the course of my journeys I have seen Rhubarb plants of which the leaves were deeply indented with sharpish points; others less

87

but still considerably indented with points less sharp; some with edges slightly scolloped and the extremities of the ribs blunt or rounded; and others again, nearly circular, allowance being made for the plaiting produced by the ribs. The varieties of Rhubarb acknowledged by Botanists are the palmated, undulated and compact. Those seen by me might perhaps be called digitated, palmated, undulated and compact. But though at first sight the differences might appear to constitute distinct varieties, I doubt whether they be permanent, or accidental, and on the latter supposition, arising from difference in elevation, aspect, soil, quality and quantity of moisture, as I have seen these varieties differing greatly amongst themselves as to size, color and luxuriance in different localities. I entertain this doubt with less difficulty from having observed the powerful influence of these circumstances in modifying the appearance of other plants with which I was better acquainted and of which the difference in a valley and on a mountain, about a thousand feet higher with an horizontal distance of only two miles, was so striking as much to surprise me and would probably have excited surprise in any other observer than a botanist experienced in the effects of highly contrasted localities on the same species of vegetable. If the varieties seen by me were really permanent it may be matter of doubt whether the fitness of the root for medical purposes, depend upon a specific variety of plant or upon locality and climate

[88]

for as before remarked, I have never yet met with any large root of any of the varieties mentioned that has not been affected with rottenness at its centre.

Rhubarb said to be fit for commerce is reported by a very intelligent Merchant of Yarkund to be produced largely on the northern face of the Chain of Mountains, which separates the Chinese Country of Khotan* from the Lhassan Province of Changthan, and not more than fourteen days journey from Leh, the place at which I now write. But as direct communication

between these Countries is forbidden by the Chinese, the Rhubarb of Khotan cannot reach this City except by the circuitous route of Yarkund and in fact this Drug is brought here in a very small quantity for medical use by its inhabitants alone, as no Merchant trades in it for farther transport.

Prof. Pallas is supported in his statement of Rhubarb being found at Sini or in the snowy Mountains (Suechan) by Du Halde who says “qui s’etendent depuis Leang-telion jusqu’a San-telion, et a Sining-telion.” The “Bucharians”, Prof. Pallas asserts “belong to the town of Selin (the Sinin of the Jesuits Map) which is situated to the south-west of Koko-nor or the blue lake towards Tibet &c. The River upon which the

* [Here Moorcroft leaves a blank space for a footnote that he has omitted to write]

89

town stands and from whence it derives its name is the rapid Selingol, formed by the junction of two mountain streams and which discharges itself into the Khalthungol or as it is called by the Chinese the Khoange or Khongo”. Reise. Note 397. Marsden’s Marco Polo. The Selin of Pallas, Sining-tcheon of Du Halde, Sinin of the Jesuits Map and Sining of Marco Polo is the modern Siling. My informant Kurm Joo, who acts as a Broker to Mohsin Ulee, the British Factor at Leh¹⁵, resided three years at Siling and during this time never saw any Rhubarb exposed for sale in the Bazar of that town to the best of his recollection nor any pass through it in its way to any other Country. There are fifteen mercantile Houses of Kashmeerees in Siling* which trade with Lhassa but no Bokharans reside there nor do any visit this town as Merchants. Chubbas or Lhassan Merchants now at Leh corroborate Kurm Joos report by asserting that fine Rhubarb constitutes no part of the merchandise sent from Siling to Lhassa and also that no Bokharans live in Siling or carry on commerce with it. The assertions of Prof. Pallas on these points are questioned not out of a spirit of criticism but to shew that no Rhubarb of the right kind finds its way from China by Siling and Lhassa as might have been presumed had they remained without examination. If M. Pallas had stated

*Note. In a point likely to concern Kurm Joos interest however remotely I would not rely on his evidence nor presume to place it in opposition to such respectable authority as that of M. Pallas, but as it is in no degree affected, as he has resided at Siling and as his testimony is strengthened both in this and other points by other individuals equally uninterested in the question but acquainted with the Commerce of Siling I cannot but consider it as worthy of being credited.

[90]

generally that the best Rhubarb came to Russia from the interior of China, the position would not have been open to doubt; Mullah Partab a Native of Khojund, who from his youth to the age of sixty has been engaged in Commerce betwixt Russia, Oosbeck and Chinese Toorkistan Ludakh, and the Punjab, reports that the Rhubarb of Commerce is raised in the Chinese Districts of Langanjoo or Lanshoo and Soochoo. The latter is not greatly distant from the Country in which Siling is situated whence it is probable that this District as well as many others may contribute to the large quantity annually exported. Nor is it improbable that by suitable arrangements, in the course of time, Rhubarb of quality fitted for medical use might through the intervention of the Kashmeerees residing at Siling, be brought by the route of Lhassa to Hindoostan.

The Caravan, which annually leaves the Districts before mentioned is said to amount to betwixt three and four thousand Camels loaded principally with Tea Rhubarb and silken stuffs, figured and flowered with Damask work, the ground and ornaments being of the same color, but the pieces of various colors as scarlet, crimson, rose, light blue, dark blue and purple the latter of which is said to be preferred in the Russian markets. These Silks are called Taur [appar. sic] and Linzee. Yamboos or Ingots of Silver constitute a part of the charge of

this Caravan. Although I may have disturbed the statement of M. Pallas as to the town whence the Rhubarb is dispatched I am yet unable to say precisely at what other point

91

the Traders assemble, but the Caravan sets out generally about the end of August, the Camels being then in good condition from having browsed without working during the whole of the Summer. Before this time the journey could not be undertaken with convenience on account of the swollen state of the Rivers from the melted Snows of the Mountains and of great numbers of a kind of fly which during the hot season attacks Camels and annoys them dreadfully when loaded*. The Caravan on first setting out, or soon afterwards, divides into two parts of which one taking a northern direction, goes to Taetee, presumed to be Kiachta, a Russian frontier Mart on the left bank of the River Silinginsk, Tula? Marco Polo. [appar. sic]. The other by Kambool,[∞] Toorfan, Kara-shuhr, (Black City) Ooroomchee, Bae, Syrum and Aksoo, proceeds to Yarkund, which city it reaches in December, or January, the averaged time for performing the journey being about four months.

At Aksoo the Caravan is met by Tooranee Merchants called Tashkundee, Namanga, Kokhune and Mulgulanee from the towns at which they usually reside. These purchase much of the merchandise take it to Eela and if they do not dispose of it there convey it intact[?] to the interior of Russia.

[∞] Kamul, Terfon, Harashan, Aksu, Yarkand of M Polo

* Whilst my party was crossing the Himachul in the hot and rainy season that variety of Bot fly called Oestrus Dorsales, deposited its Eggs in the skin of the back of several of our Horses to their great annoyance.

Perhaps it availed itself of this Nidus from the scarcity of Neat Cattle in these Mountains as this variety is found always to prefer them in Europe for this purpose and though I have seen the Pupae of other flies in the backs of Horses I have never before met with this variety thus situated.¹⁶

[92]

From Yarkund the Caravan goes by Kashgar and Indejan in Khokan to Bokhara but other Tooranee Merchants in various parts of this journey buy many Camel loads of the Merchandise and carry it also to Russia by different routes. The Chinese Traders who conducted it from the interior of their country accompany it no farther than Yarkund and Kashgar being forbidden to pass beyond the frontier of the Chinese Empire, by the orders of their Government. At Bokhara Nogaee¹⁷ Merchants and also Merchants from Meshed, Isfahan and Shiraz are competitors for the Merchandise of the Caravan, but as the former possess very large Capitals and give liberal prices they procure the pre-emption, and the latter seldom obtain any other articles, than those rejected by the Nogaees through their overabundance, or inferiority. With a Caravan of which the Cattle are furnished by Kosaks the Nogaees cross the Desert that intervenes between Bokhara and the Russian frontier on which latter border Merchants from Orenburg usually await their arrival and barter against the Tea, Rhubarb and Silks of China such articles of Russian manufacture as suit the markets of Oosbuk and Chinese Toorkistan, the purchase being seldom made with Coin. If the Persian Merchants have reason to think that the market of Astrakhan will be profitable they traverse the country of Oorgunj and the Caspian to that City otherwise crossing Persia to Baghdad they convey their Wares to such Marts in the Turkish Empire as are likely to afford them the more profitable vend.

End notes by the transcriber (see also transcriber's notes on the text in separate document).

¹ H.H. Wilson, editor of Moorcroft's published *Travels*, remarks in a fn. that according to info received by Trebeck, the last village of Lahul should rather be called Darcha, and Labrang is further to the NE. (Moorcroft, *Travels*, I, 210)

² Martin Mere, six miles from Ormskirk where Moorcroft was brought up, is today a protected wetland and nature centre. For its history see Hale, W.G. and Audrey Coney: *Martin Mere: Lancashire's Lost Lake* https://books.google.co.in/books?id=LPNTHGngfW8C&pg=PA94&lpg=PA94&dq=martin+Meer&source=bl&ots=F2sp7g1cE-&sig=TXX-JrklMp9N_tIDIsnMEoq1HTY&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjZ-ZiK05rNAhUBoZQKH9rAwoQ6AEIHZAB#v=onepage&q&f=false. Accessed 09.06.2016. From this preview it emerges that Scarisbrick was the name of the local manorial proprietors.

³ Wilson elides all the discussion of grains into a single phrase: Siberian barley. (*Ibid.*, 226, see also p. 204). *Jau* (Moorcroft's *jou*) is the Hindustani word for barley.

⁴ Najaf Ali doesn't, as far as my recollection goes, feature by name in the published *Travels*, though at this point Wilson does enumerate Mir Izzat Ullah's son among the party visiting the Raja of Gia. But see SIMON DIGBY: TRAVELS IN LADAKH 1820-21: THE ACCOUNT OF MOORCROFT'S PERSIAN *MUNSHI*, HAJJI SAYYID 'ALI, OF HIS TRAVELS. London, *Asian Affairs*, vol 29, 299-301. A partial translation of Najaf Ali's Persian text is among the late Simon Digby's papers, which are at the time of writing being sorted and catalogued in SOAS. From Digby's account he may not actually have been Mir Izzat Ullah's son, but his nephew or younger brother—certainly a close associate of the Mir.

⁵ Gale is defined in the 1959 edn. of Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary (second meaning) as bog myrtle, which is a low plant with fragrant leaves found in the Scottish Highlands. Moorcroft seems to use the term generically to mean a low shrub. The plant he is describing is surely seabuckthorn (*Hippophae*) (which is not at all like bog-myrtle).

⁶ The much-quoted description of the crowds in Wilson's edition of the *Travels* may be taken from another source, e.g. a letter from Moorcroft to one of his many correspondents, but doesn't appear in the Journal. It runs as follows:

...in the groups were mingled the good-humoured faces of the Ladakhi, and the sullen and designing countenances of the Kashmiris, the high bonnets of Yarkand, and the bare heads of the Lamas, with the long lappets and astonished looks of the women. (*Ibid.*, 246)

This has tended to be used to disparage the Kashmiris; or alternatively to show Moorcroft as prejudiced against them, and talking in stereotypes.

⁷ See note 17 below.

⁸ If Wikipedia is to be believed, the kaleidoscope was invented and patented only in 1817, so it's interesting to find Moorcroft distributing these objects only three years later, in 1820, in remotest trans-Himalaya.

⁹ Wilson omits some of Moorcroft's descriptive details, and adds others, no doubt from a letter. (*Ibid.*, 249–51)

¹⁰ Noyau is defined by Wiktionary as 'A French liqueur made at [Poissy](#) in north central France from [brandy](#) and flavoured with [almonds](#) and the pits of [apricots](#) since the early nineteenth century.' An appropriate offering for Ladakhis.

¹¹ '[Ratafia](#) is a term used for two types of sweet alcoholic beverage, either a [fortified wine](#) or a fruit-based beverage.' More details at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratafia>

¹² Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary (1959 edn.) tells me that trap-ball is 'an old game played with a trap, bat and ball'. Perhaps this is what Moorcroft is referring to.

¹³ Why rhubarb? I've often wondered on coming across frequent mention of the plant in Moorcroft's writings. From the present 'Memorandum' I infer that its root was used for medicinal purposes, as a purgative; and that it was an important article of trade. Wikipedia informs me that

Rhubarb root has been used for medical purposes by the Chinese for thousands of years, and appears in [The Divine Farmer's Herb-Root Classic](#) which is thought to have been compiled about 2,700 years ago.....

During Islamic times, it was imported along the [Silk Road](#), reaching Europe in the 14th century through the ports of [Aleppo](#) and [Smyrna](#), where it became known as "Turkish rhubarb". Later, when the usual route lay through Russia, "Russian rhubarb" became the familiar term.

For centuries, the plant has grown wild along the banks of the [River Volga](#), ... The cost of transportation across Asia made rhubarb expensive in medieval Europe. It was several times the price of other valuable herbs and spices such as [cinnamon](#), [opium](#), and [saffron](#). The merchant explorer [Marco Polo](#) therefore searched for the place where the plant was grown and harvested, discovering that it was cultivated in the mountains of [Tangut](#) province. The value of rhubarb can be seen in [Ruy Gonzáles de Clavijo](#)'s report of his embassy in 1403–05 to [Timur](#) in [Samarkand](#): "The best of all merchandise coming to Samarkand was from

China: especially silks, satins, musk, rubies, diamonds, pearls, and rhubarb..."

<https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Rhubarb>. Accessed 29.05.2016.

¹⁴ I'm not 100 per cent certain about the transcription of some of the unfamiliar geographical names in this section. I'm also not familiar with Moorcroft's method of abbreviating his references, so they too might require double-checking from the original.

¹⁵ 'British Factor at Leh'?? This is news to me. Did the British in fact employ a 'native' Factor to look after their interests at Leh before Moorcroft's visit? What interests? I'm really puzzled by this phrase casually thrown out.

¹⁶ 'The **Oestridae** are a family of flies variously known as **bot flies**, **warble flies**, **heel flies**, **gadflies**, and similar names. Their **larvae** are internal parasites of mammals, some species growing in the host's flesh and others within the gut.' More on Wikipedia at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botfly>

¹⁷ According to Wikipedia, the Nogais were a nomadic ethnic group living in Turkey, the Caucasus and around the Black Sea. There is no hint in the two relevant Wikipedia entries of their also being a prosperous trading community, as Moorcroft's account, based no doubt on inputs from traders coming from Yarkand, implies. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nogais> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nogai_Horde