



©

ACROSS THE BORDER

OR

PATHÂN AND BILOCH

Summary BY
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ILLUSTRATED BY
J. L. KIPLING, C.I.E., &c., &c.

WITH A MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF ALL THE TRIBES
AND THE SURROUNDING COUNTRIES

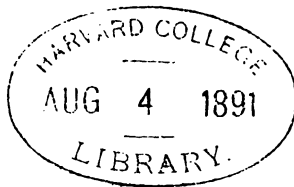
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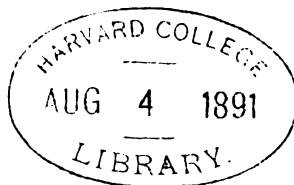
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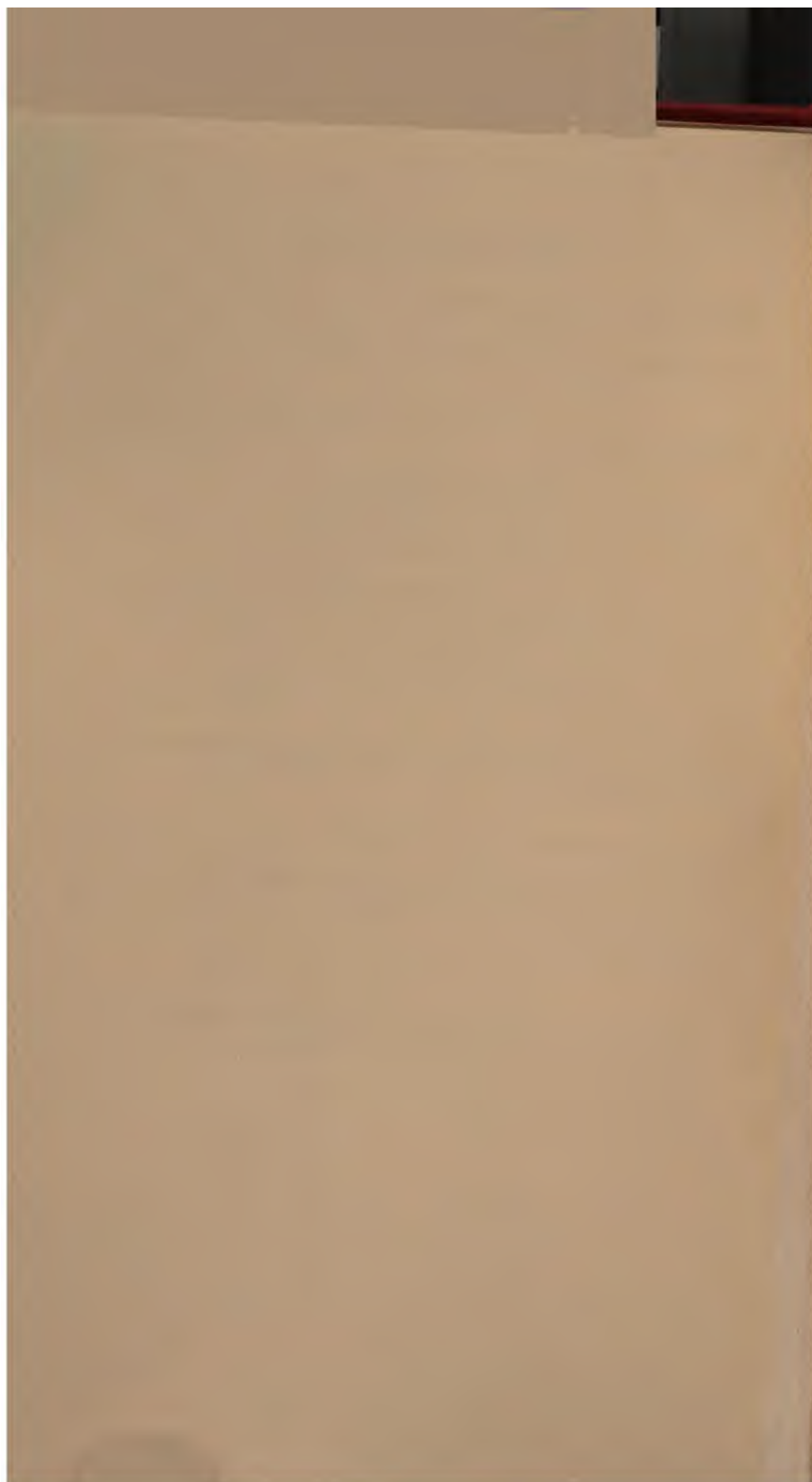
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RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

OUR past and present relations with the North-West frontier of India are not inaptly typified by Mr. Kipling's two sketches. The magnificent "leader" of the caravan slowly threading its way through passes and across deserts, from the distant cities of Central Asia to the marts of Ind, is being fast displaced by the less picturesque but more potent locomotive, and the iron road for which Mr. O'Callaghan's men are tearing a hole through the last range separating us from Kandahâr—a road that before many years are over may possibly see through booking to Europe *via* Samrkand and Bukhâra.

Up to a few years ago, the English action that prevailed in regard to this frontier was fairly summed up in the expression "masterly inactivity." Less than a decade ago, not only were the Afghâns to be left to "stew in their own juice," a scientific frontier ridiculed, the Gandamak treaty abrogated, Kandahâr abandoned, the Quetta railway stopped, but, it was "hoped that Peshin and Sibi might at no distant date be evacuated." Along the whole of the trans-Indus districts from Peshawur to Sind, a length of 400 or 500 miles, including all the

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most important passes, there was not, after some thirty-five years of occupation, a single road worthy of the name. The Indus was unbridged, a railway had certainly crept up towards Peshawur, but under protest, and after a warm discussion as to whether a narrow gauge along the edge of the trunk road should not suffice. There were not wanting advocates of a more forward policy,



"From Kandahâr"—The Leading Camel of the Kâfila.

both in India and in England, but the general tendency was to let matters slide; the place of action taken by polemical discussion, the only expenditure, an expenditure of magazine articles.

The Border itself was managed on a strictly close system. Negotiations with the Kâbul Court were practically conducted by the Commissioner of Peshawur, its military arrangements were under the immediate orders of the Lieut.-Governor of the

Punjab. All dealings with the tribes beyond were settled by the adjoining district officers, whose hands were tied with every possible restriction. While the Russians from their side were exploring and exploiting—often to our considerable annoyance—our officers were forbidden in any way to lift the *purdah* that was metaphorically hung along the whole, as carefully as if behind it was concealed the most sacred harem. Instead of our officers being encouraged to obtain information regarding the neighbouring people and territories, they were discouraged, prohibited, liable to be punished for any endeavour of the kind. Within a few miles of this arbitrary barrier there were—and there are still—important passes and valleys of considerable fertility and extent indicated on our maps by blanks, their resources and capacities so many sealed books. It used to be said, somewhat flippantly perhaps, that so solid was our ignorance, if a hostile army had been brought up to within striking distance of the Border, we could not have been certain of its precise whereabouts. So far the gods were on our side, however, that neither men nor horses could have been fed, but the assertion indicated the policy of shutting our eyes to all possible contingencies. Much of the information acquired was often in spite of orders, and almost by stealth. Even now, such as exists is too often elaborately and carefully locked up, in a form so confidential, as to be known to all anxious to obtain it, with the exception of the officers who are likely to most need it. “Strictly confidential” frontier maps and publications are probably more easily obtainable in Petersburg than in Peshawur.

To remedy what was not less a discredit to our administration than a source of the greatest danger to India, and contingently of misfortune to England, very much has undoubtedly been accomplished during the last ten years. And if there is any truth in the dictum that obvious preparedness for war is the best security for peace, another ten years of similar

progress should render the contingency still more remote. In this connection ought never to be forgotten the debt of gratitude owed to the persistent placing of the facts before the country, the merciless exposure of ridiculous theories about impassable deserts, and the constant hammering away with unanswerable arguments, of the late Sir Charles Macgregor, and others, at the time called "alarmists." Combined, it may be added, with the hearty co-operation and wise forethought of men like Lord Dufferin and Sir Frederick Roberts.

Within the Border at least, communications are rapidly being made good, if not perfected. The railway has been carried through from Karâchi to Peshawur without a break, crossing the Indus by splendid bridges at Sukkur and Attock. From either extreme of the line there is through communication by the Hurnai and Bolân railways to the Khwâjah Amrân. A few months more will see this range tunnelled for a double line to our outpost at Chaman, capable of extension to Kandahâr on the shortest notice. The opening of the bridge over the Chenâb at Sher-Shâh, completes a line from Multân, linking in the frontier cantonments of Dera Ghâzi and Dera Ismail, with the great garrison of Rawal Pindi and the base at Lahore. An extension is under construction to Marri, opposite Kâlabâgh, and a survey in progress will connect this again with the branch to Khushalgarh, and with the main line at Attock, and so provide a line along the Indus from the Kâbul river to the sea. It is only necessary to connect this at one end with the Bombay, Baroda and Central India system, and extend it at the other by Hazâra to the Jhelam Valley and Kashmir, to enable the resources of India to be promptly concentrated at any point along the entire frontier referred to in the following chapters, from Karâchi to Kashmir. The projected and already surveyed line to Bannu will bring into touch with the railway system the last, but by no means the least, important frontier garrison; while the survey com-

mencing at Dhaka by the Kâbul River route, looks as if the other arm was fairly on the way to be stretched out towards the Koh-i-Bâba; an extension badly wanted to balance our advanced position near Kandahâr.

We have got a broad road, that not even misgovernment can efface, from the Punjâb to Srinagar in the heart of Kashmir, and Colonel Nisbet as Resident may be trusted to see that no time is lost in pushing on the extension to Gilgit. Roads, metalled, bridged, and complete for every arm of the service, have been finished from Khushalgarh, by Kohât to Bannu; from Dera Ismail to the same objective; from Dera Ghâzi to Peshin; and Colonel Sandeman's recent successful negotiations with the Mahsud Waziris will probably be followed, at no distant date, by one *via* the Gumal and Zhob.

Tact and firmness have established a position in Bilochistân, as profitable and popular with the tribes, as it is strategically and administratively valuable to us. Without bloodshed, without heart-burnings, without a sign of ill-feeling, a large portion of the Biloch country has quietly passed under settled government: has become an integral part of the Indian Empire, with no more loyal servants of the crown, than the men who but a few short years ago, were distracted by constant intertribal warfare. Similar faculty for dealing with the most desperate and reckless of wild clansmen has in the Khaiber raised among the Afridis levies second to no irregular troops in the world; and who under their commandant, Major Aslam Khân, showed in the recent Black Mountain expedition what an immensely valuable additional store of force is waiting—anxiously waiting—to be utilized, should the necessity arise.

The Frontier Force has been brought directly under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, and an end has been put to the anomaly that retained a brigade command under the orders of a civilian governor, and an organization alongside, but perfectly

distinct from, the military organization of the country. As a part of the army that garrisons alike Peshawur in one direction, and Quetta in another, the field for distinction should be greater, the experience and interests broader, and the organization in every way more complete. And last, though dying hard, the "close system" stands condemned. The orders prohibiting officers from crossing the Border, or obtaining information regarding it, have been relaxed. They have still to obtain permission, which will only be granted under certain conditions, and will be refused when appearances indicate any danger of tribal disturbance, but the concession marks a return to a more rational view of Border policy. For there can hardly be two questions as to the extreme desirability of knowing all about the people and the country beyond that border, their temper and characteristics, its bearings and capabilities. Whether we hold that our line of defence should be drawn on the Oxus, at Herât, or on that shorter, stronger, and more natural position between Kâbul and Kandahâr, with a railway on either flank; if we fix it in front of the passes or behind them, the steel heads of the Border freelances pointed to the foe or against ourselves; or whether, like the apocryphal story of Dalhousie's movable red line, we hold the more convenient method is to draw it, in strictly Muscovite fashion, with a pencil that has a bit of indiarubber on the other end, there can be no valid excuse for remaining ignorant in matters of this kind. The state of things which excludes our officers from territories almost within rifle-shot of their lines, would not be tolerated by any other great power. If the petty Khâns and village headmen are not hostile to us, there can be no objection to free communication. If they are, the sooner this hostility is known the better, and the more the necessity for teaching them nicer manners is obvious.

The want of the most ordinary topographical knowledge

has been brought home to us over and over again. In the Afghan War of 1878, our troops had to blunder along, finding roads, halting-places, and water for themselves, exposed to needless delays and inconveniences at every stage. The flank march on 'Ali Musjid lost half its value for want of a good map, and the direct attack might have been thoroughly accomplished in a few hours, had it been known how easily the position could be turned from the left. In the Kurram Valley expedition, nothing was known of the Peiwar Kotal before the storming, which had to be delayed in consequence. The first experience of the Black Mountain Expedition, was to find our maps showing the Indus miles out of position, and the insignificance of the foe alone saved a disaster. Almost, all the minor expeditions across the frontier have been handicapped by similar ignorance, involving frequent mistakes, costing needless lives. While officers would often have gladly filled up idle hours at a frontier outpost by informing themselves more fully, or have occasionally exchanged leave to Kashmir, for liberty to combine sport and reconnaissance in an unexplored valley, had more facilities been afforded them.

It was good a system like this should be modified; it would be better if the change introduced last year could be made even more radical. The origin of the present sketch was in a suggestion, that such information as was available, put into a compact and intelligible form, would be appreciated by many Indian readers, which led to the publication in the Lahore paper of a series of twenty-four articles, dealing with the leading Border tribes. The first of these urged the desirability of a change, and that the acquisition of the fullest information in no sense involved any aggression. The substance of the remaining chapters, have from time to time, in one form or other, been contributed to the *Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Pioneer*. That the policy advocated has to

some extent been accepted would perhaps be hardly sufficient excuse for reproducing them; but it seemed to the writer, considering the constantly increasing attention given to Indian affairs, some handy account of its most important frontier people, however imperfect, might be acceptable to a wider public.

Along and across such a length of Border, with a series of tribes and clans, of passes and peaks, of valleys and streams, whose topography, ethnography, statistics, and history fill eight or nine volumes of special, and "confidential" gazetteers, not to speak of papers, reports, and monographs, it is obviously impossible to deal more than generally. And in cases where to many readers the differences are not of more consequence than between tweedledum and tweedledee, and where the people are subdivided into nearly as many clans and septs as there are valleys and glens, it would be wearisome to differentiate too closely. Such divisions as present some marked peculiarity only have been dealt with, and for these endeavour has been made to notice the more general, rather than the especially particular, characteristics. Readers who are sufficiently interested, or curious, to require information more precise, will find they can fall back on a field of study of the most extensive character, one in fact, more resembling the vast, and too frequently dry-as-dusty plains of India, than the circumscribed but fresher green with which the less aspiring are content.¹

These hills and highlanders are, however, very full of interest, although the interest be of a different kind to that inspired

¹ The works mainly used in the following pages, and from which I have often quoted are: The Official Gazetteers of Afghânistân, Bilochistân, and the North-West Frontier, so far as the matter is not confidential; the *Settlement Reports* of Dera Ghâzi, Dera Ismail, Bannu, Kohât, Peshawur, and Hazâra; Paget and Mason's *Expeditions against the N.-W. Frontier Tribes*; Niâmat Ullah's *History of the Afghâns*; Priestley's *Haiydt-i-Afghâni*; Plowden's *Kalid-i-Afghâni*; Elphinstone's *Kâbul*; Bellew's *Yusafzai and Races of Afghânistân*; Raverty's *Gulshan-i-Roh and Selections*; Hughes's *Bilochistân*; Hetu Ram's *Bilochnâma*; Burton's *Sind*; Biddulph's *Tribes of the Hindu Kush*, &c., &c., &c.

by some modern productions of British rule in India, by the congress agitator, or the aspirant for senatorial fame. Neither Pathân nor Biloch can be said to be in the forefront of this advanced party. They probably do not muster a single B.A. or eloquent talker, demanding education in every direction—save, perhaps, of good manners. Their ideas on the subject of Representative Councils are probably limited to the tribal *jirghas*, or the regimental durbar. Like a famous borderer of Scott's, though "good are they deemed at trumpet sound," "gentle" is not an epithet that fits them well. Nevertheless, they probably have the touch of nature that makes them kin to the sympathies of Englishmen in a greater degree than certain others in Hindustan, who are at present making themselves more heard. It is impossible to associate with them, even in a casual way, without feeling they, at least, are men. ✓

Possibly it may be thought too much has been made of their romantic side, their alternating pillage, murder, and sudden death with softer sentiments, and, as Elphinstone somewhere says, desperate forays with strains that might have tuned a shepherd's pipe. But besides being splendid fighting animals, both have undoubtedly qualities taking and excellent, and the supposition that every Biloch is a thief, and every Pathân a murderer in his heart—in the sense those terms are understood by us—is altogether wide of the mark. Both have held their own as freemen through centuries of disturbance; both echo the Briton's sentiment that anything is preferable to slavery. That if "never united they should always be free," is a familiar saying of their own. Both have the warlike instincts and enterprise which brought the Briton to India, and have kept him there, that whilom established the Pathân soldier of fortune, or his descendants, from the Punjâb to the Deccan, and that if the British power were withdrawn, would not improbably find him so establishing himself again. To look at a gathering of Biloch chiefs or Pathân soldiers in one ✓

of our regiments, compels a tribute of admiration. "By Jove, sir," was the remark of an essentially British officer at a recent camp, "if I could not command a British regiment, I would ask for nothing better than to lead a Punjâb one." The regiment probably contained more Sikhs than Pathâns, but the sentiment applies to both, and represents fairly enough the feeling that would inspire a soldier.

Perhaps it may also be argued, that to advocate the bringing of these independent tribes more directly under our rule, is illogical, and sounds very like an attempt to take away their liberties. This is only true in the narrowest sense. The Biloch, the Khattak, or the Yusafzai, has lost none of his manly characteristics, because he has exchanged anarchy for civilized government. He is just as free as he was before, he is certainly more prosperous; further, he is contented, and even proud of having become a British subject. Granting he has been deprived of the excitement of turning his knife or his rifle against his neighbours, he still looks forward to the chance of using them against an enemy. Moreover, it is a necessity of the situation. Sooner or later, and much better sooner than later, this great fringe of Borderland must come more immediately under British influence. The theory that we should sit down on the left bank of the Indus, and wait until an invading host has formed up on the other side, has been, for better or worse, permanently abandoned. In its place, we have accepted the more reasonable one, that it is better to deal with an enemy outside the gate of the fort, than to let him in, and fight him afterwards inside. There can be no middle course; no meeting him halfway, or fighting with the river at our immediate back, except under the direst necessity. The passes along the border are the gates of India on the north; to hold them properly, we must be perfectly free to come and go on both sides, and having admitted so much, the only logical continuation of the argument, necessitates the tribes who now

occupy the passes becoming our certain allies, or our loyal subjects, and the latter appears the safer.

The idea that the difficulty can be got over, if the passes are covered by dotting down a fort here and a fort there, garrisoned by our troops, is a hopelessly impracticable one. It is hardly credible



To Kandahār "—Tunnelling for the Railway through the Khojak.

that its advocates have carefully examined a map, allowed their imagination to dwell on the gigantic network of hills and valleys to be defended, or considered the enormous garrisons to be permanently withdrawn from our modest available army. If forts and garrisons are required, their place is surely in front, and not

behind the passes, just as the position of the bastion is in front and not behind the ramparts. And of these natural ramparts and fortifications, the Border tribes should essentially be made a part of the garrison; they may in the future be found a most valuable part.

LAHORE, *February*, 1890.

CHAPTER I.

SIND AND THE LOWER INDUS.

OF the 1,000 miles of this North-West frontier, extending from Karâchi to Kashmir, from the Arabian Sea to the glaciers of Nanga Parbat, the first 300 border the province of Sind. A length of which it may be said that though the physical conditions do not differ materially—except perhaps occasionally for the worse—from those prevailing in the Derajât division of the Punjâb: the Border tribes, our intercourse with them, our familiarity with their country, and the strategical conditions affecting it, belong to an entirely distinct category. Roughly speaking, along the whole of this, and about 100 miles of the Dera Ghâzi Khân district, our neighbours are all Biloches of various tribes, beyond again all Afghâns or their connections. Besides the difference in race between these two, their natural and political organizations have little in common, and our relations with them are managed on two different systems. In the Biloch, we have to deal with a strong tendency to the aristocratic and monarchical form of government under acknowledged chiefs; in the Afghâns, with decided republicans, recognizing little more than the petty head-men of petty clans.

Through Persia and Khelât, which Biloch capital is within fifty miles of the Sind plains, is perhaps our most vulnerable point, for

an invading army could by this route, reach India with infinitely less difficulty than by any through Afghânistân or the Hindu Kush. But on the other hand, we are most advantageously situated to defend it. From Karâchi as a base, unassailable so long as England is mistress of the seas, we have, in addition to the great highway of the Indus, railway communication running from all parts of India to the front beyond the passes, to an almost impregnable position on the Khwâja Amrân range, and within easy striking distance of Kandahâr. By our friendly arrangements with the Khân of Khelât, and the occupation of Quetta, commanding on the north and west all the direct routes from Kandahâr to the Punjâb, and on the south the passes leading into Sind, a position has been established that would render aggression from that direction practically impossible. The Peshin plateau, moreover, is of considerable extent; and our cantonments there, capable of extension at any time. The climate is well suited to Europeans, and with easy railway communication to India, will soon become more popular with the native army. The Khân of Khelât was perhaps not more anxious for us to go there, than the Bukhâra and Khivan Amirs to welcome the Russian; but he has now thoroughly allied himself with us, and he is undoubtedly far more firmly established as the acknowledged head of the Biloch State than he could ever have been without us, if indeed he had been able to hold his own at all. For constant feuds and complete anarchy, has been substituted peace and tranquillity. Except a few insignificant raids by Marris and Bughtis on the Upper Sind frontier, the people have settled down to accept our presence, and as their prosperity increases—for our advent has brought substantial benefits in the shape of hard cash—to look on our coming as the best fortune that could have befallen them. From Karâchi to Quetta is only 600 miles, or by the Bolân 550, the tunnel through the Kojak will shortly be finished, the materials are ready to carry the line on from the

other side of the range to Kandahâr, and it only remains to insist on the construction of this bit of railway, some seventy miles, to measure the distance from Karâchi to Kandahâr, or a suitable position on the Helmund by hours, and those hours might be made as few as from Bombay to Delhi.

The whole of Bilochistân has been thoroughly explored, and to some extent surveyed, up to the Persian frontier. Much information about the tribes and the less known routes was acquired by Sir Robt. Sandeman's mission to Southern Bilochistân. The Persian survey of Sir Oliver St. John, has been connected with the Indian system, though something may still be desirable in the way of maps. Our surveyors have advanced much beyond this; even the wild Marri and Bughti hills, in fact, pretty well the whole of what is shown on modern maps as Sewestân, is being gradually brought under systematic survey. The districts of Hurnai, Thal Chotiali, and Vitakri, have been examined in almost every direction, and the "Route Book" of the Sewestân country will soon be as complete as of any other part of India.

Before crossing the rugged hills that separate the almost more rugged Biloch from the Delta and lower valley of the Indus, it is but fair to halt and take in a general view of this, the most westerly and probably the warmest little bit of our Indian Border. A hotter sort of Egypt, but physically and politically suggesting many resemblances in common; a country literally made by another, and a greater, Nile. So much of it as is not a delta, at one time or other formed a channel, a bank or an island, of the Indus, whose waters, according to history and tradition, seem to have travelled over the whole of it, backwards and forwards from Kachh to Karâchi; its very name a Sanskrit term signifying water. Even now a vast waste of silt, sand, or arid rock, with occasional intervals of rich cultivation, due to a net-work of canals, water-courses, and old creeks; its towns and villages mainly houses of sun-dried bricks, or huts of wattle; its only

mountains, a succession of bare, comparatively low ridges locally known as the Kirthar—which rise occasionally to 7,000 feet—and Hâla ranges, and the Pabb hills, separating it on the West from Balochistân. For the rest, 150 feet is a lofty hill to break the universal flatness. On the east, sand; plains of sand, deserts of sand, hills of sand, rolling waves of them. And through the whole length the mighty Indus, the leading feature of the picture; that collecting together the five rivers of the Punjab, all the hill streams of the Sulaimâns, the Sufed Koh, and a great length of the Himalaya, rolls down a turbid stream, at once the great fertilizer of the country, the highway for the transit of its merchandize, and for long, the only means of communication for its inhabitants.

A land of dust-storms, of extremes of heat and cold; a summer where for weeks together the thermometer never falls below 100°, and a winter where it often sinks below freezing point. That enjoys the minimum of rain and the maximum of heat. With little of grandeur and not much variety of scenery; even the great “sweet-water sea” being essentially a monotonous river. From the low, flat, and often insalubrious mud banks of the coast, to the dusty plains of Shikârpur, “the gate of Khorasân,” there is little in the way of woodland, groves, or gardens, while of forests there are none. There are creeks, that perhaps occasionally rise to the dignity of lakelets, but these exceptions savour more of the waters of the Styx, than of the abode of naiads or of nymphs, and what there is of the picturesque depends mainly on bold outline, and the scenic effects of changing light. Except the camels on its salt plains, the buffaloes in its marshes, and venomous snakes everywhere, it has few animals of any consequence, though it is naturally stronger in birds and fishes. And though a classic ground by association with almost every invader of Hindustân—Greeks, Arabs, Mughals, Persians, Afghâns, and Biloches—

they seem to have left behind them no monuments or records of their presence. Perhaps there was no bit of it lasting enough to make such records possible in a country like this Sind.

Of living records however, in the shape of naturalized tribes, there are many—Arabs, Afghâns, Biloches, and even Africans, who together make up a considerable proportion of the population. The Sindi proper, a somewhat mongrel Hindu, converted under the Khalifs to Islâm, does not occupy a very high place in the scale of oriental peoples. If his detractors give him a worse name than he deserves; even his admirers put his merits as a somewhat negative quantity. Inoffensive, kindly if not cleanly, and indifferent honest; what between a long succession of invasions, the Border people who constantly harried him, and the Hindu dealers and go-betweens who impoverished him, he probably had but a poor chance of exhibiting much of sweetness or of light, and the prosperity of both the people and the country dates from the time of British occupation.

It has not been possible for this occupation to change the climate, or to alter the natural features of the country, but it has done almost everything else for Sind. The development of a system of irrigation, by canals drawn from the Indus and its tributaries, has served to make that river do almost what the Nile does for Egypt. A flotilla of steamships, and subsequently a railway through the centre of the country, which by the completion of the Sukker Bridge now provides uninterrupted communication with the entire Indian railway system, has gone far to make it the highway for the bulk of the trade of the Punjab and North-Western frontier. While the small fishing village, wrested by the Taipur Amirs from Mekân half a century ago, has become one of the first of the great seaports of our Indian Empire, and with its extensive conveniences, its excellent harbour, and its flourishing institutions, it is hard to say what possibilities the future may not have in store for Karâchi.

CHAPTER II.

BILOCHISTÂN AND THE BILOCHES.

BILOCHISTÂN, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, includes all the country between the Arabian sea and Afghânistân ; Sind and Persia. The Persian frontier, once a subject of constant dispute, was settled by a mixed commission under Sir F. Goldsmid in 1870. On the north is the Biloch desert, blending with the Afghân districts formerly dependent on Kandahâr, but both this and the north-eastern boundary is, to say the least, ill-defined. It is perhaps more correct to say the country is here bounded by the assigned districts, or British Bilochistân, the northern boundary of which is at present under consideration in the Foreign Office of the Indian Government. Within these limits is included, the mountainous province of Sarâwan, with its capital Khelât. West of the Hâla range, the equally mountainous province of Jalâwan, its chief the second noble of Bilochistân. Between the Hâla mountains and Sind, is the proverbially sultry Kachhi Gundâva, the country of the *bad-i-simum*, or "blast of death" ; the flattest and hottest province of all, but as including the two great thoroughfares from Sind, commercially the most valuable. South again, between the final spurs of the Hâla range and the sea, is the little triangle of Lus, with its capital Beyla, under its hereditary chief called the Jam. And last, the less known,

the most barren, though by far the most extensive region of Makrân, the ancient Gredosia, extending from Lus to the boundary of Persia, and including the *Kohistân*, or land of mountains, on the west, and the bulk of the Bilochistân seaboard.

The most striking characteristics of almost the whole of this



The Best Trade on the Stony Hills of Bilochistân.

extensive country, are a succession of rugged mountains and narrow valleys, for the most part barren or uncultivated, conditions due to a great extent, to the want of water. Of rivers, there can hardly be said to be any; what streams there are, have more of the nature of torrents, filled only at rare intervals, and which frequently

disappear in the ground at no great distance from their source. In the north, a large part of districts like Nushki, Chagai or Sistân deserve no better appellation than desert, and the very names of plains like the *Dasht-i-be-daulat*, "the plain without wealth," *Dasht i bedar*, "the uninhabitable waste," *Dast i Goran*, "the desert of wild asses," or the *Registân*, "the country of sand," are sufficiently expressive. There is a saying that the most useful knowledge for a traveller to possess is a knowledge of the watering places, which the Biloch classifies as "sweet," "good," "drinkable," and "bitter."

Really or nominally, all these provinces are under the Brahui Khân of Khelât, and the chiefs acknowledge him as their suzerain. Albeit this suzerainty has always been more nominal than real, and it may be doubted if it was ever complete. At no time can it be said the turbulent Biloch chiefs were kept in order save when the Khân received, not merely recognition, but assistance from the British Government. When that assistance was withdrawn, chronic anarchy resulted; and even now, anarchy would follow almost immediately if British control were withdrawn again. The history of the dynasty for a century back, is mainly the story of successful robbers on a large scale, a succession of deeds of lawlessness, rapine, bloodshed; for though the average Biloch would deem private theft disgraceful in the extreme, plunder and devastation of a country have always been held as honourable deeds deserving the highest commendation. The hereditary chiefs of Sarawân and Jalawân with their hereditary standard bearers bearing banners of red and yellow, had always the privilege to sit on the Khân's right and left, their place in battle right and left of the centre, and the national flag tri-colour with the red, yellow and royal green. No measure of importance could be passed without their consent, nor the two large provinces they represent taxed, save by a Vazir chosen from among the Tajiks, the principal revenue payers, who had almost equal hereditary finan-

cial powers. The revenue varied with the ability of the Khân to enforce the payment of so-called state dues. The claim for military service—based on a description of feudal tenure, but differing from that of the ancient Normans, or equally ancient Rajputs, in that the troops, once on active service, were at the charges of the state—was generally acknowledged, but the number of troops that could be assembled depended on the popularity of the Khân, or the cause for which they were required to fight. Several of the chiefs, like the Jam of Beyla recognised no claim, beyond rendering to the head of the confederacy this feudatory service in case of need.

The Brahui Khân, Nasr, is practically the first man of any rank who stands out of the historic fog enveloping the more modern Brahui and Biloch genealogical story. He seems to have united a formidable confederacy of chiefs, maintained a sort of supremacy, and established something like a decent government. But he was first a nominee of the great Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, and subsequently a fief of Ahmad Shah of Kâbul, a position from which even his declaration of independence in 1758 did not entirely relieve him. His forty years of rule—from 1755 to 1795—is what a distinguished authority calls the Augustan age in Bilochistân; but even then it would have been difficult to define the various rights of the ruler, his Sardars, and his subjects. On all hands he is admitted the most distinguished Biloch as a soldier, statesman, and ruler, and to have combined the most exceptional virtues with the most vigorous government. He put down rebellion and encouraged trade, made triumphant war and established successful gardens. His justice and equity are still household words among the people, and he had discretion enough to interfere as little as possible with his feudal chiefs. But when he died, full of years and honours, the whole country almost immediately fell back into anarchy. The governors of provinces, and the chiefs of districts withdrew their allegiance, the country was distracted

with broils, and the power of the ruler of Khelât diminished even more rapidly than Nasr had augmented it. When the British moved through the Bolân to Afghânistân in 1839, the Khân though said to be dangerous, was comparatively insignificant. General Wiltshire, with about 1000 men, is reported as taking Khelât in "a few minutes." When a second Nasr was recognized by the Outram treaty of 1841, he described himself as a vassal of Kâbul. From the conquest of Sind by Sir Charles Napier in 1843, to the revised treaty with Khelât drawn up by Major Jacob in 1854, the Khân was little better than a puppet in the hands of an intriguing minister, while the tribes, each on its own account, plundered unrestrained in all directions. Raids on the Border were constant, life and property everywhere unsafe. With Jacob's treaty and his powerful control, came a brief period of wonderful prosperity, to be succeeded again by a broken treaty and a renewal of disorder. Nasr the Second it is said was poisoned, the present Khân, Mir Khudadâd, who as a boy succeeded, was driven out and another set up only to be murdered. The chiefs of Lus, and of Wadd in Jalawân were in chronic rebellion, the people of Kej in Makrân threw off all pretence of allegiance. The Marris and Bughtis were constantly on the war-path. Anarchy became so hopeless, the British Government had again to interfere, not less at the request of the Khân than of his subjects, and to restrain the tribes from tearing themselves and their country to pieces.

The treaty of 1854, with certain additions, was renewed in 1876, on the basis of the Khân's receiving substantial aid from the British Government, including a subsidy of an annual lakh of rupees. He to have no relations with any other foreign state, and to permit the occupation of such positions in his territory by British troops as the Government of India may consider advisable. Since then, the relations have been drawn closer, our Government has accepted the situation of the paramount power, the old disputes

between the various chiefs have been happily settled, and the position of the Khân as head of a powerful confederacy, and ruler of all Bilochistân, established. Certain districts, including the valley of Quetta have been made over for permanent occupation by our troops; while by the treaty of Gundamak, all Afghân rights, real or pretended, in the districts of Thal Chutiâli, Sibi, and Peshin, up to the mountain barrier that separates that valley from the plain of Kandahâr, were assigned to us, and have now been regularly incorporated with the British administration. The Border line has, in fact, been moved up to the Khawâja Amrân range.

The tribes which give the name to the country are, as will be subsequently noticed, neither the most numerous nor the most powerful. The race from which the present rulers are drawn, call themselves Brâhuis, and assert, on somewhat doubtful authority, a prior occupation and a distinct origin. Bilochistân however, and not Brâhuistân, has universally come, even by the Brâhuis themselves, to be the accepted name of the country, and its people to be spoken of as Biloches. They or their various divisions, are the dominant race all along the Border, practically as far north as the commencement of the Dera Ismail Khân district, and in them we have by far the pleasantest of our neighbours.

Essentially a nomad—good-looking, frank, with well-cut features, black and well-oiled flowing hair and beard, attired in a smock frock, that is theoretically white, but never is washed save on the rare occasions when he goes to durbar—the Bilochi is a general favourite. He is a bit of a buck, and when he finds himself passing into the sere and yellow, dyes his hair. It is not uncommon to find an old gentleman with eyebrows of deep black, and the tip of his beard gradually shading off *through* purple to red, to the roots of pure white. His wife makes quite a toilet and arranges her hair in many effective plaits, but any connection with soap and water would be voted by either as a mark of the worst effeminacy.

He shares with the Pathân many of the virtues and vices peculiar to a wild and semi-civilized people; but in most respects he presents the most agreeable contrast. Both are given to hospitality, both ready to exact an eye for an eye, and a life for a life; but the Biloch prefers to kill his enemy from the front, the Pathân from behind. To both, "Allah is Great and Muhammad is his Prophet;" though the Pathân is often a dangerous fanatic, while the Biloch is perfectly willing to have his prayers said for him. As Ibbetson pithily puts it, he "has less of God in his head, and less of the devil in his nature." There is a story of one who asked why he did not keep the fast of Ramzân, replied that he was excused, as his chief was keeping it for him. "What are you doing?" said another to a pious Muhammadan saying his evening prayers in the plains. "Praying in the fear of God," said the plainsman. "Come along to my hills," rejoined the Biloch, "where we don't fear anybody." Both have but dim perceptions of the difference between *meum et tuum*, preferring "the good old rule, the simple plan, that he shall take who has the power, and he shall keep who can."

There is a Biloch proverb that "God will not favour a man who does not steal and rob;" and there is no doubt that, though he does not much like work, he is extremely partial to rupees. Whatever he does, he first inquires what his *hakk*, or "share in rupees," is to be. Both are English in their love for horses and everything connected with them. Like the Dean's sister in *Dandy Dick*, a Biloch who cannot afford a whole mare, will own as many legs as he can manage, keeping her a quarter of a year for each leg of which he is owner. The political organization of both is tribal: but the Pathân is essentially a Radical—every man as good as his neighbour, and better—and will obey no one but the *Jirgah* or democratic council, and not always that; while the Biloch is as loyal to his chief as a Highland clansman to a McIvor. Consequently, Government can deal as safely with a

Biloch *tumandar*, as with any other limited monarch ; and this fact alone has materially simplified all the frontier arrangements on the borders of Bilochistân.

To attempt any detailed notice of the subdivision of the many tribes and clans would be wearisome ; but most of them have similar characteristics, which go to make them good subjects and valuable feudatories. They are physically powerful, hardy, bold, and manly, naturally warlike, open in manner, as a rule truthful and faithful to trust. They have been so often and so fully described, ethnologically and otherwise, by many writers, it is perhaps unnecessary to enter into much detail about them. Of their use as auxiliary troops there are probably not two opinions. The late Sir Charles Macgregor, who knew them very well, entertained a high estimate of their value. He speaks of them as "a hardy, warlike race ; their style of fighting peculiar and much more deadly than that of their neighbours, the Pathâns. The Biloch dismounts and pickets his mare, and then enters the *mêlée*, sword and shield in hand, while the Pathân engages with his matchlock from a distance, if possible under cover, and seldom closes with his adversary. Their courage is of a sterner kind, and this is shown not so much in their encounters with us—though, all things considered, they have fought better against us than the Afghâns ever did—as in their tribal feuds, and in the infinitely bolder manner in which they carry out their raids in our territory. An Afghân at feud with his neighbour gets into a tower or behind a rock, and waits till he can murder him in cold blood ; a Biloch collects all the wild spirits of his clan, and attacks his enemy in force, sword in hand, generally losing very heavily. The determined gallantry of the 700 Bughtis, who refused to surrender to Merewether's horsemen, though escape was hopeless, but allowed themselves to be shot down till more than two-thirds had fallen, is worthy of a page in history. Although as a race they are poor, living from hand to mouth, they will not be induced

to take regular service, as they will not wear uniform or undergo discipline, and are impatient of control. Their objections to our service are mainly as follows :—They are afraid of their hair being cut ; they object to any but white, or dirty-white clothes ; and they do not wish to leave their homes. It is, in fact—with the Biloches as with all wild races at first—they require careful handling, and they will wear anything, go anywhere, and do anything they are asked.” The most ordinary tact would suffice to ensure a large supply of particularly excellent material, pre-eminently suited for irregular cavalry. Born horsemen, the breeders of a particularly hardy and enduring race of horses ; and equally hardy and enduring themselves, they have further the spirit engendered by generations of freedom.

CHAPTER III.

RELIQUES OF BILOCH HISTORY.

OF anything approaching to authentic history, the Biloches have less than most Border people. From whence they came, the route they travelled, who were their progenitors, are still very much matters of conjecture. They have no written character, and consequently no literature. War is looked upon as the first business of a gentleman, and every Biloch is a gentleman. Even agriculture is despised, and the arts viewed with contempt; the art of writing would fall actually beneath contempt. The Douglas, in *Marmion*, thanks his saint "that son of mine, save Gawin, ne'er could pen a line;" and this is very much the attitude of the Biloch. Whatever there is of tribal or national tradition has been handed down in the poems and ballads of which they are exceedingly fond, and many of which are probably of considerable age.

"Sweet, singing minstrel, bring your guitar;
Bind a large turban on your head.
Let the good man receive gifts from the generous.
"Sweet, singing Relân, bring hither the guitar of rejoicings;
Bring unto my life the fresh breeze of the morning—
Strike powerfully with your fingers,
Drive out grief from the bright body,"

and others of the invocations collected, and admirably translated by

Dames,¹ might, with little alteration, pass muster among Sir Walter Scott's collection.

Like most Muhammadan tribes, Biloch tradition uniformly points



Laghâri Biloches.

to Arabia as their original home. One popular story derives the word Biloch, from *Bachh*, a son, and *Luch*, a slave girl in the harem of Muhammad bin Harun. According to Rawlinson, it is derived from Belus, who is identified with the Nimrod of Scripture, the son of Cush. The Persians write the word Bilush, and "*Kush wa Bilush*," is a term employed in that country to indicate certain nomadic tribes. Personally they consider a derivation from *Bad*

¹ *Sketch of the Biloch Language* by Dames.

Log, "lawless" folk, as more in keeping with their universal reputation for rapine and murder; and a favourite couplet is to the effect that the Biloch who steals and murders, secures heaven to seven generations of ancestors. Though if half the stories of their former habits be true, both the moss-trooping ancestors and their descendants would probably find a heaven, without forays and with no neighbours' cattle to lift, an insufferably dull place. They existed, says the *Biloch Nāmah* of Hetu Ram,¹ before the days of the Prophet. The famous old Persian King, Naushirwan, is in the *Shāh Nāmah* made to complain that "the ground had become black with Biloches." In these far-off times they claim to have dwelt in the low hills of *Halab*—Aleppo. The Aleppo people called them Biloches, and more than one Muhammadan author explains this to mean "barbarous tribes, inhabiting the mountains of Garmsir, Sistān and Makrān." When Yaziz, the second Ummiyah Khalif, fought with Hazrat Imām Hasan, and the latter was killed, the Biloches who, according to their story, sided with him, had to fly to Kirmān and Sistān in Persia, from whence again they moved to Makrān, the present Bilochistān, and the Sulaimāns. Their wanderings form the subject of many poems.

" We are the servants of Hazrat 'Ali,
The true Imām of the Faith.
From Aleppo we came,
On account of the struggle with Yazid."

"There are four and forty tribes; the foremost is Mir Jalāl Khān"—or the poet's tribal chief for the time being.

" By stages we march. From Kurbala and the cities of Sistān.
The Hots² settle in Makrān. The Khosas in Kach. Dividing out
water and dry land.
In Nali the Nohs.³ The Jatoes [and others] in Sibi and Dadur.
The Rinds settle in Sarāwan. The Lashāris in Gandāva.
This is our footprint and track. This the Biloch record."

¹ Douie's translation of the *Biloch nāmah*.

² Mazaris and Dreshaks.

³ A branch of the Rinds.

Another story tells of friendship between the Kirmân ruler and the Biloch Chief, Ilmash Rumi, who had become vastly powerful—forty-four *tumans* of 10,000 each, says an old Persian chronicle. A *tumandar* being the head of 10,000 men, as he is now the tribal chief. By and by the successor of the Kirmân ruler picked a quarrel with the successor of the chief, demanding a girl for his harem from each *tumân*. The Biloches dressed up and sent boys in girls' disguise; but, as the legend goes, fearing the ruler's disappointment, quitted Kirmân, and took refuge in Makrân, "a somewhat waste country," but which they "devoted themselves for 500 years to cultivate."

Ballads and traditions testify to a common origin of tribes now widely separated, and differing greatly; so much so that it is doubtful if a northern Balochi could make himself intelligible to a Makrâni of the south. And though a Brahui of Khelât might understand a Bughti, some philologists would classify their respective languages as belonging to entirely different stocks. Four sons and one daughter of the chief under whom they made the Makrân migrations, gave their names to as many famous tribes, of which two stand out as markedly prominent—the Rinds and the Lashâris. Of the former there is now no representative clan bearing the name, though almost all the leading frontier Biloches claim to be of Rind extraction. All true Border Biloches, in fact, are either Rinds or Lashâris, and it is these sections that furnish the two great legendary heroes—Mir Châkar the Rind, Mir Gwaharâm the Lashâri; the Percy and the Douglas of Border ballad.

‘Originally they were both brothers,
God knows both of the same family.’

But Rihand Rind and Rawân Lashâri were in love with the same woman. "A fair one of a thousand wiles and sweet sugared speech. A bane of many lovers." They staked their fortunes in love on a

horse race, the loser to abandon his suit. Some Rind meanly loosened Rawân's saddle-girth, and he lost the race.

"The Rinds practised a great deceit,
The hero Rawân was displeased.
In the gloaming he sped away,"

and ill blood ensued. Mir Châkar, the "ever victorious" Rind had a mistress exceeding fair and wealthy withal; possessing flocks and herds, especially of camels. A Lashâri chief, also an unsuccessful rival for the lady's favour, was so ungallant as to steal some of her camels in revenge.

Thereupon the Rind chief—

"Fell into a great rage;
In exchange for fair Gohârs young camels,
We will take a seven fold revenge with our swords,
We will gamble with heads and hair and turbans.'"

Said he—

"On both sides damage was done,
On this side was Gwaharâm with his sword;
On that side Mir Châkar. For thirty full years
War continued about these young camels of Gohâr's."

This finally seems to have developed into a great struggle. The Lashâris won a victory, killed a Rind chief and 800 of his followers. Mir Châkar is then described as obtaining assistance from the ruler of Khurasân, possibly Sultân Hussain Baikâra, and with his aid beating the Lashâris so completely, they were driven out of Gundâva (Kachi) to Tatta and Hyderabad in Sind, where many reside to this day. A few settling under Rind protection in Khelât.

Mir Châkar is the national Rind hero, the Grettir, the Sigurd, the King Arthur, of the Biloches. The subject of innumerable stories, stories romantic, historical and legendary. He is able at will to change the tribal buffaloes into stones, and so blockade the defiles

against his enemies. His name still survives in the *Châkar ke Marri*, his "upper story," the *Châkar-ke-Tang*, his "defile" and many a peak and pass scattered throughout Sewestân. He is described as forming an alliance with the Khurasân ruler in the fifteenth century, and both with fighting and assisting the Mughal Humayun in the sixteenth. With leading the Rinds into Makrân, with founding the old fort of Sibi, the centre of a kingdom ; and, still more improbably, with emigrating in disgust to the Punjâb and dying at Lahore.

"Forty thousand men came at his call
All with shields upon their forearms ; all with bows and quivers,
With silk scarves and overcoats ; and red boots on their feet.
With silver knives and daggers ; and golden rings on their hands."

And they are "all kinsmen to the bold Mir," waiting the signal to let loose the furies of Border war. The Mir is not contented with "man-devouring Sibi," or "dusty Gundâva," while though they "eat fat-tailed sheep and brew strong liquor in their stills," they "rub no scent in their moustaches and have only children's sticks in their hands." Let us, he says to the Rinds, forward—

"To conquer streams and dry lands,
And deal them out among ourselves.
Let us take no count of rule or ruler."

The Rinds are in fact described as the lords and masters of the rest. Compared to them, all other sects are of small account. Quite a long list of clans are described as

"All nought but slaves to Châkar,
He gave them to his sister Banâdi
As her dowry, when she married Hadiya
But Hadiya scorned to take them."

They evidently acted on their hero's advice, and the period of their obtaining supremacy probably marks the time when they began, under various petty leaders, to settle in their present hold-

ings along the Derajât frontier, and the various divisions to be known by their existing tribal names.

Such is the story as told in the songs by the tribal bards, the *dartars*, or professional reciters of genealogies. Leaving out of the question any attempt to fix a date for so ubiquitous a hero as Mir Châkar, there is sufficient solid historical ground to prove that Biloch adventurers had extended as far as the Multân district towards the end of the fifteenth century ; while others had got as far north as the Jhelum by the beginning of the sixteenth. They might, therefore, have well been strong on the Sulaimân by the middle of the fifteenth.

Another influence, besides the Rind hero's desire for fresh fields and pastures new, was moreover at work, which made a forward movement more necessary. The Biloches were themselves being driven out of the fertile valley of Khelât, by what is generally thought to be the kindred tribe of Brahuis who, probably some time in the fifteenth century, became strong enough to establish themselves there. Similar legends credit the Brahuis as being equally Biloch, and equally hailing from Aleppo ; and the *Biloch-nâma* ingeniously suggest that settling in the hills, they were originally called Rohis from *Roh*, a mountain, which gradually passed into the term Brahuis. When Mir Châkar took Khelât, they had only got as far east as Makrân and Sistân, but while the Rinds were pressing back the Pathâns from the lower Sulaimâns, and ousting the Jât from what is still called the Derajât border, while the Ismail Khâns, Fatteh Khâns, and Ghâzi Khâns were founding the Derahs¹ named after them, the Brahuis were wresting Khelât from Mandi Khân, whose tomb is there still, and establishing the dynasty of the Khân of Khelât, a chief who previous to this had been an ordinary *tumandar*, with nothing of an army to speak of. To Khelât, the Brahuis added Mastang, Quetta, the Bolân, and part of Kuch Gandâva. Ultimately they

¹ Or encampments.

became the dominant people, and their chief was accepted as supreme by all the modern trans-border Biloches. The social distinction is still marked by their right to draw rations of wheat flour when on service with the Khân, while the Bilochi has to content himself with the coarse millets. The supremacy of the Brahui Khâns would, however, no doubt have entirely passed away, but that it has been our Border policy to support it.

Within our Border the chief of the Dumki, a Rind people, is the nominal head, but the tribes are perfectly independent of one another, and are only restrained from their old intertribal wars, their old plan of harrying their neighbours' home and driving off everything possessing four legs, by the presence of English rule, and for some time they were not even restrained by that. But the provision of many and expensive law courts, and more expensive lawyers, nevertheless provides in a great measure a sufficiently exciting substitute, and it is now possible for two chiefs to ruin themselves, and impoverish their clans more quickly by a suit than by a whole series of fights; and the Border Bilochi is fast becoming civilized enough to adopt the process.

CHAPTER IV.

THREE LEGENDS OF THE SIND BORDER.

WHAT the story of the unfortunate star-crossed Pathân lovers, Adam Khân and Durkhâni, is to the Yusafzai, the pathetic tragedy of Sassui and Panhu is to the romantic Biloch on the Sind border. The latter, however, purports to be much older, and the lovers are described as living about the time of the introduction of Islâm, some 900 years ago. Besides the Biloch version, the story is told in Persian,¹ Bilochki and Punjabi. In the latter the heroine is known as *Rul Mui*, "she who died wandering," to distinguish her from *Dub Mui*, "she who died drowning." The story is familiar among all the wild tribes on the Sind and Biloch borders, and, says Sir Richard Burton, who gives an epitome of the legend in his work on Sind, "the camel-man on his journey, the herdsman tending his cattle, and the peasant toiling at his solitary labours, all while away the time chaunting it in rude and homely verse."

Panhu is a desperately good-looking Biloch, the Benjamin of his family, the idol of his parents, a terrible Don Juan among the ladies. Ari, his father, is the Jam, or Prince of Kej in Makrân. The heroine was a daughter of a Brahman of Bhambuna,

¹ Mir M'asum of Bakkar tells it, under the title of *Husn O Naz*—Beauty and Blandishment.

of whom it was predicted she would become a Moslem, and so bring disgrace on her family. Her father was for killing her, but, at her mother's request, put her in a box and let her float down the Indus, from which she was rescued by one of the 500 apprentices of a well-to-do washerman, named Mahmud, at Bambhora, who, being childless, adopted her. She was christened Sassui—"A piece of the moon"—grew up all virtue and accomplishments, and was beautiful enough to cause the most disastrous consequences—"Every one who saw her wished she was his own, and wherever she seated herself men crowded round her like the cluster of the Pleiades."

To Bambhora¹ comes Babiho, with a string of camels and merchandise, trading on account of the Kej Jam, whose servant he is. There he falls in with Sassui in the midst of her companions, with whom he exchanges a little chaff as to the prices of his wares. The ladies appeal to his gallantry, and demand the present of a trifle of musk, to which, as a Hindu, he naturally demurs. Sassui encourages him, and promises ready money if he will only freely display what he has to sell. While he is doing this she is struck with his good looks: "See his beauty, O my friends; how handsome he is." But Babiho disclaims any pretension to good looks, passing on the compliment in favour of Panhal Khân, his master's son "the beautiful Biloch, with long flowing locks; of beauty like his I have not the fortieth part." To such good purpose does he praise Panhu that the lady's ears become enamoured—"ofttimes the ear loveth before the eye"—and she solicits Babiho to act as Mercury and bring that Biloch to her, for which he shall receive great reward. Babiho raises all sorts of difficulties: "Panhu cannot get leave from his mother even for the chase; how is it possible for me to bring that well-guarded Biloch? Worse than this, the beautiful Panhu has two wives already, whose voices are as sweet as the Kokilas"

¹ Then the most famous port of Sind, now a ruin between Karâchi and Ghâra.

(cuckoos). The lively young lady, however, laughs at difficulties, and will take no denial. "I, too, am a maiden, the pride of Bhambora, and surely my accents are not less dulcet than the Kokila's song." Finally, the trader is started off to Kej with all sorts of tender messages to Panhu, and rich offerings for his papa the Jam.

Babiho returns to his master, renders an account of his merchandise, and takes the first opportunity to give Panhu the lady's message and presents, painting her loveliness in the most glowing colours. The description is more than sufficient for the inflammable Panhu, who fired with such sympathetic ardour, is for starting at once, with or without the parental consent. As a matter of fact, he has a good deal of trouble in getting away. His father is for sending any of his sons, save the Benjamin. His mother is all anxiety, and charges all the men of the caravan to "guard her little Panhu with every care." His eldest wife takes matters coolly, though the younger one rushes out, seizes the camel's nose-string: "Husband,' says she, "for Allah's sake leave me not thus. Either pass this night with me or send me home to my father's house again." But Don Juan, got up in his best, armed to the teeth, mounted on his favourite camel, will not be stayed, and rides away in great glee, delighting the whole *kāfila* by the spirit and smartness of his conversation.

Temptation awaits him before he has gone very far. At a town *en route*, named Lohee, lives Sehjan, a lady more noted for her good looks than her good morals, who is so struck by a sight of Panhu that she disguises herself like a man, follows the camp, and makes love to him while he and Babiho are playing chess. The former, whose eye is not deceived by the disguise, does not require much encouragement to put away the chess-board, and is soon so charmed by the frail one, that he not only accepts her invitation to a feast, but halts the whole caravan.

Sassui meanwhile, all impatient to see her young Biloch, sets

to work to write him a letter, or rather gets Akhund Lal, a silent admirer of hers, to write one for her. Now Akhund Lall had gone blind from weeping over his hopeless affection for Sassui, but he wrote so moving an epistle for the lady that he instantly recovered his own sight by virtue of hearing it, and it was therefore well calculated to hasten Panhu. This "moving epistle" she sends by a messenger to him, while he is still dallying with Sehjan at Lohee, from whence the lady will not hear of his departing. Panhu is finally reduced to the expedient of dropping opium into the syren's cups and leaving Babiho behind to pacify her when sober, with a story of a messenger from Kej, and news of his mother's death. This fiction saves Babiho, who leaves the outwitted Sehjan calling upon her companions to "come and kiss with their eyes the place where my beloved Panhu abode," and joins the caravan in time to make a state entrance into Bambhora, where all the people turn out to see so fine a show.

They pitch their camp in Sassui's garden, but that young lady, having got her adorable Bilochi so far, now turns coy, and requires a good deal of wooing. Panhu only obtains a meeting by shooting a pet pigeon so skilfully that it falls into her aunt's lap, and while the old lady upbraids him, Sassui gives him his arrow back and a chance to explain himself. As a test, she demands that he become a washerman, which affords an opportunity for many love passages, and he soon washes himself deep into the lady's affections, to whom he is married, after a serious quarrel with Babiho, who goes off back to Makrân in high dudgeon.

Their matrimonial happiness did not last long. The wife begs as a favour of her fickle spouse, he will avoid passing out by a certain gate of the town, which of course he immediately seeks, and falls in with a very fair, but also frail goldsmith's wife, one Bhagula, who makes no secret of her admiration for the Balochi's

handsome person. "May God cause us to meet," she remarks aloud, and Panhu at once finds that the scabbard of his sword is broken, and he must take it to be mended. Bhagula, not contented with seducing Panhu's affections from his bride, tries to persuade him that the latter is unfaithful. Sassui takes in the situation quickly enough; she tries her best "to extract the poisoned arrow from her truant husband's breast," and indignant at her rival's accusations demands that the quarrel be decided by fire. An enormous fire is consequently prepared for the ladies' benefit, at the very sight of which Bhagula turns pale, and would have fled, but Sassui seizes her by the ears and forces her to enter. Needless to say, the false dame is burnt to ashes, all save her two ears, held by the hands of the virtuous Sassui. Panhu is convinced of his wife's chastity and love, and the two, for a brief season, are happy once more.

The final catastrophe, however, approaches. The old Jam in Makrân is being frightfully scandalised at the stories carried home by the irate Babiho, and sends off six of his stalwart sons to bring the Benjamin home. They arrive at Bambhora, and shortly after to avoid fuss, cause an intoxicating potion to be given to Panhu and his wife, and at midnight carry off the former tied on the back of a camel. Sassui awakes to the consciousness of her misfortune. When at dawn she looks round, her lover is not on the couch beside her, nor are the camels of her brothers-in-law to be found. She recognizes that Panhu has been carried off, and "weeps tears of blood as if sprinkling the hill over which her husband was travelling."

"Alas, alas, how shall my wounded heart survive the loss of him thus torn away?"

She will not be consoled:

"My spinning wheel gives me no pleasure now that my husband is gone,
Nor feel I joy from the conversation of any companions.
My soul is among the hills where the Baloches urge their camels."

She declares her determination to follow her loved one's footsteps, nor will she be deterred by all the dangers, real or imaginary, which her friends conjure up in the most direful form, for her benefit, as lying between Bambhora and the wretched huts that compose the Biloch village. She even dissuades her friends from accompanying her. "I will not return without my husband ; but



Sassui and Panhu.
(Facsimile of a Punjab lithograph.)

you, when you come to die of thirst, might curse him." Alone she starts upon her journey, apostrophising the hills

"Why point ye not out the direction of my lover ;
It was but yesterday the string of camels passed over you,
Was not my husband in that *kāfila* ?"

And in spite of all the dangers of the road, on which the author enlarges at length, in spite of the sun, the simoom, heat, fatigue and bruised feet, perseveres in her quest. At last, in one solitary jungle she meets a goatherd, a perfect "Demon of the Waste" in ugliness and wildness, from whom she demands, in the Lord's name, to know the path taken by her brothers-in-law.

This wretch, who had been told by the old witch, his dam, that on this day he should meet a beautiful bride decked in jewels and rich attire, considers Sassui to be the very person, and begins the most abrupt and uncereemonious gallantry. To gain time she complains of thirst, and begs her horrid admirer to milk one of his goats. When he replies that he has no pot, she draws out a brass pipkin, and while he fetches the goat, knocks a whole in the bottom. Caliban's eyes are so much charmed by the beauty of his prize that he does not notice the time it requires to draw a draught of milk. Sassui, in despair, meanwhile prays to Heaven to preserve her honour, and begs, if no other means of escape be possible, that she may be allowed to sink into the earth. Her supplications are heard, and suddenly she sinks into a yawning gulf which closes over her, and the wretched goatherd perceives his mistake too late. Unable to cancel the past, he occupies himself in raising a tomb and platform in her honour.

A few hours after, Panhu, who has escaped from his brothers with Lallu, a slave, comes in hot haste *en route* for Bambhora. Attracted by the appearance of the platform, which the goatherd must have been very quick about, he proposes to rest awhile, when he hears the voice of his bride calling him from the tomb :

“Enter boldly, my Panhu, nor think to find too narrow a bed,
Here gardens bloom and shed sweet savour round.
Here are fruits and shades and cooling streams,
While Islâm's light pours through our abode,
Banishing death and decay.”

Panhu hands over his camel to his slave, and giving him a parting injunction to carry tidings of his fate to his father and his friends, calls upon heaven to allow him to join his Sassui. The ground opens and swallows him in the same way as for his lost wife, and the story finishes by Lallu informing the old Jam that the lovers have met to part no more. As he says :

“The souls of those two lovers are steeped in bliss ;
The rose is at last restored to the rose-bed.”

Their tombs are in the Pubb Hills, between Karâchi and Lus-Bela where they are visited with great advantage by many pilgrims. A believer, who is sufficiently devout, will be fed on bread and milk by a hand stretched out from one of the tombs; while to many of the Faithful, St. Sassui or St. Panhu appears in person; the beautiful lady to the male pilgrims, the handsome Biloch to the female. But no camel must approach Sassui's tomb: she has never forgiven that animal for carrying away her husband.

"The Drowned Beauty," is another popular heroine of the Lower



Sohni swimming the Indus.
(Facsimile of a Punjab lithograph.)

Indus Valley. Sohni, the *Dub Mui*, she who died drowning, is usually described as the daughter of a Jât cultivator, who gave her in marriage to one Dam, an individual of the same clan. Dam was not musical, probably not attractive, and as the nuptial procession went to the banks of the Indus to perform certain rites and consult the omens, Sohni was sent by her husband to fetch some milk from the forest, where she saw an omen for herself, in the shape of a buffalo-keeper, a most skilful player upon the *bansli* or reed-pipe, and instantaneously fell in love with him. Her head, like the

buffaloes in the Punjâbi sketch, was turned, and reversing the practice in the story of Hero and Leander, she, guided by the sound of the *bansî*, used nightly to swim the Indus, supported upon one of the large earthen pots which the fishermen commonly use on that river for the same purpose, and spend the hours of darkness listening to the sound of her lover's pipes; returning home before dawn.

A malignant mother-in-law discovered the assignation, and substituted a jar exactly similar to the one used, except that it was unbaked. One night, as Sohni sat in the moonlight with her lover, she drew his attention to a little spot she noticed in his eye. He replied that it had been there for many months, and her not having remarked it before portended some immediate misfortune for both. The lover's portent proved too true; the next time she tried to swim the stream, the jar so treacherously substituted burst, and the fair Sohni, literally, "the beautiful," was drowned. Sympathy is still with her, and the couplets sung in her praise evidently consider that her beauty fully condoned any trifling errors of judgment on her part.

"Sohni was fair in body and mind,
Nor had she one defect you could remark.
She husband left and home in search of happiness,
In quest of love; but found a grave."

One more legend relates to the course of the river itself. There is some, if not very good, authority for supposing that the Eastern Nâra, or Snake river, marks an old course of the Indus, and down this very channel Alexander sailed with his fleet; that he halted his boats at Aror, not very far from Bakkar, while he made a little expedition against a place General Cunningham thinks might be Larkâna. The ancient hydrography of the Punjâb and Sind, moreover, still forms the subject of many learned disquisitions. Whether the "lost river," that used to empty itself into the Rann of Kachh, started entirely on its own account with the Sutlej, or the holy

Saraswati, or whether, getting tired of wandering about the sands around Khairpur, it suddenly found a gap and turned sharp west, may be still an interesting problem ; but the popular legend affords a solution much more simple.

Between Bakkar and Khairpur was a city called Aror, or Al-Ror, a name which clearly survives in Rori, the modern town hard by ; a city " adorned with palaces and villas, gardens and groves, reservoirs and streams, parterres and flowers." It and Multân—" the boundary of the house of gold "—were then the " main pillars of the country, the two finest capitals and royal residences." " If you stop anywhere," writes one very early Sind historian to his nephew, " you should choose the most delightful place." Multân and Aror were both so charming, it was difficult to choose between them. For a long time the extensive dominions of which Aror was the capital, was ruled " in ease and prosperity " by a dynasty of kings who " possessed great wealth and treasure, diffused justice over the earth, and whose generosity was renowned in the world," from Kashmir to Kaikânân. The people all lived happily, as many of them at least as got their share of the Indus water. But Larkâna, Mehar and Schwân were a " mere waste," because " the water which is the fountain of all prosperity," flowed by Aror through the country south to Muhammad Tur, a famous town where resided many great men, disciples of the Shaikh of Shaikhs, Bahâwal Hak, and which was probably not very far from the present Shakarpur on the Gungru. " After fertilising all these lands, the river poured its water into the ocean at the port of Dewal," which Sir H. Elliott places at or near Karâchi.

All this flourishing country was, however, after a while, unlucky enough to come under a proverbial wicked king, Dalu Rai, a tyrant and adulterer, who taxed traders without mercy, levied a toll of fifty per cent. on all goods that came by the river to Aror, and every night possessed himself of a maiden. At length came a merchant, one Shâh Husain of Delhi, with an exceptional amount

of goods, great wealth, and a handmaiden "young and beautiful as the full moon," descending on his way to Mecca. The tyrant not only increased his usual demand, but insisted on the transfer of the lady. The traveller determined on a bold effort, which with the help of Allah, and of Allah's special representative, Khwājah Khiza, "should stand recorded on the page of destiny until the day of judgment." He obtained three days' grace before forwarding the duties and the damsel, and having collected "a vast number of skilful and expert artizans, men who excelled Farhād in piercing mountains, and who could close a breach with a rampart like Alexander's," he set them to dig a new channel and erect a strong embankment above Aror, apparently taking good care to keep his own boats above it. So well did they labour, and so great was Allah's mercy, that before the three days expired, the Indus was turned from its course, and was flowing towards Siwān and the Lakki Hills, taking the merchant and all his craft with it. Dalu Rai woke one morning, and instead of the fathoms of water passing his capital, found nothing but mud and a dribble of muddy water, the merchant and the moon-faced maiden escaped, and his country ruined. Every effort to turn the river back into the old channel failed; it would not be induced to return. The Rajah's regret and repentance came too late. "When the evil is done—O fool"—remarks the chronicler, "what avails your regret?" The tyrant paused not in his evil courses, until his crimes destroyed both himself and his people. And, though there is much mud round the ruins of Aror, the Indus still holds to its channel among the rocks of Bakkar, where it has just been bridged, and into which Gazetteers persist in saying it was "diverted by some great natural convulsion." But the Gazetteer makers do not make sufficient allowance for the "skilful and expert artizans," of the Sind historians, or for the "great mercy of Allah."

CHAPTER V.

TWO SIDES OF THE SULAIMÂNS.

THE long narrow strip of country, which, extending northward from Sind, is shut in between the dreary monotonous succession of knife-like ridges, forming the Sulaimân range, and the river Indus, with its still more monotonous and constantly shifting banks and islands of sand, corresponds very nearly with the civil district of Dera Ghâzi Khân, and for nearly 250 miles is seldom much more than twenty-five in width. Like Sind below, and a good deal of the remainder of the Derajât Division above, it is practically a rainless tract. The torrents that pour down the bare hill-sides furnish at times a certain amount of irrigation, which the cultivators husband to the last drop; and by a complicated system of artificial embankments, turn a strip of arid and naturally unproductive clay into a fertile fringe, locally known as the *pachdd*. Where the lands come within the influence of the Indus, the country is also fairly cultivated and green, canals or shallow wells become gradually more frequent, trees appear on the scene, and villages are more numerous the nearer the river is approached. More than half the cultivated area of the district, and by far the larger proportion of the population is to be found within this "*Sindh*" tract—Sindh or Sindhu being the old name for the Indus. Between the "*Sindh*" and the *pachdd* intervenes a barren belt of desert, a succession of rolling sandy undulations, varied

occasionally by stretches of low hills, that look as if some malicious spirit had carefully sown them with assorted boulders of every size. Almost without water, inhabitants, or vegetation, it is about as uninviting a strip of country as the most grasping earth-hungerer could wish to annex. Looking at the map and at the number of little hill-streams that appear on paper,—numbering, in the Dera Ghâzi Khân district alone, over 200,—it might be thought that the *pachâd* must be a land flowing with milk and honey. But, save in exceptional seasons, not a drop from any one reaches the Indus; some only collect such rain as falls in the low hills, in others the supply is most precarious. Only two are perennial, and it is rare that water from one of these raises a flood sufficient to break through the embankments that lie between it and the river. In the hot months, with these exceptions, all fail; the shallow wells dug in the dry beds do not last much longer, the few ordinary wells are often 300ft. deep, and then yield but a brackish and intermittent supply. The country ceases to be habitable, the tribes who inhabit it either drive off their cattle to the Indus bank, or more usually betake themselves further into the hills; and during May, June, and July the *pachâd* is practically deserted.

Nor are the characteristics of the mountains, that form the historical western boundary, such as would at first sight appear to offer much inducement to an advance beyond them. The outer hills consist of several parallel ranges, the principle ones occasionally rising to a considerable height. The Gandhâri peak opposite Rojhân is over 4,000 feet; the Diagul opposite Harrand over 5,000 feet, Ek-Bhai opposite Sakhi Sarwar 7,500 feet, and the Takht-i-Sulaimân, nearly west of Dera Ismail Khân, has two summits, both over 11,000 feet. The eastern slopes are rocky and precipitous, with little or no vegetation, and, with the exception of a few stunted wild olives, bare of trees. The openings, narrow gorges, almost destitute of water, tend to increase the forbidding aspect. Nevertheless, the whole frontier is here a net work of

passes and lateral communications, laid out by nature with a regularity that might have formed part of a scientific system of parallels and approaches. As a natural barrier, the whole line is pronounced by experts to be a complete fraud. It has, says Major Holdich of the Survey, "generally a double line of main watershed, the commonest geographical feature throughout Afghânistân, with a series of broken, but approximately parallel minor ridges, forming narrow lateral valleys, running about north and south, all parallel to the main formation, and to the line of the frontier, and combined into a general system, which is broken through by the main drainage lines in innumerable places. Thus, roads to the plateau are opened, more or less difficult according to the nature of the gorges and drifts formed by the direction of the drainage across the lines of the watershed." The number of these may be judged from the fact, that there are upwards of ninety leading from the Dera Ghâzi Khân district; and Dr. Duke gives an itinerary of no less than fifty-three routes through the Sewestân country beyond. All are held by Biloches nominally independent, but subordinate to our Government; who, in consideration of certain allowances, are made responsible for their safety, for the return of all stolen property, and for the police duties through the respective tribal lands. Commencing from the south, the most important are the Suri, which, starting from the edge of the Mazâri country passes through the territories of the Bughti and Márri tribes; the Zangi, leading past the Gandhâri mountain into the same country; the Câchar and the Kahâ, both into the country of the Khatrâns and the Luni Pathâns, the former of which was once extensively used, and was the one by which the Emperor Jehangir returned from Kandahâr to Delhi in 1601; the one by the Rakhi Nullah, which was selected for the new military road from Dera Ghâzi Khân to Peshin, passing over the Khar plain by Fort Monroe, and is now a splendid highway adapted for all arms of the service. This last is merely a branch of the better known one by the shrine of Sakhi

Sarwar, a route affected in former days by Bârber, when he went up to Ghazni after his campaign in 1505. In more modern times, this was the route by which the Kâbul rulers got their mangoes sent to Kandahâr, and it has been made still more famous by the shrine at the foot of the hill. It was here that, 650 years ago, Saidi Ahmad mended the legs of the camels going from Khorasân to Delhi. One merchant, whose camel's leg had been broken, found, when he got back to Delhi, that the leg had been mended with rivets, and the then Emperor was so much taken with the miracle that he sent four mule loads of coin to the ingenious Saidi, who built the shrine with it. It has been endowed by many people since then. Hindu merchants from Lahore built the steps. Nadir Shah and the Durâni Shah Zamân presented jewels, and some Sikhs added a shrine to Baba Nânak. The *majâwars* or keepers, who always number neither more nor less than 1,650—including women and children, all entitled to equal shares, when the proceeds of the shrine treasure chest is annually divided—have hit on a simpler method of raising money, more suited to the times, which is, to send out their pilgrim hunters furnished with bills drawn, payable at sight, on wealthy believers likely to be substantial and obliging enough to take them up. Curiously the shrine is affected equally by Hindu and Muhammadans, and it certainly involved considerable pilgrimage to get there. Whether, now that the new road will make the journey so much easier, the income of the shrine will increase, remains to be seen. Further up, the Vidore pass, opposite Dera Ghâzi Khân, offers a still more direct, but also a more thirsty route, past Ek-Bhai into the Rakhni Valley. The Sowâri, the Shori, the Mahoi, the Sangarh, and Kawan, lead through the territories of the Bozdârs, the Luni Pathâns, the Musa Khels, and the Kakars into the Zhob Valley; the most important of these being the Sangarh opposite Mangrotha, which was the one taken by General Chamberlain in the expedition against the Bozdars in 1857.

Through these, in times gone by, the hill men swept down for many a foray, "riding," as they describe themselves "like ravening wolves towards the sheep-house, the Low country." Wild-looking men, with thick flowing beards and long curly black ringlets coming down to their shoulders, surmounted by huge turbans twisted rope-like rather than folded. In voluminous smock frocks and expansive trousers, so begrimed as to show little of the original white. Their shields secured to their backs by a plaid of the same tint, and their belts set off by a perfect armoury of weapons. Perhaps more ferocious in appearance than in fact, but each with swagger enough for a host. The whole party mounted on small thin, lank, but wiry and enduring mares, a quality most necessary and often surely tried; for, riding all through the night to some flourishing village, their masters would before dawn be pushing home again with all the cattle and plunder they had been able to collect. Nor was the vendetta always unassociated with romance, for Sassui was by no means the only young lady who exchanged love-tokens across the Border, and whose fancy turned towards the stalwart young Biloch; nor was Panhâl Khân, the only "thief of renown" whose heart burned with secret longing for the Peri of the Plains, or the objective of whose raid was not merely all the camels, goats, and village gear, but "the fairest of maidens in the reed huts by the Saints' Canal." "How," says one young lady, whose capture is related in a popular ballad, which describes her as a dove, a very pea-hen in gait, a mist cloud in lightness, with locks like the tendrils of the creeper, but whose will was hard as the hills, when it came to a question of flight. "How can I part from my mother, for my father to heap curses on her head?" But the freebooting lover has no time to stop and argue.

"Then I seized her pliant form in my arms,
And with the end of my turban I stopped her mouth:
She struggled like the kid in the tiger's jaw,
But soon she rested her head on my shoulder."

And having got back safe through the stony paths of the passes and divided the plunder, declares—

“ My bride was pleased with none but me,
Forgotten her mother, her playmates, her companions,
For she walks with a dainty boy on her hip.”

Like a good deal more of the unexplored, moral and physical, the difficulties of most of these passes to a great extent disappear when they come to be examined. The narrow gorges through which the drainage forces its way to the plains, and the ruggedness of the defiles naturally leads to the idea of still greater difficulties beyond, while the character of the wild tribes has always been an element calculated to exaggerate the dangers. By a curious process, there seems a belief in some minds that the more bare, rocky and impassable the mountains, the worse and more barren the country, the more numerous and warlike the inhabitants. Either is possible, but not both, and experience has proved both to have been greatly overrated. As a rule, the passes are only difficult in proportion as they are unknown. By far the worst features of them are turned towards India. The first difficult range surmounted, comparatively fertile valleys appear—“*Shams*,” as they are locally called—and often comparatively open lines of communication. Even the slopes of the rugged Sulaimans ease off considerably towards the west. By far the most formidable difficulties in making the Peshin road just referred to have been met with in the approaches by the Rakhi torrent up to the sanitarium of Fort Munroe. The descent on the west is by easy slopes over what by comparison may be called grassy downs. The Rakhni Valley, immediately below, offers finer grass and better sport than can be got almost anywhere in the Dera Ghâzi Khân district, and for a considerable distance the construction of a good cart road was comparatively easy. Like so much of Bilochistân and Afghânistân, there is a deficiency of water; but this will

in a great measure be remedied by a system of storage, and the country only needs irrigation to turn it into a garden. As it is, many of these "*Shams*" are fairly well off. Many tracts are rich in grass. The Khetrân Valley along its



One of the Donkeys that made the Peshin Road.

whole length is celebrated for horse-breeding. The Paniali Valley is reported admirably suited for a similar purpose. Near Gumbaz are wood and grass for three or four regiments of cavalry, with splendid manœuvring ground. The Smalan Valley is both productive and beautiful, its elevation about 5,000 feet, and its water

and supplies certain. The Bori valley has been selected for the new cantonment of Loralai. The hills between this and the Zhob are penetrable in all directions, and the latter valley is for some distance fourteen miles wide, The further explorations of these valleys are carried northward, the more favourable the country is reported. The fertility of Quetta and the valleys adjoining have long been famous: so have the melons and grapes of Mastung. The characteristics of some of the hillsides are not unlike certain in South Italy, or only need vineyards to be so; and there is no reason why the vineyards should not follow.

CHAPTER VI.

THE "FHAIRSHON" AND "MCTAVISH."

WHETHER the Biloch stock originally came from Aleppo, *vid* Bâghdâd and Makrân ; whether, as some assert, he had whilom an intimate relationship with the Jews, or was of Turkman origin—with which people he has certainly many points in common—or if, still more probably, he is a result of the admixture of the original inhabitants, reinforced by Jew-Arab-Turkman immigration, and assisted by hosts of conquerors from Alexander downwards ; his tribal divisions are numerous enough to include the whole. He has certainly this in common with the Jews, that, in respect to these divisions, probably not all the children of Israel scattered over the wilderness of Sinai, would have offered such a complicated family problem ; and he has divided his inheritance almost more minutely than they did the land of Canaan.

To attempt a systematic numbering of the tribes would, in the first place, require the mantle of Moses, and in the next, it may be reasonably doubted whether ordinary readers have patience to follow a stringing together of names, compared to which the First Book of Chronicles would be light reading. The tribes, or *tumans*, numerous as they are, moreover represent only the beginning.

For these *tumans* are again divided into clans (*paras*), the clans into sections called *palli*, and sometimes these again into sub-sec-

tions, each with a head-man, whose local following is often a mere handful. The Gurchânis, for instance, run to eleven clans and eighty-one sections; the Bughtis, six clans and forty-four sections; the Mazâris, four clans and fifty-seven sections: while probably none of the three can muster more than 2,000 or 2,500 fighting men, even counting all from fourteen, instead of the Israelitish twenty years of age, as able to go forth to war. To add to this there is an aggravating habit which the Biloch has of ringing the changes on a single name. Thus the town of Dera Ghâzi Khân was founded some 400 years ago by one Hâji Khân, who begat Ghâzi Khân and called the town after him. Ghâzi Khân then begat a son, and thought it only right to call him Hâji Khân, and for fifteen generations from father to son, without any variation of patronymic, this was continued, until the people got sick, and christened the whole place Hâjighâzi, an expression suggestive enough. Like the Highlands of Scotland in former days, almost every valley and hill-side boasts a clan of its own, under a petty leader, independent but still acknowledging allegiance to some more powerful tribal lords. The principal occupation of the local "Fhairshon," and "McTavish" is, or was before our advent, small feuds against their neighbour and raids on his cattle. In fact, the best understanding of the average Biloch clan can probably be obtained from a study of Bon Gaultier's Gaelic ballad. It is only necessary to alter slightly the names, and the story of the invasion by the Macpherson, with his four-and-twenty men and five-and-thirty pipers, adapts itself very closely to the politics of the Mârri and Bughti hills. In most affairs, of the small fighting tail, the largest number would be employed in driving "ta cattle," and the few casualties be due to the sudden appearance on the scene of the aggrieved party in force; the McMarri—

"Coming wi' his fassals,
Gillies seventy-three, and sixty Dhuine wassails."

Bearing northwards from the Jacobabad and Sibi railway, the

more important of these clansmen, along what can now only be described as our old Biloch frontier—for our occupation of Peshin has now placed them behind us—to a greater or less extent also hold lands within purely British districts. Such are the Mazâris, Dreshaks, Bughtis, Gurchânis, Laghâris, Khosas, Lunds, Bozdârs, and Kasrânis. In the hills just beyond, are the Mârris, Khetrâus, Luni Pathâns, and Musâ Khels. Further still in the Hurnai, Thal Chotiali, and Peshin districts, the Tarins, Dumars, and a somewhat too extensive sprinkling of the various divisions of Kâkars. With a few exceptions all are Biloch, or closely allied and differing only in minor points. The Mazâris—whose name is variously said to be derived from the Mazâr—a stream in Sistân—or the same word meaning a tiger—hold the country from the Sind border to near Mithankote, and are perhaps the most important and flourishing. They can muster probably 4,000 fighting men, mostly living within British territory, where they own many villages. In former days they were referred to by Elphinstone as famous for piracies on the Indus, and accomplished as highway robbers. They were at almost perpetual war with their neighbours in every direction, and had the reputation of being the most adroit cattle-thieves along the line. Since annexation in 1849 they have given no trouble. They are perhaps not now good agriculturists, preferring to graze their flocks along the river banks in the hot weather and in the low hills in the cold; but they have settled gradually down into becoming peaceful and loyal subjects, and their chief was not long ago made a Nawâb for “distinguished loyalty and good service.” Their neighbours and former enemies, the Dreshaks, though probably deriving their name from the Drekhân, a stream in the hills, have now no possessions there at all. The Gurchânis—or as they would call themselves, Gorishânis—somewhat mongrel Biloches, who traditionally trace their descent to a converted Hindu Rajah of Sind, own the bulk of the Mârri and Drâgul hills, though they cannot, or very recently could not, be said to hold them. Constant

feuds with the Mârri rendered their lands beyond the border somewhat less profitable than an Irish estate. One of their chiefs joined Humayun in his march to Delhi in 1556. Others maintained a state of constant war with the Sikhs; systematically harried the plains east of the Indus; and at the time of the Punjab annexation had the reputation of being "the worst-behaved of the Biloch tribes." They are probably now only restrained from falling on the adjoining Laghâris by our presence; yet they have in various ways been brought under complete control, and their conduct reputed as "uniformly good." The Laghâris, a powerful tribe, located around the Sakhi Sarwar pass, as well as the Khosas, Lunds and Kasrânis, originally all more or less given to the trade of Turpin and Macheath, have developed comparatively industrious habits. Several of their head men have turned their energies to canal-making; have acquired extensive estates; become honorary magistrates; and are now among the staunchest supporters of social order. The Bughtis of the rocky and barren country on the Râjanpur border, and the Bozdârs of the hills opposite Mangrotha, have at times given a little more trouble; and the former are credited with at least one famous raid into Sind, when they succeeded in lifting some 15,000 cattle. Both have had to receive lessons more or less severe, but have profited greatly by the teaching, and with the Mârris, in many respects the most important of all, whose raids in former times were constant and indiscriminate, are now exceedingly friendly.

The reputation of the Mârri is sufficient to ruin a far better man. He is charged not merely with devotion to theft and robbery of every kind, but with being always ready to welcome the seven other spirits more lawless than himself. His character may be estimated from his own maxim, quoted by Duke in his interesting history of the tribe:—"We are," says the Mârri, "the enemies of all our neighbours: we do no good to any one: nobody wishes us well. Let us then afford every encouragement to strife

around us: let us give passage through our country to any neighbour who seeks to injure another. Whichever side is injured or destroyed matters not to us; in any case we shall be gainers." Though he occasionally acts up to this policy, even he has his redeeming side; for, though he has small scruple in making the traveller or trader pay, he holds stringently to the laws of honour; a ring or token given as a receipt for black mail is a sufficient guarantee for further safety; and he would take the most ample vengeance upon any one else failing to recognise the pledge. Though generally regarded as Brahui Biloch, the tribe is occasionally spoken of as Pathân, and some clans talk more readily a Semitic Pushtu than a Mârri Bilochi; but they are really a confederation drawn from several races and peoples, grafted on to a Biloch stock. They profess a nominal allegiance to the Khân of Khelât, but they pay him no revenue, act independently of him, and have no more scruple in raiding his territories than our own. The three main divisions comprise no fewer than eighteen clans, and are supposed to number 4,000 or 5,000 fighting men, who carried fear into all the surrounding tribes; but, according to Duke, excluding those in Sind and Khelât, they number little over 2,500 males. Raiding as a profession, though it certainly offers plenty of excitement, is neither lucrative nor safe. The Mârris have made too many enemies, have fallen on bad times, and constant reprisals have gone near to wearing them out. On the whole, their recent relations with us have been fairly satisfactory. The prospect of plunder being too strong, they took advantage of the Maiwand disaster to attack our workpeople on the Sibi line, and cut up some of our clerks and coolies, which drew on them an expedition under the late Sir Charles Macgregor; but care, firmness, and tact on the part of our Political Officers has now brought about a result sufficient to justify a use of the past tense in regard to their misdeeds.

The Khetrâns immediately below Fort Monroe, the Lunis in the next valley, and the Musa Khels a little further again, are all

Pathâns. The first of the three, whose name signifies "cultivator," was probably a Pathân graft on a Jât stock. They speak a dialect between Sindi and Punjabi, still retain some Hindu customs, and are fairly industrious and agricultural. More notorious as receivers than thieves, they are peaceful and unaggressive, but they have had the Mârris for next neighbours. Similarly the Lunis, whose country extended from the Râkhni to the Bori Valley, have been so weakened by feuds, mainly with the Mârris, that five of their fine valleys through which the new road to Peshin passes, have been deserted, rendered "*bar*" or desolate, and their flocks and herds restricted to a little more than a fifth of the area they once possessed. Little was known about them till a few years ago; but they are fine men, somewhat fond of showy armour and tasselled spears; good raw material for excellent soldiers. The Musa Khels are traditionally Kâkars, who left their old haunts somewhere between Kandahâr and Herat, to seek fresh fields and pastures new under Musa, settled down on the further slopes of the Takht, from whence they were ousted about eighty years ago, and have since taken up an extensive and prosperous position on the Toi stream. They too are mostly shepherds, disposed to be friendly with our politicals; but friendly from a respectful distance.

The time would fail to attempt to tell of the many tribes that occupy the debateable land between Bilochistân and Afghânistân, whom our new lines of railway and road are making us daily better acquainted with, like the Spin or White Tarins of Thul Chotiali, the Dumars, the Pannis of the Sangan Valley—who were celebrated free-lances in Bârber's time—and the many other petty septs of Pathân origin. By far the most important, both as regards numbers, strength, and distribution are the Kâkars, a numerous Afghân race, divided into many distinct tribes, who have very little in common save the name of Kâkar. They are scattered over a considerable area from Hurnai to the Zhob Valley, and from the Takht to the Registan, or place of sand, beyond Peshin. The

three best known of their tribes are the Panizai, Sarangzai, and Hamzazai; but they have not even a *jirgah* or general council of the whole, the various sections quarrelling freely among themselves.) The warlike reputation of some of their chiefs has been consider-



An Uchakzai Pathân of the Peshin Valley.

able: and for a long period the Bilochis carried on almost a national war with them. Elphinstone tells of an engagement in which a large force of Brahui Bilochis were entrapped in the Khulaz defile, and some 800 or 900 cut to pieces: very near the spot from which the Kâkars rolled stones down on our troops

during the Southern Afghân campaign. The same tribe murdered Captain Showers in the Osdapslie pass in 1880; and the Zhob Valley sections still continue to give trouble now and then. Colonel—now Sir James—Brown was deputed by Lord Lytton, in 1877, to specially report on them; and presumably there is much information of interest concerning them locked up in the Simla archives. What has been done however in the case of the Mârris can no doubt be equally well applied to the Kâkars. It is only necessary to open out their country, establish communications, and adopt a friendly but firm policy. The marching of our troops by way of the Zhob Valley and the Gumal pass to and from Dera Ismail Khân to Peshin—a proposal our Government, after many years of debating, is now insisting on carrying out—will probably be the best possible beginning.

Meanwhile, there can perhaps be no better illustration of the advantages to everybody concerned of opening such countries out to the civilising influence afforded by free communications, good roads, and the presence of British officers of tact and judgment, than the contrast between the Biloch who has come within our influence, and the independent tribesman. It is almost startling. The one is so obviously sleek and comfortable, has generally a decent suit, a good mare—all the four legs,—is well to do, and can afford to appear prosperous. His villages are thriving and populous. The other is lean, hungry, living from hand to mouth; his dress a few dirty rags or tattered sheepskin; in constant anxiety for his life, his crops, and his cattle, which he can seldom call his own. His house is often a round tower in the field entered by a ladder, which he draws up after him. Occasionally even this has to be abandoned, as being too far from his village. When not raiding himself or being raided upon, he is wearied out by constant watching for surprise from raiding parties, and "*chapâos*," which carry off the whole of his cattle and occasionally kill off the attendants. A *chupâo* is simply the Biloch expression

for an organized raid, and at one time probably formed the best part of a chief's income, a fifth of the whole spoil—which often amounted to a large sum in property of all sorts—falling to him. The footman had one share, the horseman another for his horse, or so many legs of it as he owned; another half share, if he possessed a gun, while if he was killed his relations got his share. The tribal headmen got a proportionately better share, and the booty was all carefully valued according to a regular scale, in terms of bullocks. A mare being equal to four cows, a gun to a bullock, a sword to half a bullock and so on.

But even successful raiding is obviously not a very lucrative business. The raiders had nearly as hard a time as the raided, they could never afford to rest, any one who by chance fell out or got left behind, was at once murdered, if not mutilated. It was literally a case of the devil taking the hindmost. "The members of a *chapão*," as Fryer writes in one of his graphic accounts, "have to travel long distances by night, lying concealed by day, and they have no food but what flour they can carry with them, which they dare not light a fire to bake. They often end by falling into an ambuscade themselves, or by finding their intended victims too much on the alert for an attack to be ventured." He instances a party of Mârris whom he met returning from a raid on the Luni Pathâns. They were half-starved, and worn out with fatigue, having been out for three weeks; and after deducting the leader's share, their plunder was only sufficient to give the third of a bullock to each man. The liberty of the "Fhairshon" is clearly not worth very much to him.

CHAPTER VII.

SULAIMÂN AND SIND SAINTS.

“MAY Allah not set Sayuds and Mullahs over us !” is a common local proverb trans-Indus, and yet superstition of the most degrading kind is probably greater among the Muhammadans west of that river than among the Hindus on the east. The latter holds his sacred Brahman cheap, compared to the abject deference the former pays his spiritual guide. Variation there is in degree ; from the independent Bilochi—who, grossly credulous as he may be, is compared to a Pathân, almost an agnostic—to the snivelling Bannuchi, described by Edwardes as “accepting the clumsiest imposture as a miracle, and the fattest fakir as a saint.” But whatever reverence enters into the composition of the Border tribesman is for saints and shrines ; his credulity in this respect has no limits, and he accepts the connected miracles as a matter of course. The whole Sulaimân range would appear to have been a favourite resort of the fraternity. Hardly a pass, a peak, or an old mound, but boasts a legend, a tomb, or a shrine, even though the visible sign may be no more than a few rags, or a heap of stones. Perhaps, as Fryer suggests, this may be ascribed to the unattractive nature of the country, which contains so many places admirably adapted for the residence of those who desire to mortify the flesh ; or more possibly to the fact that, for many centuries, the range

offered a natural resting-place for the invading Musalman hosts, saints and soldiers alike. The founders of the religious orders can be more often traced to Bukhâra or Bâghdâd, than from Delhi or Patna. The "pillars of the faithful," "the guides of the devoted," or the "Pole-stars of Islâm," would often have had a short shrift at the hands of Gakkhars or of Sikhs, and the average Punjâbi Jat has an awkward habit of disliking religious advice.

Just as Border history is mainly made up of mythical genealogies, its traditions relate almost exclusively to the sayings and doings of saints, sayuds, or priests. They are the chief figures in most relations of life, and take the place of precedence as regards the wants of the people. Among the most formidable, in that bare and stony country, has always been the want of water and supplies. The "pattern of the devoted, and wanderer in the field of generosity," Shaikh Ismail Sarbanni, whose tomb is upon Koh-i-Sulaimân, though an observer of rigid abstinence, is described as killing 400 sheep daily for the benefit of travellers. The heads, limbs, and skins were gathered up in the evening, and every morning the shepherd found all his flock alive again, and drove them off to pasture. So, also, fifty famishing travellers call unexpectedly upon "the asylum of mankind and magazine of wisdom," Shaikh Mulhi Kattal, and find nothing in his house. "In the name of Allah" he fills a pot with water, places it on the fire, sends to the potter for an earthen plate, and with his own blessed hands serves up to all his guests abundance of excellent stew, the dish always remaining full, "and," adds the ingenious chronicler, Niamat Ullah, "the plate is to this very day in the possession of his successor." Again, the tribes on the east of the Takht-i-Sulaimân suffered greatly for want of water, while those on the west had comparative plenty, whereupon a certain "falcon of knowledge and stage of excellence" opened a passage right through the mountain, and brought to their relief the Drâban stream. The stream is there still, though it has less water in it

than formerly, because a subsequent "lion in the forest of unity," Shaikh Dana, caused some to flow to a tribe favoured by him.

Another difficulty was—as it is still—the control of the Indus river. Once it broke its banks, carried away the best part of a village, and might have done infinite damage, had not the inhabitants promptly repaired to that "mine of inspiration and flower of the pious," Yahya Bakhtiar, who at once provided an effectual embankment by laying down a single tile, which he had used to keep his illustrious foot out of the mud when bathing. This effectually controlled the stream, which would not run past it. He was a saint decorated with a particular divine glory. He had "kept the fast of the Ramazan even as an infant;" travelled to Mecca and back every Friday for prayers; and on one occasion so vigorously did he recite the praises of Allah that he threw his heart out of his mouth, his servants ever after carefully preserving it in a napkin. When he needed a sacrifice to appease the hunger of his followers, a fat antelope walked up to the fire made ready. So also did a lion, but, on seeing the saint, became quite subdued, and went off cheerfully with a bone. When the Indus boatmen demanded a fare for ferrying the Khwâjah, a fish popped its head up with the money. When he and his disciples found themselves thirsty on a barren hillside, he took his tooth-brush, and, like Moses, struck the dry rock, upon which a spring of fresh water rushed out, and has run ever since. And when the great Timur, on one of his expeditions, approached the Sulaimâns, where numbers of the Afghân tribes had taken refuge, the Khwâjah and his adherents remained at the foot of the mountain, and, as the hostile army approached, Yahya, reciting some verses of the Korân, threw a handful of dust against his foes. Not only did the dust act as a veil between the Mughal army and the saint, but the Mughal soldiers grew blind, and hearing as it were the noise of a vast host approaching them, became filled with consternation and fell back. Timur however was hardly the man to be stopped by a saint more or less. He

quickly found out the cause of the trouble, and attempted to tip the Khwâjah with a horse and a robe; but the latter seems to have thought the insult hardly large enough, so sent them back with some excellent advice, and moved away.

Everybody who has been to Multân knows that its notorious



Shams-i-Tabrez of Multân.
(Facsimile of a Punjâb lithograph.)

heat was brought about by the influence of a saint, Shams-i-Tabrez from Bâghdâd, an "abstracted and accomplished devotee," who begged his daily bread in the city, not always in sufficient quantities to satisfy his hunger. One day, suffering from short commons, he caught a fish which he held up to the sun and begged

that luminary to come down and cook. The sun at once drew nearer than to any other part of the earth—and Multân has suffered ever since. So much so, that unfortunate Multânis who have mistaken their way in the shades, have, as the legend goes, invariably had to send back for an extra blanket. The accomplished Shams performed many subsequent miracles, even to raising the dead: but it may, at least to residents in that dusty and almost rainless place, be a trifling satisfaction to know, that he was in the end flayed alive for his pretensions.

Shams, however, was quite a minor light beside the other celebrities of Multân, Rukn-ud-din and his still more famous grandfather Bahâwal Hakk, "Light of the truth." The former, who is credited with having a good deal to say to the trap by which Ghiâs-ud-din Tughlâk, the Sultân of Delhi, was done to death, they buried with his grandfather, but he subsequently moved into his present stately tomb of his own accord, and without any assistance. That Shaikh of Shaikhs, Bahâwal Hakk, who was directly descended from Hâsham, the great-grandfather of the Prophet of Islâm, travelled over all Muhammadan Asia for half a century before coming to Multân, where he settled down and became "a fountain of the most illustrious miracles" for another half century. Among other trifles, he raised a ship that had foundered with all hands, and is still the especial patron of all the Indus boatmen, who appeal to him in difficulties.

The son of Bahâwal Hakk, and father of Rukn, by name Sadr-ud-din, was hardly less distinguished, but he essayed a trial of saintly skill with a still more potent expert, a Sayud practising lower down the Indus at Tattah, one Pir Murâd. The Multân Shaikh sent the Tattah Sayud a cup of milk, to signify that the former's religious dignity filled the whole country, as the milk did the cup. It reached Tattah quite fresh, without a drop being spilt, and the Sayud, putting a handful of flowers in, returned it, implying that there was still plenty of room for the saintliness of Pir Murâd.

Not a flower was faded when it reached Multân again, so the Shaikh saw nothing for it but to go and tackle such a famous rival in person. The dispute was to be settled in the Tattah mosque. On the way thither, the Shaikh saw a dead cat, which he restored to life, saying, "Arise with the permission of God." The Pir was in no way put out by this, but calling into the mosque a most notorious old Brahmin idolater, bid him recite the prayers. The Hindu at once tore off his priestly thread, preached in elegant Arabic, became a luminous Moslem and explained the word *Bismillah* in fourteen different ways. Whereupon the son of Bahâwal Hakk allowed he was beaten.

Tattah must have literally swarmed with saints. Muhammad Aâzam, who wrote about a century ago—one of the many books on this inexhaustible subject—gives a list of one hundred buried in the city, and of eighty shrines of the first order of magnitude on the Mekli—or "Mecca-like"—hills adjoining. In fact the whole of that little range is covered with their tombs—to say they could be counted by thousands, would not be expressive enough. The Pir Murâd just referred to, might well have accounted for many, for at the age of forty he had acquired such sanctity, that he was compelled to wear a veil; because any one who saw the light of his countenance became a saint on the spot. Not less than 2,000 of his pupils, says the learned writer, were "enlightened enough to rise to eminence."

One of these, an "exemplary of the pious, and strict-keeper of vigils," Mian Maluk Shah, lived a long life of such abstinence, that during his threescore years and ten he used but 112 lbs. of flour which he moistened with nothing but water. He seems mainly to have lived on the pleasure of listening to the dull creak of the Persian wheels raising water from the wells. This to him was so intoxicating, that on occasions he caused the wheels to revolve after the bullocks were taken out, and a luckless cultivator, in whose garden he sat under a tree, wrapt in ecstasy, listening to

his favourite music, found his whole property flooded one morning ; and, when he ejected the stranger, saw with dismay his garden, tree, well, and Persian wheel, follow the saint.

At Sehwan is the shrine of the Pir of the Kohistan, Usmân-i-Merwandi, a great grammarian, scholar and traveller, as well as saint, who died in 1274. His more familiar title is Lâl Shâh-Bâz, the "Red Falcon of Merwand," so called because in order to imitate a Moslem story of Abraham, whose father tested him by throwing him into a fiery furnace, which forthwith became a bed of roses, Shâh-Bâz sat for a whole year in an iron pot placed upon a broiling fire. The Sind hero seems to have suffered no inconvenience beyond changing colour from a pious pale to a bright red. On another occasion he assumed a winged form to rescue a distressed brother from the hands of an infidel king. The title of Red Falcon is therefore particularly appropriate. Originally he was probably a respectable harmless old gentleman, but hardly so are the present representatives and guardians of the mausoleum that has grown up, who belong to the sect of Jelâli Fakirs, and enjoy a reputation more evil than most. Rumour has it that a girl of a particular caste is annually married to the tomb. It is pretty certain that the stout ruffianly mendicants, disfigured by shaving head, beard, eyebrows and moustachios, not only grant, but accept the *indulgenza plenaria*, or license to sin freely.

That portions of the earth's surface are movable at the will of the saints, is accepted in several cases. There are two holy brothers and "favourites of both worlds," Mians Mitho and Ratho, buried in one of the Sind border hills, that on the day of resurrection will not only go to Paradise but will take the whole hill with them. As may be supposed, the hill is still in great request as a burial ground.

Not a bad place to be buried is on the heights of Chehal Tân, the loftiest of the Biloch mountains overlooking the Bolân. The Brahuis say that the great apostle himself, the "praised one,"

came one night mounted on a dove, and left a whole colony of Pirs, or saints, for their guidance. No less than forty of these, no doubt much-needed, saints, were buried under the mountain, which thus obtained the name of Chehal Tân, "the forty bodies." Masson has, however, a more interesting legend as to the origin of the name. To the effect that a simple old couple, childless for years, besought the saint of Teree to take away their reproach. He was obdurate and refused, but the saint's son, a stalwart youth conjuring with his father's wand, promised the dame a son for each pebble she caught in her lap. She caught forty pebbles, and in due course was blessed with a family of forty sons at a birth. Overcome with so much bliss, the parents left thirty-nine of them to the chances of fate on wild slopes of the mountain and fled. Anon repenting of their crime, they returned, searched the mountain again to find the thirty nine at play, as happy as may be, leaping and dancing among the steep cliffs: but attempting to decoy them down again, by a view of the remaining brother, he too was stolen away, and the old couple were left childless once more. Consumed with grief, there was nothing for them to do but to raise a shrine, which to this day works wonders for similar disconsolate wives, who in good faith resort to the "hill of the forty bodies," and crave the boon of children.

Perhaps the most renowned saint of all, along this part of the Border, was the Saidi Ahmad, whose shrine at Sakhi Sarwar has already been referred to. He is the hero of innumerable of the most popular legends, not only on the Border, but over half the Punjâb. It is at his shrine that Daru, the Jât woman, after twelve years of childless wedded life, prays for a son, and attains her desire; and when, in spite of the anger of her husband, a strict follower of Guru Nanak the Sikh, she goes again to return thanks, and the child dies at her breast, because in her heart she has resolved to defraud the shrine of its dues, it is the compassionate Saidi who is moved to restore him to life again. It is Saidi, who grazing his

father's goats in the jungle, the while he studies the Korân, is set on by a fierce tiger, which he unaided slays with his staff. Chânnu, the Pathân ruler of Multân, gives the saint a horse, and much fine raiment. The first he kills to feed fakirs, and tears up the latter for their clothing, but when accused of doing this, he comes into Multân, riding the horse and wearing the clothes, which have come back to him from Heaven, from whence also come houris and fairies, bringing pots and pitchers to celebrate his wedding with Chânnu's daughter. The lady brings the saint much wealth and three servants, whose descendants are now the 1,650 keepers of the shrine. The ballads of Isa Baniya and Isa Bapâri collected by Captain Temple, tell of rich merchants who vowed large sums for the shrine if their adventures proved profitable, forgot them when success came, and fell into terrible distresses which only pilgrimages and a very liberal subsequent expenditure at Sakhi Sarwar sufficed to allay. Even the Saint's Biloch mare Kakki Sarwar, "broad in the back and brown as a partridge," is hardly less famous, for she is credited with the gift of speech, and with working many minor miracles.

The banks of the Indus were of course a favourite resort of the saints; its fertilizing waters and welcome freshness being a pleasant exchange for the bare and arid stones of the Sulaimâns. Quite one of the most famous and widely known is Jenda Pir or Khwâjah Khizr—the "Green King"—whose shrine is at Bakkar. He is practically the river god, the personification of the mighty stream to whom hymns and petitions are addressed, though the shrine is dedicated to a celebrated Pir who saved the honour of a Muhamâdan young lady on her way to Mecca, from the lust of a Hindu king, by a sudden diversion of the course of the stream.

Only second in rank as a water saint was Shaikh Tahir, or Uddhero Lall, as the Hindus call him, whose tomb a little below Hâla, in the keeping of a chapter of Moslems, is the site of a great annual Hindu fair. A variety of his miracles are claimed to have

been wrought in the defence of both faiths. He used to float about the river seated on a small sheet—of white, say the Hindus, of indigo blue, say the Muhammadans. He saved a man of the rival faith, challenged to the test by the same method of navigation, but who, sinking, had to save himself by resting his finger tips on the edge of the sheet, which say the party of Islâm, left



Khawjah Khizr.
(Facsimile of a Punjab lithograph.)

five white spots. And some of the river people affect a blue sheet with white spots in its corners to this day.

Like the saint of Sakhi Sarwar, these two river saints are equally venerated by both Hindus and Muhammadans, and both creeds equally flock to the *ziarat* of Chehâl Tân.

Of many, their chief merits were their reputation for asceticism. They abandoned home, children, wife—even though they might have to take up with some one else's. Theoretically at any rate,

they spent their time in fasting and keeping vigils. One "abstracted sage and consummate enthusiast,"—the chronicler's titles generally run to a paragraph—is described as becoming so emaciated from "excessive abstinence" that his ribs projected like a staircase. They called him Shaikh Bakhtiar Dunkar, and whoever mentions his name is still secure from the evil eye, and—still more useful in a Pathân village—saved from the annoyance of the flies. Pir 'Adil, the just priest, whose shrine is a few miles from Dera Ghâzi Khân, and second in repute only to Sakhi Sarwar, gained his title from his abstract justice. His son killed a goat while out hunting, and accidentally, the goatherd boy who was defending his goats. The goatherd's mother appealed to the saint, who, to satisfy her, put his own son to death.

Nevertheless, very many of them contrived to make the best of both worlds. Numbers are represented as following the traditions of the profession, and making themselves especially agreeable to the ladies. It was not always *O Sanctissima* even in the West, and one "ecstatic saint" is described as "throwing his arms round a specially handsome woman in the marketplace," and as himself thrown into an oven by the Governor of Kandahâr, where anon he is found calmly eating the roast meat. Another "pilgrim in the desert of unity" remained "disguised under the garb of a worldly person," and greatly to his satisfaction rescues a certain "beautiful washerwoman." Even Khawjah Yahya is warned by a reverent brother about the danger of cotton and fire, and too near an intercourse with the sex. But Yahya was a wag, and replied by sending cotton and fire joined together in a letter; the former uninjured.

The danger of offending, or refusing a saint hospitality, is exemplified in innumerable stories. A "guide to the truth" in Kohistân, is, on occasion, driven by the inhabitants of his village into cursing them; and, "on the same day there occurred forty funerals." Even the Emperor Islâm Shâh, who threatens "a precious gem" with

death for his conduct in regard to women, is from that very moment afflicted with a fistula and inflammation in all his limbs. While the merit of entertaining holy men meets, as history throughout the world amply proves, with its own reward here and hereafter. The shepherd boy who refreshes a party of fakirs with his one pet lamb, finds a flock of sheep start up from the stones. The man who builds a house for their shelter, has but to call on the forest in Allah's name, to find the timber ready to hand.

Nihil' scriptum miraculi causa. The age of miracles for the Pathân has by no means passed away, but a single characteristic modern instance must suffice. There is or rather was, on the roadside between Kohât and the Indus, a large stone or rock, a couple of feet high and several wide, on which, some few years ago, a well-known officer saw a holy Mullah sit, who being asked by a follower for a remedy for toothache, prescribed in the form of powder a little of the stone so honoured. Its reputation as a specific was insured, and under the continual scraping of believers, troubled with that distressing malady, the toothache-stone gradually diminished. Two years after the same officer found it still in great request, but scraped down to a couple of feet below the surface. To a generation that has taken Parr's life pills, and set its limbs with Holloway's ointment, there is perhaps nothing extraordinary in this; but considering the Mullah's few opportunities of advertising, his remedy had a fairly good run. Perhaps when Messrs. Cook have exploited the country, and personally conducted parties along the Border, greater possibilities may arise. If, for instance, Mr. Pears could only induce a few Mullahs to wash, what a stroke of business might be done in soap!

CHAPTER VIII.

~~THE POWINDAH AND THE PAT.¹~~

A LONG dreary stretch of level plain, as flat as a billiard-table or a barn's-floor, often without a tree, a bush, or plant bigger than the camel-thorn, or the small, stunted, horny herbs that seem equally caviare to the palate of that most useful, but unsavoury, beast. Not always even so much vegetation as this, to cover the monotony of the mud-coloured expanse, familiarly known as the "*Pat*." Firm, yielding, and elastic, it offers a fairly good substitute for turf to gallop over, so long as the dry weather lasts; but the first few inches of continuous rain, fortunately not very frequent and not very continuous, is sufficient to turn it into the most tenacious and greasy mud, to render locomotion difficult, and roads impassable. Almost impervious to water, the harder the clay the worse the mud, and, apparently, the less the water can sink through, the more easily the smallest running stream cuts out a channel for itself. Consequently, when it does rain, the water rapidly forms little ravines, and the hill torrents scour out deep channels, with almost perpendicular sides, forming a series of deep cracks which intersect the plain in every direction, like a piece of curious old china. Here and there, where the bed of these has widened out sufficiently, to admit of some little green thing

¹ Viz. the Ghilzai Clans and Dera Ismail Khân.

obtaining a footing, there is a fringe of tamarisk at the bottom of the crack ; but otherwise the banks are perfectly treeless, and the water too far below the surface, to do much towards helping struggling verdure without artificial assistance. Dry for a good part of the year, these ravines are occasionally roaring torrents, more or less formidable, as their sources are among the stones of the low hills or away towards Ghazni. Like the *pachád* in Dera Ghâzi Khân, the *Pat*, or the *damân*, to use the local equivalent word, is in places redeemed to some extent, by a laborious and ingenious system of artificial irrigation, with the result that little oases are created which, by comparison, may be called wooded. Up in the north-west corner, the town of Tânk was famed for its excellent fruit trees and luxuriant gardens, in the old days the resort of the choicest houris of its old Nawabs, whose history has been told by Edwardes ; and marvellous legends are still current of the harem of Sarwar Khân. But the mean-looking mud-roofed houses, rather below than above the surrounding country, that make up the villages, are ordinarily far apart ; and there are few or none of those detached farms and cottages, orchards or groves, that in other parts, even of India, help to give variety and interest to the scenery. The fame of Dîâband, the town of the "closed pass," is of a single mangoe tree, the fruit of which was so good that Runjit Singh used to have it sent to Lahore. While of Kulachi, the saying is particularly characteristic :—"Never visit it save to find brave soldiers or delicious melons."

To the west side, bare and precipitous, are the Sulaimâns, in a long straight line, with the Takht in the middle. To the north, long stony spurs, the outworks of the Bhitanni or Shaikh Budin range, which, with another rugged group known as the Ruttah Koh and the Nila Koh—the red and the blue hills—form a complete barrier, extending to the Indus banks, and separating this plain from Bannu and the Marwat. The whole tract, from the Indus to the stony gorges, whence issue the hill torrents—and which

represent the passes about which so much mystery was made—from Vahoa in the south, to Tânk in the north, is monotonously alike. Wherever these torrents are perennial, or there is water enough to turn on the fields, the general dreariness is broken, and when at certain times the rugged sides of the mountains are thrown into relief by the setting sun, the scene is not wanting in the elements of the picturesque. A fresh clear day, a good horse, and a gallop over the *pat* might possibly lead to the discovery of fresh beauties; but the substitution of the young camel, for the spring lamb, the slouching Powindah, for the proverbial harvester, or the rude camp village, for the “haunts of ancient peace,” is not particularly idyllic; and the picturesqueness is one to which distance most eminently lends enchantment. The nearer the hills are approached, the less inviting they become, the more savage the bare knife-like edges, the want of trees, and the scarcity of water, while once inside the spurs, the sensation, as described by Macgregor, is not so much that of being in a valley among hills, as of being in a pit surrounded by perpendicular walls. The country Dera Ismail Khân has fairly enough earned its epithet of “Dera dismal.”

From this not very inviting, but extremely important, “dismal camp,” the principal passes by which the western barrier is crossed are the Vahoa, in front of the village and military post of that name; the Shaikh Haidar, or Zao, a title used for any exceptionally difficult pass, and this one in places is little better than a cleft a few feet wide, shut in by precipices of great height that nearly close overhead, though it was the route taken by the last Takht Survey party; the Gumal; the Tank *zam*, or river; and the Shuza. In addition are nearly seventy others, which cross the outer ranges, and communicate with the longitudinal valleys behind them. Some of these are well known in connection with frontier expeditions, others by the local names of the streams which issue from them, which names often vary within a few miles—even the

Gumal becomes the Luni on our maps—and also by the outposts which have been established to watch the tribes using them, and who, in the Sikh times, not only carried off cattle but many a likely Hindu, who had to pay up liberally to get out again. Edwardes tells a story of a whole marriage procession, bride, bridegroom, friends, and fiddlers, who, in his time, were seized by a soldier of the Dera Nawâb, wanting some arrears of pay, and whose relatives had eventually to find Rs.4,000 to obtain their release. Most of these passes rejoice in a legend regarding the stream, or a converted saint, some unite both. At Drâband is the tomb of a Shaikh, who, as usual with Border saints, was “a polestar of guidance, a paragon among devotees, the exemplar of mankind, the pattern of his age, the chief of true believers”; and by the side of the stream which passes it there is, or there ought to be, a jug constantly filled with water. When a quarrel arises between two persons, which is to be decided by oath, each of them sips a draught from it. He that is in the right remains unhurt, but the liar swells like a water-bag, from which state nothing can relieve him but confessing the truth.

In the range to the north are two passes, the Bain and the Peyzu, leading into the district of Bannu; the latter, Edwardes, in his time recommended no one to attempt without a guard, but it is now the one through which our main frontier road passes, and is probably rather safer than Regent Street. (Of those on the west, the Gumal has been, from time immemorial, the chief trade-route, between Khurasân and India, the great central highway for the trading Afghân, of even more importance in this respect than the Khaiber to Kâbul, or Bolân to Kandahâr. Every cold weather, strings of camels laden with the merchandise from Bukhâra and Afghânistân find their way through this pass; and scatter through the length and breadth of India; and as summer approaches, return to the cooler highlands, carrying back in exchange either cash or goods for distribution as far as the Persiau and the

Russian borders; their owners a border people of considerable importance.

Not so much by his fruits, is the Afghân merchant known in every Indian bazaar, as by his strange appearance, his great stature, physical strength, and rude independence of manner. It is not necessary to see him to be fully conscious of his presence. The "rank-est compound of villainous smells" pervades the atmosphere through which he passes. "His loose untidy dress," as Bellew describes him, "generally in a state of dirt beyond the washerman's cure, and often covered with a shaggy sheepskin coat, travel-stained and sweat-begrimed to an extent that proclaims the presence of the wearer to the nostrils though he be out of sight in the crowd; his long unkempt and frayed locks, loosely held together by some careless twists of a coarse cotton turban, soiled to the last degree, if not tattered, also add to the wildness of his unwashed and weather-worn features; whilst his loud voice and rough manners complete the barbarian he is proud to pass for. Such is the common Powindah as seen in the bazaar." The term *powindah*, possibly from *parwindah*, the Persian for a bale of goods, is the collective name for all the migratory Pathâns who engage in the carrying trade, in fact monopolise all the trade between Central Asia, Afghânistân, and India; and includes a number of clans, mostly belonging to the great Ghilzai tribe, the most famous of all the Afghân tribes before the Durîânis rose to power. The Ghilzai or Ghilji, are by many authorities set down as of Turkish origin, their name another form of *khilchi* or swordsman; but the very romantic story of the Persian prince who seduced the affections and honour of the Afghân young lady as his only chance of marrying her—for the Afghâns would not give their daughters to Persians, and the issue of which irregular union—subsequently duly ratified, was a son christened *Ghal-zoe*, the son of theft, furnishes a derivation much more probable. But whether they are to start in the past, as "swordsmen" or "sons of theft," they are

in the present, an undoubtedly fine race ; as regards stature, strength, and courage quite among the best of the Afghâns, with a spirit of commercial enterprise and readiness to fight to the death for the privilege of selling their wares at a profit, not altogether



A Powindah Fruit-seller.

without resemblance to the Briton himself. Assembling every year in the plains of Zermut or Katawâz, east of Ghazni, with their families, flocks, herds, and droves, rather than herds of camels, the clans combine and march in enormous caravans, often numbering

several thousand of fighting men, disposed in military order against the attacks of the Waziris, Kâkars, and other Border tribes through whose territory they have very often to literally fight their way: the mass of them, by the Gumal pass; though a few, mostly sheep-owners, prefer the branch by the Zao.

The *pat* of Dera Ismail Khân is their great grazing ground, and they, or their camp villages, and their vast flocks of camels, furnish the most prominent addition to the scenery just noticed. Not a little of that district, moreover, has from first to last been colonised by offshoots from one clan or the other. Their numbers may be judged from the fact that, according to the enumeration made at the mouths of the passes by our militia stationed there for the purpose of disarming them and collecting the trifling grazing and other dues, upwards of 76,000 entered the district in the cold season of 1877, 58,000 in 1878, and 50,000 in 1880. Of the last named over 33,000 were males, more than half being fighting men. In 1878 their parties were accompanied by upwards of 77,000 camels and 188,000 sheep and goats. Besides those coming with the regular caravans—*Kâfilas*—many of whom, in spite of the railway, still continue to travel down to Amritsar, Delhi, Benares, and often as far as Patna, there are numerous others who establish themselves in fixed camping grounds called *kirris*, in the Dera Ismail district, where their women, children, arms, and a certain portion of their cattle and men are left for the cold season, while the rest of the clan go off to trade, the same *kirris* being resorted to year after year, their droves of breeding and young camels being driven off to graze, not always with much regard to village boundaries. A third and still more numerous class, called *charra-folk*, troubled with but few belongings of any sort come simply as labourers, and wander about in gangs not unlike the Irish harvesters, before the days of Home Rule, did in England; ready for rough work of any sort; stone-breaking, road-making, or jobs requiring energy and strength, living a very hard and industrious life, often subsisting on what they can succeed

in begging at the close of their day's work, and saving the bulk of their earnings to go back to Afghânistân again.)

Rough and stony as may be the rugged mountains of Solomon, the rocks and hills of the passes, whose heads touch heaven, they are the least formidable of the difficulties the soldier-merchant has to face. Before he can supply his customers in India with the silk of Bukhâra and the fruits of Afghânistân, or carry back the English calico and muslin for the "soft harems of Herât," he may have to fight a series of small engagements. Scarcely one of this "hard-bitten" race, but carries some record of skirmishes with the Border tribes through whose country he has to pass. Speaking generally, it may be said that south of the Gumal he has to deal with varieties of the Kâkar Pathân, who—disagreeable as he can be at times—by comparison with the Waziri on the north, carries peace in his right hand, and droppeth on the unwary traveller as the gentle rain from heaven. For generations the Waziri has carried on a war to the knife with the Powindah caravans. A day's march is seldom made without some little excitement in van or rear; the cutting off of stragglers, or the plunder of cattle. Occasionally these affrays develop into downright pitched battles, followed by additional exasperation on both sides: and more than once a compromise has been suggested, to take the form of a fixed black mail for the unmolested passage; but the Waziri seems to prefer taking it in the more sporting form of highway robbery. Before discussing his enemies, it may, however, be worth while to halt at the mouth of the pass, and finish dealing with the Powindah himself.

Many of the clans, though classed as Ghilzais, and spoken of as Powindahs, differ entirely in almost every particular. The Nasars, short sturdy men, have practically no country of their own, but pay for the right of grazing equally in the Derajât and the Ghilzai countries, living principally by their flocks and herds. Popularly they are divided into camel-folk, ox and ass-folk, and sheep-folk.

The camel-folk, the Trans-Indus carriers *par excellence*, owning between 30,000 and 40,000 camels, are probably the poorest, the roughest, and the most unkempt. They are largely engaged in carrying salt from the Kohât mines or grain from the Marwat, and are met with at every town along the frontier roads. The ox-folk and the ass-folk are to be seen everywhere, with their oxen and donkeys, carrying earth and bricks, or cutting and selling fuel in every frontier town. The sheep-folk, who are credited with owning some 100,000 sheep, arrive with their flocks about October, grazing them along the foot of the hills, and returning about the end of April. The Kharoties, who come from the hills near the source of the Gumal, are a poor tribe, mainly labourers and carriers, and have been nearly ruined by the luxury of a long-standing feud with their more powerful neighbours, the Sulaimân Khels, which feud is only suspended when they enter British territory, and resumed every year as soon as they re-enter the hills.)

The Sulaimân Khels are the most numerous, the most powerful, and the most warlike. Fine, strong, well set-up men who, though they behave well in India, have the reputation of being a very rough set, out of it. They, with their allied clans, are scattered over a great extent of the hilly territory from Peshin nearly as far as Jelâlâbâd. Of those who come down into British territory and bring but little merchandise, many are brokers and merchants on some scale, travelling as far as Calcutta, buying wholesale and selling to other Powindahs, taking back a good deal of their profits in cash. Some of them figured rather prominently in the disturbance that took place near Tânk in 1879, and nearly all the men of the Kirri were wiped out by our troops in suppressing it. Probably the richest of the Powindahs are the Miân Khels, whose summer home is near Panah and Karabagh, east of Ghazni, but who are very closely allied to the tribe of the same name settled within our border at Drâban and Musâzai. In fact, many of the latter have not given up their Powindah life, and every now and

then a leading zamindar takes a trip to Kâbul or Bukhâra, while his trading friend from Ghazni acquires an estate on this side the mountains, which his relations look after in his absence. Most of the Bukhâra trade—silk, sheep-skin coats, and drugs—is in their hands. They belong to the Lohâni or Rawâni—from *rawâni*, the Persian for travellers—division of the Ghilzais; they dress better, look better,—having often quite ruddy complexions—live



Mir Alam Khân—A Miân Khel Ghilzai.

better, and behave better than many of their less civilised allies. Neither are they so vulgarly desperate; they do not want for pluck, but are credited with preferring to remonstrate “with all the eloquence of avarice, and bribing with the generosity of smugglers.” He may take castles who has nothing to lose, but they are not ashamed to own a preference to leading caravans rather than armies into that profitless breach where the exchange is against all parties.

The Dautanis are a small and unimportant tribe, who have a little strip of country between the Gumal and the Waziri hillmen, but they are almost the only Powindahs who manage to keep on good terms with the latter. They have a comparatively fertile valley, growing rice and serials, are well to do, and also carry on a profitable trade with Bukhâra. The Niâzais trade almost exclusively from Kandahâr in dried fruits and madder. The Tokhis, in former days the most prominent of Ghilzai clans, hold the northern part of the Argundah, with head-quarters in Khelât-i-Ghilzai. The Tarrakkis, who hail from Kandahâr, the Andars from the Shalgar district south of Ghazni, and the Daulatzais, who were the original settlers in Tânk, and founded a family there, are all distinctly *Kâfila* folk, and come only with fighting men and camels. The minor clans may be said to be both numerous and unimportant.

Within the Dera Ismail Khân border, many of the Pathân tribes are more or less closely allied to the Powindahs. In earlier times, traders and graziers came from the hills to the plains, and for one reason or another, a branch of the tribe settled permanently. The Miân Khels have been previously noticed, and a similar process of emigration has taken place all along the line. About the time of Akbar several of the Lohâni clans were driven forward by the Sulaimân Khels; the Marwats who settled in part of the Bannu district and the northern corner of Dera Ismail Khân; the Tatars and Daulat Khels in Tânk. The latter called in the Gandapurs, who are Powindahs though of a lawless and brutalised type, to assist them against the Marwats, with the result of an extensive settlement in the Kulâchi tahsil. Similarly the Bâbars, described by Edwardes as the most superior race Trans-Indus, and whose civilization and intelligence has given rise to a proverb that a Bâbar fool is equal to a Gandapur sage, were pressed out of their holdings by their next neighbours and kinsmen, the

Shirinis, and settled round Chandwân, where they are reported rich, quiet and honest traders.

Regarding the extent of the Powindah trade, no very reliable returns are available. In the Punjab Report to the Secretary of State, it was estimated at Rs. 33,00,000, in 1861, and in 1870 at fifty lakhs.¹ A careful estimate by the settlement officer put the imports as averaging twenty-two lakhs, of which the largest items were fruit, madder, silk, wool, and drugs ; and the exports at nineteen lakhs, the most important items being indigo, cotton-goods, and tea. The chief trade centres beyond our Border are Bokhâra, Kâbul, Kandahâr and Ghazni ; and within it, Dera Ismail Khân, Tânk, and Kulâchi Trans-Indus, with Leiah and Bhakkar Cis-Indus. What effect the extension of the railway to Bhakkar will have on this trade, remains to be seen, but it is probable that the trade is already in excess of the estimated value, and it is certainly capable of very considerable extension. Needless to say a more forward frontier policy, that would ensure a safe route for the caravans, would do wonders in this direction.

¹ Approximately £500,000.



The Flying Throne of Star-taught Sulaimân.
(Facsimile of a Punjâb lithograph.)

CHAPTER IX.

SOLOMON'S THRONE AND THE GUMAL.

ACCORDING to one of the many Muhammadan legends of the place, Solomon, not content with the daughters of Jerusalem, came once to Hindustân to marry a lady named Balkis, a beauty of exceptional fame. As the happy pair were starting back on their honeymoon, seated on a throne—"the flying throne of Star-taught Sulaimân"—carried through the air by genii, the lady begged for a halt to enable her to take one last look at her beloved home. Opportunely they had just arrived over the Takht,¹ and the distinguished author of the Proverbs, desirous of obliging his spouse, directed the genii to scoop out a stand on its top, upon which the throne was placed, and the fair Balkis was able to indulge her faucy for a view of the plain, recently referred to

¹ Throne.

as "Dera Dismal." The place is held in much respect, and is quite a fashionable resort of pilgrims, though the shrine—not of Solomon, but of one of the usual "pole stars of guidance, extract of the herbage of religion, crocodile in the ocean of unity"—is some distance north of the true Takht.

The summit of this mountain, which has only recently been mapped by our surveyors, is about the centre of the Shirâni country, a tribe who, with their affiliated clans, extend from our Border to the Zhob river in the west, and north to the Gumal, or rather up to the little bit of no man's land, "the bloody Border" that separates them from the Masaud Waziris. Their main settlements are in the low hills to the east, between which and us run long narrow valleys of the most arid and sterile character right along to the Kasrâni country in the south, frequent but narrow gaps like the Gumal, the Zao, the Drâband, and the Dabri, affording egress to the plain. The crest and upper valleys of the Takht are well wooded, though the bulk of the Shirâni country is bare of trees, and exceptionally barren generally. The more settled clans who occupy fixed homesteads and pasture their flocks on the higher slopes, are the most friendly disposed to us; the clans nearest to us, fortunately not numerous, the least so; one or two sections, notoriously lawless, at times given to plundering villages and other malpractices. In the Sikh times they sacked Drâband, and a lot of land was thrown out of cultivation through fear of their attacks. In any other respect they are insignificant; an expedition sent against them in 1853, consisting of 2,500 of the Frontier Force and Military Police, went through the heart of their country, turned their defence, and returned to Drâband without losing a single man. The fighting strength of all the clans does not exceed 3,500, the bulk of whom are desirous of maintaining good relations with us. Since this lesson they have behaved well, but they are even for Pathâns, exceptionally democratic, caring nothing for

chiefs, and certain of the irreconcilables not even acknowledging the *Jirgah*. Petty thefts in British territory—which the elders admitted but p'eaded their inability to enforce order—necessitated a blockade in 1883, which brought about the fullest submission, and enabled us to carry out the Takht survey in 1884, with the aid of the tribesmen themselves; an event which, considering the intense dislike of all Pathâns to any survey, was considered one of the greatest triumphs of our Border policy.

Generally of middling stature, with bold features and high cheek bones, the men of the Shirâni clans are active, hardy, wild, and manly, but distinctly inferior in fighting capacity to the Waziris. For dress, the poorer tribesmen have seldom more than one coarse blanket round the waist, and another over the shoulders. The chief probably adds an exceptionally dirty linen shirt, baggy Pathân trousers, and the greasy puggaree that secures his straggling black ringlets is surmounted by a dingy gold cap. His large thick canoe-shaped shoes were once decorated with red and gold; while if below the sheep-skin *postern* that covers other things besides a multitude of sins, he can run to a garment of Multân silk, he is a buck of the most magnificent type. A curved sword, an old English double-barrelled pistol, and a powder horn complete the picture of the Shirâni on the war-path, who if he live up in the highlands calls himself a Burgas, in contradistinction to the Lurgas who lives in the valley. As a tribe, they are exceptionally poor; many are employed as servants by the Bârbars and Miân Khels in our territory. They marry late in life, and unlike other Pathâns, the father of the bride gives a dowry, instead of receiving a price for his daughter. They have also a sort of local Providence, who receives tithes in kind, is called *Nika*, or "grandfather," the chosen head of the oldest family. Money, as with many other people, is said to be scarce; perhaps, exceptionally so, as their trade is mainly carried on by barter. Their principal employment is agriculture, and this

is impossible without irrigation. They have few horses, absolutely no camels, and no great wealth of cattle. Except fuel, of which the Takht supplies plenty, they do not seem to have much to keep out the cold : up on the heights they cut their houses out of the hill sides, and close the entrance at night with the branch of a thorny tree. All the trade which they have is with British territory, where many of the tribe are every year located, and they are dependent on us for many of the necessities of life.

There can be no doubt that they would be infinitely better off if they were brought entirely under our rule, encouraged to settle in large numbers in the plains, helped a little in the matter of irrigation and capital for the purposes of trade ; and though the altitude of the Takht is probably too great to be useful as a strategic position, it would be valuable as a sanitarium. Its fine climate, magnificent pine forests, and grand scenery, would make it a much more pleasant hot weather station than the cantonment of Dera Ismail Khân. It is somewhat difficult of access, water is scarce at certain seasons of the year, at least our troops found it so, but this would be remedied by the construction of reservoirs, while the occupation of such a position would go a long way to securing a good trade-route with the valleys of the Gumal and the Zhob.

South of the Shirâni country the main watershed is held by a variety of wild tribes, of which the Usterânas, so called after a holy Sayud who married into the Shirânis, are the chief. Their lands are mainly across the Border, in villages just beyond the passes in the low outer hills, though large numbers of them are now regularly settled in the plains within it. Until about a century ago, they were entirely a pastoral or *Powindah* people, when a quarrel with the Musa Khels forced a number of them to take to agriculture. Their country is very barren and sandy, depending entirely on rain water, but they are fine well set-up men, quiet and orderly, many enlisting in our army and police.

Others are said to be venturesome traders, dealing largely in cattle, and travelling anywhere, from Bengal to Kandahâr. They are divided into two main clans, the one who wear their hair long, like a Biloch, and the other who cut it short; and, as between the Cavalier and Roundhead, a deadly and bloody feud exists.

Eastward of these two large tribes, and between them and the Zhob river, are the Isots and the Zamârais, two small tribes of nomad Pathâns of Kâkar origin: neither are of much importance and are both reported quiet and inoffensive, not extensive traders, but in the main dependent on their relations with us for the little trade they have. A handful of fakirs, called the Haripals, on the western side of the Takht, depend on the Shirânîs; and another settlement, the descendants of Shaikh Haider, are located at Zirkanni, the eastern entrance to the pass, a village which is a great burying-place of the Powindahs. Beyond the Zhob, and between the river and the Ghilzai country, are the Mandu-Khels, another off-shoot of the Kâkars, a fairly peaceful and agricultural community, but who rarely come down to trade with us. All of these are more or less favourable to British interests, and a large proportion of the people may be said to be well under British influence. The pass known as the Gumal, and for the opening of which negotiations under Sir Robert Sandeman seem progressing so successfully, takes its name from the village and the valley on the Tânk border, though the stream called the Gumal higher up, bears other names along its length, and finally becomes the Luni in Dera Ismail Khân. It is popularly associated with the Powindah traders just described, and regarded merely as the doorway of Ghazni. Really it is a highway of the greatest strategic as well as commercial importance, for after winding through the Sulaimân range to Kajuri-Kach—the plain of palms, though there are no palms, and no plain beyond a stony river bed—or to where the Gumal and Zhob streams join, the road bifurcates; that along the

last-named river leading by two important routes west and south-west to Peshin and Kandahâr, the other continuing north-west along the Gumal proper to Ghazni. Up to the junction, the whole has been mapped a railway survey being actually commenced, and the route traversing the Zhob valley towards Peshin is also pretty well known. Leading more or less into this, are passes like the Shaikh-Haider, the Drâband, and the Dahna which again communicate with one another through the lateral valleys described by Major Holdich as a peculiarity not merely of the Takht, but of the range. The Drâband is even a more direct pass than the Gumal, but some lengths where nature has torn a passage through the terrific limestone gorges are at times all but impracticable. The Dahna is said to be now little better, though both it and the Shaikh Haider or Zao have at times been used as the main caravan routes.

The upper part of the western route is less known. For some distance it traverses the Zhob valley, whence it crosses into the Kundil, follows it to the head, and across the watershed separating the Gumal and Helmund drainages, to Maruf, an important place, forty miles from Khelât-i-Ghilzai.

The north-western branch, after getting clear of the Masaud Waziris, traverses the country of the Sulaimân Khel Ghilzais, across the Kohnak range by the Sarwandi Kotal, which has an elevation of about 7,500 feet, into Katawâz and the Shilgar country to Ghazni. The Powindah trade which follows this last route is mainly, if not almost exclusively, in the hands of Ghilzai clans like the Sulaimân Khels, Kharotes and Naisirs, who occupy the plains south and east of the Ab-i-Istâda, and the Indian side of the above-mentioned range. It may be doubted if any considerable portion of the trade comes from countries very distant beyond this range, but if it does, it is all carried by these enterprising clans, whose doings have already been described.

The more immediate want in the care of the Gumal, so soon

as the necessary tribal arrangements have been completed, is the construction of a thoroughly good military road, adapted for all arms of the service, by the Zhob valley to Peshin, one that would be even more valuable for the Kandahâr position than that just opened from Dera Ghâzi Khân by Fort Monroe. The



On the Road to Quetta.

opening out of a subsidiary route to Maruf and Khelât-i-Ghilzai would necessarily follow, while the third desideratum would be a good trade route through the Sulaimân country to Ghazni. This third road, whether railway communication should hereafter be extended by the Dawar valley to Ghazni, or by the

Khaiber direct to Kâbul, would be invaluable as a flank protection, but as a railway route it must take a place second to either.

North of the No-man's Land referred to as bordering the Gumal Pass, we have to deal with a much more powerful people, and the Waziris are among the most troublesome of all the border tribes. The most important of the divisions of these, are the Mahsud Waziris, whose territory only abuts on ours at the extreme end of the Gumal Valley by the Urmân Pass, though the main road to this country is through the Tânk Pass by Jandola, the remainder being shut off by the hill Bitannis. It will therefore be convenient to refer to the latter first, and reserve the Waziris and Waziristân for subsequent notice.

The Bitannis, or descendants of Bitan, the third son of Kais or Kesh—the distinguished Afghân, who is said to have gone to Medina and brought back the true faith, and to be responsible for founding all the existing Afghân tribes—are our neighbours for forty miles, or from the Gumal Valley to the Gabar mountain in the Bannu district. Till some fifty years ago, they lived wholly in the hills, but have now spread in numbers into the Tânk plain; and one of the three principal clans hold considerable lands there. The range separating Tânk from the Marwat is also called after them, as far as the sanitarium of Shaikh Budin. On the west they are hemmed in by the Waziris, who have necessarily to pass through their territory to reach our border. The two are generally more or less at feud though until recently the Bitanni was always ready to assist the Waziri when any robbery was afoot in our direction. In spite of their family pedigree, they are only just emerging from barbarism, their hill possessions are stony and uncultivated, their villages small, often hidden away in hollows, their houses mere hovels of mud and brushwood. Wiry and active, they have still a reputation for stupidity and thriftlessness. "A hundred Bitannis will eat a hundred sheep" is a country-side joke. Inveterate thieves when

opportunity offers, they have been more frequently employed as spies and guides, abetting theft by their more powerful neighbours, and have earned the title of "the Jackals to the Waziris." The fighting strength of all the clans is probably not much in excess of 3,000 men, and their villages are entirely at our mercy. For a long time they were more or less ill-conditioned, but their acceptance in 1875 of the pass responsibility, has changed the character of that part of the Border, and for some years the Waziri lion has been restrained, and the Bitanni jackal has given no cause for complaint.

CHAPTER X.

AFGHÂN TRADITIONS.

ACCORDING to most Oriental historians, the Afghâns believe themselves descended from the Jews, if not actually from the lost tribes. They were carried into captivity together, shared their lot, but subsequently escaped and found refuge in Arsareth, which some would identify as the modern Hazârah. Their own traditions refer to Syria as their original home, whence they were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, and planted in different parts of Persia and Media, from whence again they moved eastward into the mountains of Ghor, and long after to Kâbul and Kandahâr. They claim that they were in Ghor, east of Hirât, when the Prophet Muhammad arose in the seventh century. One of the most reliable of the Persian histories certainly mentions a people, called Bani Israil, as settled there when Chenghiz Khân conquered it in the thirteenth century. The weight of authority is in favour of their Semitic origin. There is a great likeness between the features of the Afghân and the Jew; in many cases it is so striking that the two could hardly be distinguished, but the same might perhaps be said of certain Kashmiris and others who are in no way connected with the Afghâns. The use of Jewish names is so common that some of their genealogies might be mistaken for chapters taken out of Genesis, but going back to the

early tribal names, the comparison does not hold good. The tribes of purest blood have some peculiar customs, particularly suggestive of the old Levitical law. The Passover-like practice of sacrificing an animal, and smearing the doorway to avert calamity, the offering up of sacrifices, the stoning to death of blasphemers, the periodical distribution of land by lot, the rites of circumcision, purification, &c., of which the last two are no doubt common to Muhammadans generally.

On the other hand, their language, the hard northern Pukhtu or the soft southern Pushtu, is on all hands declared to have nothing in common with the Hebrew or Chaldaic, but is allied to the Aryan, and a branch of the Persian stock. Opinion is divided, all the learning is against the theory, more especially with the savants who have no acquaintance with the people; while those who know them best, appear to have a sneaking feeling, that however absurd the fictions of the Afghân genealogist and historian may be, they contain material which by patient study may hereafter assist to a sound conclusion. Their traditions, oral and written, persist in tracing their descent from Saul, or *Talût*, the King of Israel, celebrated not less for his wisdom than his mightiness in war. The "*Malik*," who from the shoulders and upwards was higher than any of his people. The story is worth telling in their own style.

It is, says the erudite Niâmat Ullah, well known to every intelligent, learned and accomplished scholar, that the reason why nothing has ever been satisfactorily recorded by those who explore notable events and elucidate novel facts in any book or history relating to the early Afghân nation, its tribes, and their conversion to Islâm, is partly because, ever since the time that Musa, the interpreter of the All-Wise, vanquished I haro, and since Bukhtu-n-nasr, the great magician expelled and exterminated the Coptes, and was permitted to subjugate Sham (Palestine), to raze Jerusalem, and vanquish Bani Isrâil, they have been continually living amongst mountains and

deserts, without any science gaining ground among them, except Islâmism and the five pillars of practice ; and partly because, since the time of "*Mâlik*," Sârul, surnamed Twâlut, " the prince of stature," their great ancestor, through whose tribe of Ibnyamin, their pedigree ascends by Yacoob, Isaâk, Ibrahim, to Nuh and Adam, " the chosen of God," down as late as the time of Sultan Behlol Lodi's accession to the throne of Ind, no one amongst them raised himself to sovereignty and became a monarch ; and it is only under mighty sovereigns the rose-grove of erudition, and the pearls of eloquence, which go to make up such compositions, are enabled to flourish.

But those who have preserved traditions, and committed to memory the transactions of ancient times, relate there was a descendant of Ibnyamin-bin Yacoob, called Kais or Kesh, the whole of whose inheritance from his father and his uncle consisted of four sheep. Kais had a son, a choice young man, whose name was Sârul, but by reason of tallness he was called Tawâlut, and besides looking after the four sheep he kept an ass and fetched water from the Nile. Two of the sheep once went astray, and while Tawâlut looked for them, he fell in with a young man of the tribe of Lâwi, named Ismâel, who forthwith anointed Tawâlut's head with oil from a horn, which instantly assumed the appearance of a crown ; and saluted him as *Mâlik*, and king over Bani Isrâel. Sârul married into the tribe of Lâwi, two wives, by one of whom he had a daughter, subsequently married to Daud, the youngest of a family of twelve sons, who had distinguished himself so greatly in the wars with the Amâlika tribe, that he had been entrusted with the uncontrolled administration of the most important affairs of the kingdom, and ultimately succeeded Sârul on the throne. Of these two wives, were also born in the same hour, immediately after their father's death, two sons, Barakiah and Iramiah. Daud treated the two afflicted widows with great kindness, and subsequently entrusted to each of the two sons the govern-

ment of a tribe; so that by the divine favour they were promoted to a high state, bore on the arena the ball of bravery and fortitude, and every army they led on, was by their able conduct, visited by the breeze of victory and triumph. Such proof of superiority and bravery induced Daud to grant to them exalted positions. Barakiah became prime minister, and Iramiah commander-in-chief, and by their prudent conduct, universal welfare reigned from tribe to tribe, and the cultivation and population of towns and villages increased ten-fold. Each of them was in his time blessed with an accomplished son, the former named his Assaf, and the latter called his Afghâna. After the death of their respective fathers, both filled the same important positions under the government of Sulaimân the son of Daud. Afghâna also superintending the building of the Bait-ul-Makaddas, or temple at Jerusalem, which Daud had commenced, and which by the care and labour of Afghâna was brought to completion.

After this, their descendants multiplied exceedingly; Assaf having eighteen sons, and Afghâna forty. And when Azrail, the angel of death, stood forth on the part of the Great Pardoner, and saluting Sulaimân, bore his soul to Heaven, before he had even time to take leave of Balkis : no tribe of Bani Isrâel equalled them.

Time passed, and when the All-Powerful permitted Bukhtu-n-nasr to subjugate the territories of Sham, and required Bani Isrâel to worship him as a God, the tribe of Afghâna adhered to the religion of their forefathers, on account of which, after great struggles and persecution they were vanquished, and had to seek shelter in the mountainous districts of Kohistân-i-Ghor, and Kohistân-i-Faroza; where the tribes of Assaf and Afghâna fixed their habitation, continually increasing and making war on the heathen infidels around them, most of whom they put to death; extending their borders to Kohistân-i-Kâbul Kandahâr, and Ghazni. At the same time part of them

sought shelter in Arabia, remarking to each other, that, being prohibited the temple of Daud and Sulaimân, they ought not to neglect that founded by Ibrahim. With this view they took up their residence in the vicinity of Mecca, where they paid homage and obedience to the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Fifteen hundred years after Sulaimân's time, the sun of Muhammad's beauty—upon whom be peace—arose and illumined the darkness by the directing light of Islâm, and all the nobles of the Arabs resorted to the Majesty, and received the blessing, a small number only of stubborn people preferring to oppose it. Nine years after the light of Muhammad's countenance had appeared in the place of Ibrahim, a fellow Israelite, named Khalil, "the sword of God," son of Walid—who had become a firm adherent of the standard of Islâm, and whose descendants are to this day called Khalidi Afghâns (and are represented on our border by the Bangash tribe)—sent a letter to the Afghâns in the mountains of Ghor, informing them of the appearance of the last of the Prophets.

On the receipt of Khalil's letter several of the chiefs of Ghor departed for Madina, the mightiest of whom, and of the Afghân people, was one Kais, whose pedigree extends by thirty-seven degrees to Sârul, forty-five to Ibrahim, and 603 to Adam. As soon as the party arrived they were, under Khalil's guidance, enabled to become adherents of the Prophet, who lavished all sorts of blessings upon them, changed their Hebrew names for Arabic—Kais becoming Abdu-r-rashid, the "servant of the Wise;" and promised that the title of *Mâlik* bestowed on their great ancestor should never depart from them. As they were about to leave, he conferred upon Kais, the additional title of Pathân, which in the Syrian language signifies rudder, and drew a simile—revealed to him by the Angel Gabriel—comparing Kais to the pilot of his countrymen in the Faith, the rudder being the part of the ship which steers it in the way it should go. So successfully did Abdu-r rashid, the Pathân, steer the ship of faith, that

within a few years from his return to Ghor, a large proportion of the nation had, by the divine pleasure, become Muhammadans [or had accelerated their descent to Hell], and amongst them rose up dervishes, devotees and saints, excelling in both deed and speech. There rose up also a great posterity to Kesh, who had married the daughter of Khalid, and by whom he was blessed with three sons, of whom he called the eldest Sarbun, the second Baitan and the third Ghurghusht; from each of whom descended sons and tribes on such a scale as to pass all conception.

The worthy Khwâjah proceeds to relate—In the name of God, the All Merciful! The Almighty of his universal sovereignty presents Sarbun, son of Pathân, with two sons. Sharkhbun and Kurshbun. * * * *

But it is necessary here to part company with Niâmat Ullah and his friends; the distinguished friends who supported him by their amiable kindness and consummate erudition, who collected and arranged the scattered and confused genealogies, and from the mines of Ahmedian records made schemes for authentic histories—repositories of unparalleled value, but also of unparalleled length

From these sons of Kais the whole of the Afghân tribes—some 400 *Zais* and *Khels*—claim to have sprung. The Afghâns proper, from Peshawur to Kandahâr, are credited to the two sons of Sarbun: from five sons of the first are said to have sprung the Abdâlis or Durrânis, the Tarins, Shirânis, and Khetrâns. From the second, fused perhaps with the ancient Ghandâris, the Yusafzais, Muhammadzais, Mohmands, Daudzais, and many others in the plains round Peshawur. From Baitan's daughter and her Persian lover, all the Ghilzais, the Lodis, and the Suris, which two last gave dynasties to India. While from the three sons of Ghurghusht, with probably a large admixture of Turk and Sythic stock, combined with a dash of Jat and Rajput, are descended all the Pathâns proper, the Kâkars, Waziris, Shitaks, Turis, Khattaks, Afridis, and others.

Some of these last have special traditions of their own, and though Pukhtuns are not included among the Afghâns, or only by adoption, they probably belonged to much the same stock, but for one reason or other remained much longer unconverted to Muhammadanism. The most numerous and powerful are generally included under the term *Karrhai*, or *Karralâni*. Divided into as many *Khels* and *Zais* as the others, they have just as many legends as to how they came by the name, but in regard to which the Afghân saying for all doubtful cases eminently applies—*Wa-illâhu 'alam*, "God only knows" the truth.

The terms Afghân and Pathân are however apt to be misleading. In India all Pushtu-speaking-people are called "Pathân,"—though the Highlanders among them were sometimes spoken of as "*Rohilla*"—from *Roh* or *Koh*, a mountain. Even their country has only within comparatively modern times come to be called Afghânistân, it was originally a part of Khurasân, and there the people more generally speak of themselves by the name of their clan, as *Durrâni*, or *Ghilzai*, but all admit to being Pukhtâns, and are proud of it, and it is from this word that the Hindustâni corruption of "Pathân" is derived. By no means all the Pathâns who reside in Afghânistân are Afghâns, any more than the English or Scotch settled in Ireland are Irish, though they are generally called so. And as Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Welshmen, who—some of them—speak English, are called collectively Englishmen; so quite a number of vastly dissimilar people who speak Pukhtu, are included under the term Pukhtûn or Pathân.

In Hindustân the title is assumed by all sorts of mongrels, whose claim to it is no better founded than the Eurasian, who describes himself as European. But on the Border, a Pathân is so called by virtue of his language, and if he be a resident in the territory of the Amir, he may be called Afghân, however doubtful his descent from Afghâna.



Sulaimán Khel (Ghilzai) Horse-dealers.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FRONTIER SWITZERLAND.

BETWEEN the "Bloody Border" at the base of Solomon's throne, and the snowy peaks of the Sufed Koh, or "white mountains," lies the great country of Waziristân—the Switzerland of the north-west frontier. A land of high and difficult hills, deep and rugged defiles, brave and hardy people, in their way as independent and patriotic, and in the presence of the common enemy, hardly less united, than the famous compatriots of Tell. Geographically and politically, the two have several points in common; and as regards the mass of hills that lie between the Gumal and the Tochi or Dawar valley, of which Kanigurum, the stronghold of the most powerful of the Waziri tribes, is about the centre, this is more

especially true. The east front is protected by the bare hills held by the Bitannis; beyond which ravines, flanked by precipitous cliffs, which occasionally widen out to enclose small valleys fairly fertile, from one hundred to one thousand yards wide, but narrowing again as they ascend. Not unfrequently the mouth is a mere gorge or *tangi*,¹ where the water forces its way through a range crossing it at right angles, and forming a colossal natural barrier. In these valleys, and the small strips of alluvial land which border the base of the higher mountains, locally called "*kaches*"—which are quite a distinctive feature of the whole range—there is often a good deal of cultivation, the whole carefully terraced and irrigated by means of channels cut out of the hill sides, a great deal of ingenuity and skill being expended in leading the water from field to field. The edges of the fields, which correspond with the side of the watercourse, are planted with mulberry and willows, the houses of the owners being perched picturesquely on the slopes above. Lower down, where the valley narrows to the *tangi*, paved with rough boulders and stones—difficult enough in ordinary times, but probably filled by a roaring torrent in the rains—the Waziri has been provided by nature with the most magnificent defensive position, the valleys behind furnishing a camping-ground and a base of supplies. Until the Dawar Valley is reached, there are no passes leading directly through the country, though the Tank *Zam* from Dera Ismail Khân, and the Shakdu and Kaisor from Bannu, afford access to the heart of it. From the west it is even less accessible, and practically it has always been independent of Kâbul. Secure in a long line of mountain fastnesses, possessing considerable natural resources, and with constitutions that would enable them to live where most other people would starve, the Waziris could probably not be dislodged by any force which the Amir is able to detail against them. Even in our case, advancing from our adjacent frontier-lines, it took nearly 7,000 men, and

¹ Literally, *waist*.

cost us over 350 lives, to get to Kanigurum in 1860, though the whole country could, if necessary, be dominated by us without much difficulty.

The inhabitants of these mountain homes are essentially a self-governed people; they are eminently a fighting people, but still more essentially and eminently are they a thieving people. From the comparatively civilised Darwesh of Bannu—who, if he cannot steal a pony, will take a bicycle—to the ruder Mahsud, described as the earliest, most inveterate, and most incorrigible robber of all, this characteristic is the most prominent; and they are proud of it. Every true man's apparel fits your Waziri. The travelling Powindah is his oyster, and he is ready on every opportunity, sword in hand, to open the latter's bales, to cut his throat, and to "convey" rather than "steal" his goods back to the passes. They are the most numerous, and in spite of intertribal feuds, probably the most united, of all our north-west tribes. Of blood feuds and family feuds they have many—these are luxuries it would be unreasonable to expect any Pathân tribe to give up—but their very democratic arrangements, observed in the distribution of lands amongst the various sections, and the manner in which these sections and their sub-divisions are scattered over the face of the country, have contributed to make any formidable intertribal feuds more uncommon. And it is to this, added to the natural strength of its position, that Waziristân is not a little indebted for its independence. Taking into account all those who would be classed as Waziris, their united tribal strength would be in excess of 40,000 fighting men. A contingent that, when the quality is taken into consideration, would be no mean addition to the resources of ourselves, or—and the problem is worthy the consideration of the "Backward School"—of our enemies.

Tribally, the Waziri is spilt up into the usual complication of branches, sections, divisions, and sub-divisions, the enumeration of which would be clearly a multiplying of words without knowledge.

Nor would it be profitable to try and work out the descent of Wazir-bin-Sulaimân from Saul or even Kais, to the various Musas, Mahmuds, and Mahsuds, whose names are still borne by the clans. By far the most important of the main branches are the Darwesh Khels and the Mahsuds. A few representatives of tribes like the Lalais extend up to the slopes of the Safed Koh, or Spinjah, as the Waziris would call what they say was the original home from whence they came, and some of the Gurbaz reside on the borders of Khost, but no great numbers are located north of the Kurram. The Darwesh Khels consist of two great sections, the Utmanzais and the Ahmadzais; again split into divisions and sub-divisions, important enough from a tribal point of view, but which there is no reason to particularise. The first sections are mainly on the right bank of the Kurram, occupying the hills between the Khost and Dawar Valleys. Some cultivate lands within our border, and others regularly come in to trade. Another division, the Kâbul Khels, are extremely wild and lawless, ready to join with any one in mischief and devilry, and have, as the Frontier Reports put it, "given a good deal of trouble;" an expression somewhat comprehensive—as for instance, it covers the fact, that in one year, they made twenty raids, finishing up with a murderous attack on some Bannuchi villages, some fourteen of which they sacked and burnt. In return for which Nicholson—whose name by the way is now as a household god among them—penetrated with 1,500 men into the heart of their country and retaliated in kind on their villages. Subsequently, in 1859, they came in for a second expedition all to themselves, under Chamberlain, the punishment for an audacious attack on Bahader Khel and the Salt-mines. The Ahmadzai branch are mainly on the left bank of the Kurram, north of Bannu, though probably there are now nearly as many residing within our border as beyond it. On the banks of the Kurram, and the Kaitu, which flows into it, both enjoy broad tracts of rich soil, and the hills which surround them, whose jagged walls conceal many a grassy slope,

afford good pastures for their camels and flocks. Their proper settlements, if they can be said to have any, are up on the higher spurs; but of regular villages they have few, residing mainly in *kirris* or encampments, sometimes protected with a wall of loose stones, often merely stout woollen blankets stretched over curved sticks, which, like the Irish cabins, are shared with their cattle and the family camel, and guarded by the family dogs of a particularly large and fierce breed. The most permanent thing they ever possess are the tribal graveyards, which are scattered over most hill sides, and are perhaps the only places they hold sacred. The boldest thief among them will keep his sacrilegious hands off any property deposited among the tombs. The lands of both sections of the Darwesh Khels extend moreover all round the Tochi or Dawar valley, though not into it; the inhabitants of that valley being, curiously enough, almost a distinct race, greatly inferior in physique, in morals, and in courage; and considering the intense contempt in which a Dawari is held by the Waziris, and the small scruple the latter usually has regarding his neighbour's landmark, why they have permitted so important a highway through their country to remain in what might fairly be considered alien hands, is a somewhat curious problem.

Something will be said hereafter about the Dawaris and the Tochi, a route of the greatest importance to us, but to dispose first of our Waziri friends, and the most important and powerful branch of all, the Mahsuds, whose country around Kanigurum has already been referred to. These are sub-divided into three main sections, the Bahlolzai, the Alizai and the Shaman Khel; the first-named being probably *facile princeps* in the noble profession of robber; and as robbery is—unless it be done on a sufficiently large scale—opposed to the policy of the British Government, they are consequently our most inveterate foes. In this respect it is unnecessary to institute any comparison between the dwellers in Waziristân and those in the Swiss Alps. The boast of the former,

that, while kingdoms and dynasties have passed away, they alone, of all the Afghân tribes, have remained free, and that the armies of kings have failed to penetrate their strongholds, might strike a chord of sympathy ; but they continue in a strain most reprehensible, to the effect that they know no law or will but their own, and from generation to generation the plain country has provided them with a fair hunting-ground for plunder. The merry Switzer, wiser in his generation, contents himself by taking it out of the traveller in the form of hotel bills.

Even the Bahlolzaïs have, however, had to modify this boast. A series of raids filled up the measure of their iniquities, and in 1860, General Chamberlain forced his way into the heart of their country to Kanigurum and Makin, and burned the latter. On one or two other occasions the whole Mahsuds were blockaded, and paid down a cash indemnity, giving hostages for the observance of the terms imposed on them. Posts were established within the passes of the Bitanni country, and offences effectually checked for years. In 1879, instigated by emissaries from Kâbul, or excited by our proceedings in the Kâbul Valley, they became discontented again, and finally, amongst other tribes, came down in force and fired the town of Tânk. This led to an expedition under General Kennedy being sent against them in 1881, and they again found that not even their most distant glens, or wildest and pathless hills could protect them from punishment; and they ultimately accepted the greatest humiliation a Pathân clan can suffer, surrendering some half-dozen of their proscribed ringleaders, and sending eighty hostages to reside in Dera Ismail Khân. One of the ringleaders died in Lahore, and the rest were, in consideration of their furnishing an escort to our survey parties in the Gumal, and their general good behaviour, released in 1884.

Physically, they are a fine race, tall, muscular and courageous, in many respects noble savages. Desperate in their forays, never sparing an enemy of the male sex, even if he be but a Ghilzai boy

—nor does the Ghilzai ever let off a Waziri when he catches him—the Waziri is, on the other hand, so far chivalrous, he will never kill or rob women. He rather prides himself on a certain gallantry in this respect. Like other Pathâns, the whole people are given to hospitality: guests are welcomed by the men and women present in the village, with the greeting "*harkalarshee*," "may you come always" and entertained according to rank. They are generally ignorant, illiterate and superstitious, with dangerously little learning, and show great reverence for *Mullahs*, *Akhunds* and holy men of all sorts, who write charms, read incantations, enjoy alms and pilgrimages, and prescribe for ailments greatly to their own profit. For most complaints the prescription is uniform and simple, and merely consists of enveloping the patient in the skin of a newly-killed sheep until he perspires freely, which, combined with a strong purgative, dry bread and a good climate and constitution, answers as well as anything else.

But unlike other Pathâns, they are credited with some regard for honour, and, still more remarkable, with comparative truthfulness. Many of the Waziri customs are also peculiar to themselves. For adultery they kill the woman, but cut off the nose of the man, though in some cases the lady apparently escapes with the lesser punishment. Their women do not cover their faces, but live freely with the men. The bridegroom gives a dower to the bride's father, in other words buys his wife; the cost of an eligible young lady ranging from Rs. 60 to Rs. 150; but this does not prevent her having fifty or sixty bridesmaids, who bring double that number of young men, and indulge in a regular flare-up, including a dance with a liberal drum-accompaniment. Contrary to the usual rule about the avenging of blood feuds, the Waziri greybeard of ancient times ruled that the actual murderer must be the only victim; thus avoiding many of those ramified feuds and indiscriminate vengeance where a blood account-current is handed down for generations from father to son; and it ultimately becomes almost

impossible to strike a balance. Again, the "make up money," or pecuniary commutation, has been fixed in the case of Waziri lives at exceptionally high rates. The fixed price for a Waziri, for instance, is Rs. 1,300, half of which must be in cash and the other half in produce or commodities, including two girls at Rs. 100



Darwesh Khel Waziris.

each. A woman can be killed for half price, or Rs. 650 and a *lungi* or silk scarf of Rs. 50. The cost of a limb which permanently incapacitates a man is compensated for by a payment of Rs. 500; and this is the cost of an eye. The tariff for sword-wounds is apportioned much in the same way as cuts on a club billiard-cloth, and at very nearly the same rates—Rs. 12-8 for the

first half-inch. But it costs Rs. 250 to cut off a nose—by mistake of the Waziri Baron Cresswell presumably—Rs. 100 for an ear, and so on, down a scale it would be tedious to extend.

The moral to be pointed in connection with the Waziris is however, less their ethnological peculiarities, than the fact of the importance of so large, warlike, and independent a people on our immediate border, a people that cannot be left out of consideration when military interests are at stake. It is notorious that, two or three years ago, the agents of the Amir were doing their utmost to gain over the Mahsuds to surrender their independence, permit posts to be built in their hills, and to pay even the most nominal tithes. So far without success, and as matters now stand Waziristân is particularly open to British influence, which we could extend without in any way complicating our relations with Kâbul. An opportunity that would certainly cease if at any time Kâbul garrisons were posted in strong positions in the country; and without some active interference on our part, it is quite within the bounds of possibility that Kâbul persistence may establish such a position.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRICE OF BLOOD.

WHETHER Ban-i-Afghân and Ban-i-Israil are identical, or whether Ars-areth, where the ten tribes carried into captivity ultimately found refuge, represents the modern Hazârah country, or no, there is no doubt that all the race, Afghân or Pathân, has, among other Jewish practices, customs, traditions, and laws, followed pretty closely to the old Levitical idea of a "life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." The rudest form of this principle of retaliatory justice is probably practised among the "Children of Joseph" in Yusafzai. There it is applied to all sorts of offences. If A steals B's property, B is at liberty to lay hands on similar property belonging to any member of A's clan. Any of the latter may be called upon to "pay forfeit," as they call it, for A's misconduct. If A outruns the constable, and gets into debt to B, the latter, by the same summary process, can recover from any of the debtor's clan. Should A kill B's ox, and the tribal council cannot arrange matters, B's remedy is to kill an ox of A's. Finally, if A kill B, the council must hand over the former to the heirs and assigns of the murdered man, to be dealt with. Not to so hand him over is to ensure a lasting blood-feud between the two families or clans, which may run on from generation to generation, and finally defy all attempts at a settlement.

It may happen that B's next of kin is away, perhaps soldiering in a British regiment. He will have to come up to his commanding Officer with a story of "urgent private affairs," take leave, go away home again, kill A or one of his clan : and, having thus "put his house in order," rejoin, proudly conscious of having done his duty to his country. The Yusafzais are particularly notorious for following the law literally, and avoiding compromise. The majority of them are pretty sure to have been mixed up in some affair of the kind.

In Swât there are some curious varieties of procedure. If B's property has been stolen, he can call upon A, or any one he suspects, from C to Z, to give him a *Sayad* ; that is the suspect must produce a respectable person to swear that he is not guilty, which, if he succeeds in doing, B must accept that as sufficient evidence of innocence. Should the *Sayad* not be forthcoming to take the needful oath, A is guilty, and B can treat him accordingly. Another is even a more simple, and certainly ought to be an effective, method of binding disputants over to keep the peace. It is simply to expel both from the place ; deprive them of all civil rights, wife, children, home and property, which in some cases are confiscated altogether, and leave them to the charity of other villages, until they can come to an accommodation or reconciliation. The rule is more particularly applicable to the village headmen, but in spite of it, these are the people almost constantly at feud with one another.

Revenge may, as Bacon says, be a kind of wild justice, and though this particular form of it was enjoined by Moses, it is not particularly profitable. If a man cause a blemish in his neighbour, it is perhaps equitable to do the same for him again ; but to go for the particular eye for eye, or tooth for tooth, besides being unprofitable, must on occasions have been highly inconvenient ; and if not to the early Israelite, it seems to have soon occurred to the practical-minded Pathân, to reduce the damages to a money value,

and assess all kinds of hurt, from murder downwards, in rupees. The idea of "blood-money" is familiar everywhere in Afghânistân, and, in one form or other, is common to all the Border Pathâns. Among the Western Afghâns, says Elphinstone, a murder can be compromised by giving twelve young women; six with dowries and six without. Ordinarily, among the common people, the dowry would be about sixty rupees each, partly payable in goods. For the loss of a hand, an ear or a nose, the tariff is six women; for breaking a tooth three women (surely an excessive charge, even against a dentist); for a wound above the forehead one; but for a hurt below the forehead, unless it take a year to heal, an apology would be held sufficient. Nearer our Border, the people prefer more cash and fewer young women, and the aggrieved may, if he or his relations happen to be very much married already, or he prefer it, stipulate for the whole in cash.

With the Barzai division of the Mohmands, the fine for murder is Rs. 1,200, the same as for the abduction of a married woman, two-thirds of which goes to the husband or the victim's heirs and one-third to the village council. If it is not paid, the offender is expatriated. Besides this, his relations have to pay Rs. 100 to free themselves of responsibility for the action of their relative, and to insure the council a feast. Widow abduction is only half as expensive. A gunshot wound is costly, Rs. 600, but to own a gun is a luxury naturally reserved for the well-to-do. To keep a sword, like the old-fashioned classification of the man who kept a gig, is "respectable," and to wound with it, costs a Mohmand Rs. 100, a dagger-stab is Rs. 50; and a plebeian blow with a stone is only Rs. 25.

The Mahsud Waziris on one occasion, by way of showing their anxiety to conclude a treaty of peace with us, while expressing their regret that they could not guarantee us against occasional thefts and raids and consequent unavoidable injury to individuals, specified that our Government should be at liberty on all occasions

to indemnify itself by looting their *kāfilas* of merchandise on a regular scale ! Their scale laid down Rs. 600 for all items of blood-money, Rs. 200 for all arms, legs, or blows equal to the loss of a limb, and a sliding-scale for minor injuries ; offering to give us hostages to see the arrangement fairly carried out. The Kuki Khels paid a fine of Rs. 3,000 for the murder of a British officer rather than produce the murderer. And when the Utman Khels killed our coolies on the Swât Canal works at Abazai, and the compensation was adjusted after Cavagnari and Battye had surprised their villages, they agreed in addition to a fine, to " blood-money " at the rate of Rs. 200 for each coolie killed, and Rs. 100 for each coolie wounded who recovered. " To eight coolies killed at Rs. 200, and twenty-two coolies damaged at Rs. 100," was the bill actually paid.

None of the tribes, however, can come near the Waziri for system in matters of this kind. He, or his forbears, long ago codified the " customary law," and his " Criminal Code " dates back 300 years. The provisions of it are, in their way, a study, and refer to (1) offences against the person ; (2) against property ; (3) by or relating to women ; with provisions for taking oaths, trial by ordeal, and measures for enforcing them. Murder is classified according to the weapon or means used. A bullet, a knife, a dagger, a blow from a stone, strangling or cutting the throat, are all on the same level. Death by sword-cut is considered more painful, and to so inflict it is more expensive. If the heirs of a murdered man thirst for revenge, they may kill the murderer and plunder his house ; though, if the first murder was by a bullet, and the avenger elect to kill the murderer by the sword, he will have to pay to his enemy's heirs Rs. 100 as compensation for the difference in the mode of slaughter. Where the original victim was a woman, the penalty would be to cut off the murderer's right foot or his nose. The pecuniary commutation would respectively be Rs. 1,200 in the one case, and Rs. 600 in the other. At least nominally, for it

would probably be largely payable in produce or commodities, including women at Rs. 100 each, which seems to be considered a sort of fancy bazaar price; the ruling rate being ordinarily much lower.

After the expedition against the Kâbul Khel Waziris in 1860, a very characteristic agreement was drawn up between them and the British villagers of Thal. The details of the negotiations lasted three days, and both sides pledged their solemn concurrence on the Korân. The first clause specified that bygones should be bygones; the second, that all hostilities should cease; the third, that neither side should take the law into their own hands but refer all disputes through a British officer. The fourth laid down all the details for "make-up-money," as follows:—For killing a Pathân, Rs. 1,200; for killing an inferior man, Rs. 360; for laming a Pathân in hand or foot (for which giving a daughter was to count as a set-off of Rs 80), Rs. 500; for laming an inferior man, to give him a daughter and do penance at his door; for a Pathân thumb or forefinger, Rs. 60; any three other fingers, Rs. 60; for an inferior man's finger, a goat or a sheep which the *jirgah* or village council are to help him to cat. Restitution for robbery to be made by proof on solemn oath.

The procedure adopted in doubtful murder cases is simple in the extreme. The suspect may bring a hundred men of his clan to swear before the assembled village headmen, oaths on the Korân that they are satisfied of his innocence, or if inconvenient to bring so many, he can bring a few men, but they must each take more oaths. Or, as a last resource, he may take the whole hundred oaths himself in the case of a man (reduced to fifty only, if the case relates to a woman). If after this, the aggrieved clan kill him, they are themselves held to be guilty of murder. For bodily injury, the Waziri tariff runs from Rs. 600 for "half death," such as the loss of a limb, to Rs. 20 for a blemish between waist and feet. For a still slighter assault, the aggrieved party may, with

the assistance of his friends, throw the aggressor down, and "menace him with threats—" disgrace him, in fact, before his village. But here again wounded honour can be satisfied, and the disgrace prevented, by payment of the modest sum of Rs. 3; a course which is said to be "generally preferred."

These are but samples of a code that provides and often provides ingeniously for most cases of violence and theft either of the man's goods or the woman's honour; and whatever may be the value of its precepts in the abstract, on the old principle that even bad laws are better than none at all, it may be said to have prevented many a feud, and probably much bloodshed, among the Waziris.



Knife, Shield, Jezail, and Belt

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DAWAR OR TOCHI VALLEY.

THE Dawar Valley has already been referred to as by no means the least important of the main highways into the heart of Afghânistân. It is considerably shorter, in some respects it offers more facilities, than the Gumal ; and though, as a trade route, it is probably never likely to be of much importance, its value for military purposes, as affording direct communication with Ghazni, or effecting a flank movement on Kâbul, is even still greater. In the time of the Greek occupation and the early days of Hindu sovereignty, it must have been the scene of constant and direct communication between Western Afghânistân and India. The high mounds at the mouth of the passes, and the ancient remains scattered through the valley, mark the sites of what were once great and flourishing cities, while it is tolerably certain it was one of the routes most affected by Mahmud of Ghazni for his raids on India when not aimed directly at Peshawur. And in the ruins of Akra, among the scraps of Buddhist ornaments, Hindu idols, broken bricks and pottery, the hundreds of Ghaznavi coins, from the beginning to the end of the dynasty, which are laid bare after heavy rains, furnish a complete record of constant encampments.

Like so many others of the passes, the "tight places" are only at the Indian end ; and it is perhaps no exaggeration to

say, the whole route is better known from Ghazni than from Bannu, though the entrances are within a few miles from our outposts, and a morning's ride from cantonments. As with some other famous plans for action, there are from the Border three courses open, all perfectly practicable and of no great length—ways which only need the will to make them perfectly easy, but which, to judge by the holy horror the British Government has always seemed to entertain for them, might have all Dante's Purgatorio behind. The Tochi, just opposite the outpost of the same name, is the best known—a mere track, rough and stony but which is generally fairly level, and at most is only nine miles long; the Barân, somewhat to the north, much more rocky and more circuitous, involving a detour of about twenty miles, entering the valley near the village of Isohri; and a third by the Khasora Pass, about six miles south of the Tochi, which was used on the return of the Masaud expeditionary force in 1860—the easiest and best of the three, though the longest, a twenty-five mile march being needed before the valley is reached.

Once through this paltry range of almost uninhabited hills, the valley, or rather valleys,—for there are two, the Upper and Lower Dawar, separated by an unimportant *tangi* or waist,—open out into what may almost be called plains—rich, productive, and fairly well cultivated, irrigated by a considerable river, the Tochi, known in British territory as the Gambila, studded with more or less wealthy villages, walled and defended by flanking towers—the whole extending as far as Sherannia at the foot of the eastern slope of the Jadrân Hills, which form the head of the Upper Dawar Valley, and fix the limit of the trade that at present finds its way to India by this route. From Sherannia onwards are several routes not quite so plain, so well-known, or so open, but which recent information has shown offer no great difficulties. Crossing the range, which is also the water-shed dividing the streams flowing to the Indus and the Helmand, the most direct

and the easiest passing by Urghûn, or Warghin as the Waziris call it, and the Kotani Pass, leads to Sarâfza at the western foot of the Jadrân range, and from thence by Shilgarh to Ghazni, a country, which, as the result of the investigations carried on by our native explorers shows, offers no obstacle to military movements. Detailed information is still wanting. One of the last of these explorers, a Sayud, was unluckily suspected and imprisoned at Ghazni, from thence sent on to Kâbul, where his survey books were taken from him, though he was eventually allowed to return to India. But from information gathered in this way and sketches taken during various expeditions, the general features are pretty well known.

The Lower Valley, owing to the swampy nature of the ground, is somewhat feverish, though not nearly so bad in that respect as Bannu, but the Upper Valley is in every way desirable; and at the head of it are breezy, healthy highlands, more than ordinarily fertile and with a splendid climate. A position might be taken up there that would command some of the very best parts of the Afghân border, and would, moreover, ensure a grip on some of the best and sturdiest of the independent tribes. To the south lie the highlands of Birmal, a tract of country only lately prospected, much in the manner just referred to, where rises the main stream of the Tochi, which flows northward through it for forty or fifty miles, and then enters the Upper Dawar by a sudden and sharp bend to the east, and flows on towards the Indus. The course of the river, according to Major Holdich, marks the line of a good road through the length of Birmal, and is connected with its head by an easy pass across a low water-shed with the Gumal system southwards. From the eastern slope of what are shown on old maps as the Kohnok Hills, but are really the southern continuation of the Jadrân Range, there rises also an important affluent of the Gumal, called the Dua Gumal, a stream not yet surveyed, but described as flowing through open valleys

till it joins the main Gumal to the south-west of Waziristân, and would doubtless afford an excellent second line of communication. The waters of the Tochi are sweet and good, and it may always be depended on for a plentiful supply. Along most of its course the bottom is hard and stony, and though liable to sudden rises it is never impassable even for footmen for more than a few hours. The Dawar Valley throughout is seldom narrower than one mile, and in many places, two or three miles wide: a great part of it well cultivated, a good deal of grain being grown; and the villages are prosperous and possess considerable herds of cattle. Birmal is a more debatable land, some of the Powindahs grazing their cattle there in the summer, and the Waziris apparently holding it in winter. The former, dirty, wild, and unkempt, as they may be—do not look as if they came from a bad climate or a poor country.

There is probably no reason, save the persistence in a policy of non-interference with the tribes, why a force should not march in at the Tochi, travel round a great part of Waziristân, and out by the Gumal, without meeting with any serious difficulty; and one of the easiest routes to the Masaud country is admittedly from the Dawar Valley over the Râzmak Sir. West and south of the Jadrân Range is a wide undulating country, gradually flattening into broad level plains, with a few isolated hills, affording easy roads to Kandahâr, Khelât-i-Ghilzai, and Ghazni, from which last the road to Kâbul is well known.

Of the people who live along this highway, the very name Dawari is a byword of reproach. The Bannûchi, according to Edwardes, is an exceptionally degraded specimen—with all the vices of the Pathân rankly luxuriant, his virtues stunted; but the Dawari is universally described as somewhat more eminently vicious and additionally degraded. An object of supreme contempt to his warlike neighbours, the Waziris, he is even looked upon as a bad character by a Bunnûchi. Worse probably could not

be said of him. To call him dirty would be almost a compliment ; his clothes, usually black cotton to start with, are worn till they would be considered malodorous by a Ghilzai. Rankness in this respect is with him a matter of pride, for it indicates he can afford to indulge largely in *ghee*, or clarified, but more or less rancid butter, which is in great demand, not only for food, but for anointing his head, his face, and his dress. He will carry, says Hyât Khân, a piece of bread saturated with it in his pocket or bound up in his clothes, as to him the sweetest scented sachet. His complexion naturally inclines to yellow. As a youth he will stain one eye black and one red ; as a young buck have his beard plucked out to keep his face smooth, and wear flowers in his turban ; as an older warrior, his idea is to shave one side of his face only, stain his eyebrows and eyelids red and blue and frighten his enemies by putting on a fierce expression. In old age his regularity at prayers is unimpeachable, but there is hardly any known narcotic with which he will not stupefy himself. He is essentially a non-fighting man, and an unenterprising man : he is ready for any robbery, or to back up any villainy, but he has not energy or pluck enough to venture out of his valley to attempt it ; and even as a trader, he looks on the thirty miles to Bannu as an exceedingly far cry. He will tyrannise over the few Hindu settlers to a cruel degree—the Hindu has to give up a wife if she be good-looking, pay a tax on a son, and a ransom on a daughter's wedding ; and though he manages withal to hold the purse strings, he will rather buy off, than cope with the Waziri marauder who harries him from time to time ; and who has a proverb that one Waziri with one stick is equal to one hundred Dawaris. His unnatural licentiousness would have made him conspicuous in Sodom or Gomorrah, and it may fairly be doubted if the requisite number of righteous could be found in the valley to save the Dawar villages from the fate that fell on the cities of the plain.

From what wandering horde he originated is not clear. His history is ancient and obscure; but he has remained for centuries shut in by strong hardy neighbours, and has probably been as nasty for ages, and is only desirous to be let alone, to go on in his evil courses for ages to come. The fringe of warlike tribes by which the valley is surrounded has, however, really been its protection from annexation over and over again. It seems to have been included in the Mughal Empire during the time of Aurangzebe, whose son, Bahâdur Shâh, is said to have levied in person some heavy arrears from the wealthy inhabitants. The Durrâni lieutenants occasionally used their armies from Khost to extort revenue; and there are stories of a shadowy Sikh jurisdiction, but which really relate to mere forays. Though Dawar has at different times been nominally subject to the Kâbul authorities, practically it has been, and still is, perfectly independent. In 1855 the Government of India, as usual ready to disclaim any intention of moving over the Border, renounced any rights in favour of the Amir, Dost Muhammad, though neither he nor his successors were ever strong enough to enter into possession, and the sovereign rights of Kâbul remained just as imaginary as before. The people have several times expressed a wish to come under British rule, protesting against being handed over to any other power, and begging, if they must be subjects, to be subjects of the Queen. And though the proposal has always been refused, the Indian Government has dealt directly with them, and, when necessary, proceeded to expeditions or blockades without any reference whatever. Both have had to be resorted to on occasions either on account of raids and murders by Dawaris, or because they provided a rendezvous for others; and it is only some few years ago the valley was reported a hot-bed of disaffection and fanaticism. The Dawaris, however, may fairly plead it was not until they had asked and been refused aid against the Wazaris, that they made friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and became notorious for harbouring rebels against

us. Whether or no these Dawaris would make desirable subjects it is needless to consider; they would not make soldiers, though we could probably enlist their neighbours on both sides. The Jadrânis beyond them are a primitive, hospitable race, many of whom, excellent workmen but inveterate beggars, come into Bannu to work as navvies in the cold season, where they are nicknamed "hill-wolves," on account of the amount of earnings they usually carry back with them. They are said to be very well disposed, but their numbers are too insignificant to be taken into account.

The strategic value of a position among the well-watered and fertile highlands near the sources of the Tochi, and the possession of points like Sherannia, Urghûn, and Sarâfza, that would practically command the highway from Ghazni to Bannu, cannot be doubted. If the Russians were at Bannu instead of ourselves, we should probably hear that a line of railway was in progress. When the line to Bannu is completed, and presumably this cannot be long left out of any sound scheme of frontier defence, a continuation up to the eastern slope of the Jadrân hills would be perfectly easy. Nor is there any apparent reason why these highlands should not be successfully crossed, certainly with less difficulty than the same range could be negotiated *vid* the Gumal. These crossed, the reports of native surveyors show no special obstacles right on to Ghazni. From Ghazni to Bannu is considerably shorter than by any other route, and the principal argument against its adoption is, that traders do not use it. This, however, may be a good deal due to causes other than physical difficulties. It is quite off the Kâbul and Kandahâr lines of traffic, or for enterprising Border traders like the Powindahs. Its inhabitants are at the other extreme of the scale, not only the most degraded, but the most unenterprising.

The physical difficulties in the way of an occupation, are certainly the reverse of formidable. A mere cavalry reconnaissance proved sufficient to carry a scare that was almost a panic through-

out the valley. The only expedition against the Dawaris, undertaken in 1872, was an affair of less than twenty-four hours. Early one morning some 1,500 of the Frontier Force fell in, occupied the heights covering the Tochi Pass, cleared and made the road through it passable for guns by breakfast time, marched through, occupied three or four of the leading villages, and burned their flanking towers by lunch, received the complete submission of the Dawaris, and were on their way back, if not to afternoon tea, at any rate were all outside the Tochi again for a late dinner.

It is at present perhaps unnecessary to annex the Dawar Valley, but that our surveyors, engineers, and soldiers should be perfectly free to come and go in it, might be reasonably insisted on. To permit so important a line of communication to remain a sealed book ; that within a short ride there should be passes a few miles long, with a great fertile valley behind them, affording free access almost to the centre of Afghânistân, but as much closed to us as the gate of Eden to the Peri, is an obvious absurdity. And to persist in maintaining a curtain immediately in front of our outposts, behind which no British officer is to be allowed to look ; to be dependent for our information regarding the country, its capabilities, its strategic positions, and its tribes, on native explorers in disguise, stealthily noting in rough sketches, and approximating distances regarding which precise information might at any time be of the greatest importance to us ; surveyors whose field books are liable to confiscation and their persons to imprisonment at the hands of our allies—is to persist in a policy that can only be described as fatuous. The Dawar Valley and the Jadrân Highlands should, at least, be as free to us as is Kashmir ; and we should be assured that Mahmud's highway to Ghazni, is fairly passable in case circumstances should ever compel us to go there ; for it is impossible to say how soon such a contingency may arise.

CHAPTER XIV.

BANNU AND THE BANNUCHI.

AS regards means of communication, though almost the worst provided, Bannu is, in many respects, one of the most important, one of the prettiest, and not the least interesting of our Frontier stations. Its position, its history, its scenery, and its fertility, "an emerald set in a country pre-eminently of rocks and stones," have all combined to make it a favourite subject with Frontier writers, from Edwardes downwards. Geologists talk of it as a great lake before the Aryan race had left its cradle. To the earlier immigrants, it was "*Dand*," "the Marsh," The Bannudzais, who dug drains and sowed corn, took to calling it Bannu, after their mother, the wife of Shitak, because, they said, it was fruitful, even as she was. And Edwardes, whose *Year on the Frontier* would alone have made it famous, and whose name has still stuck to the modern cantonment, has left a series of pictures of it, perfectly idyllic. "In spring," he says in one, "it is a vegetable emerald; and in winter its many-coloured harvests look as if Ceres had stumbled against the Great Salt-Range, and spilt half her cornucopia in this favoured vale. As if to make the landscape perfect, a graceful variety of the sheesham-tree, whose boughs droop like the willow, is found here, and here alone; while along streams, and round the villages, the thick mulberry, festooned with the wild

vine, throws a fragrant shade, beneath which well-fed Sayuds look exquisitely happy, sleeping midway through their beads. Roses, too, without which Englishmen have learnt from the East to think no scenery complete, abound in the upper parts at the close of spring. Most of the fruits of Kâbul are found wild, and culture would bring them to perfection; as it is, the limes, mulberries and melons are delicious. Altogether, nature has so smiled on Bannu, that the stranger thinks it a paradise: and when he turns to the people, wonders how such spirits of evil ever found admittance." Even settlement officers grow eloquent over its prettiness; and not only did Thorburn enliven a most interesting report with picturesque bits about yellow corn, green trees, murmuring waters, reapers, and pet lambs with tinkling bells in every field, haunts of peace and content, with a background of grey hills, weird rocks, gloomy glens, and snowy peaks in a blaze of glory—but he overflowed into a graphic volume, dealing more fully with the district and its people, their stories, songs, and proverbs.

Historically, it has been the scene of a succession of changes, exceptional even for a Border along which they have everywhere been numerous. The ruined mounds of Akra mark what was probably a flourishing city before ancient Greece became a power. Alexander is still a popular local hero, known as "Sikandar Badshâh." His Macedonian successors have left distinct records, both of Greek art, and of the permanence of Greek occupation. So have Græco-Bactrians, Indo-Scythians, and Buddhists. Hindus re-colonized it, and fill up a gap by traditions of the city of Sat Râm. The Brahmin kings of Northern India were a power there in the ninth century, and Sabaktigin seems to have followed and adopted their heraldic device of the lion rampant. Mahmud and two centuries of Ghaznavis passed and repassed, and from their camps on the banks of the Kurram and Gambila, raided on India till they were finally crushed by the Ghoris at Lahore in the twelfth

century. The valley was a highway for the armies of 'Timour at the end of the fourteenth century, and was ravaged by Bâber at the beginning of the sixteenth. Before Timour, it had been colonized by small bodies of Afghâns; the Bannudzais that Bâber found there, had already driven out the Mangals and the Hannis, and had a



A Border Fruit-seller.

comparatively long spell before they were gradually ousted by the Niázais. Closely following the latter, came their still finer kinsmen, the Marwats; a great host of splendid men, who drove the Niázais eastward, settled down, and possessed the land which they called Marwat, after their forefather. Their children hold it to this day.

and very fine cultivators they are. The last wave of colonists were the Waziris. For a while they were content to drive their flocks from their own bleak, dreary hills, pitch their black blanket tents in the luxuriant valley during the winter, and go back to their highlands again in the spring, but as flocks and herds increased, and as they looked on the fields and the harvests, the Waziri became, as Edwardes describes, possessed with the lust of land, and promptly proceeded to take it. While their Mahsud clansmen exercised their profession by taking toll from the Powindah, the Darwesh gradually took to acquiring fertile lands from the Bannuchi, and what is left to the latter is probably due to the advent of British law and British protection.

All these changes, however, are only a part of what has gone to make up the hybrid Bannuchi, a designation which has now come to include, not only all the so-called descendants of Shitak and his wife Masammat Bannu, but nearly all the Muhammadans, and even the Hindus, who have been long domiciled among them; the *Jhuta* or "leavings" of all the adventurers who have at different times, and for various reasons, found their way to the irrigated tracts in the valley. These have, in Edwardes's words, "contributed, by intermarriage, slave dealing, and vice, to complete the mongrel character of the Bannuchi people. Every stature, from that of the weak Indian to that of the tall Durrâni; every complexion, from the ebony of Bengal to the rosy cheek of Kâbul; every dress, from the linen garments of the South, to the heavy goat-skin of the eternal snows,—is to be seen promiscuously among them, reduced only to a harmonious whole by the neutral tint of universal dirt." Small in stature, sallow, fleshless, and wizened in appearance. "Shut up in close villages amongst heat, dirt, squalor, and stagnation; hot beds of all that is enervating and demoralizing"; bigoted in the extreme, a mosque for every thirty-four houses, praying at all hours and in all places, blindly obedient to the direction of the lowest type of priests; "impudent impostors, who contribute

nothing to the common stock but inflammatory counsel, and a fanatical yell in the rear of the battle"; vicious in all manner of ways; "litigious, utterly regardless of truth; ready to take any advantage, however mean, over their enemy; without any manly feelings about them, always harping about 'honour;' 'izzat,' though possessing none,"—they appear certainly well qualified for the epithet "degraded" that is applied to them by Edwardes, Reynell Taylor, Thorburn, and almost every one who has had anything to do with them. After this, it seems a small merit to credit them with being "excellent revenue-payers, quiet, inoffensive subjects," or to charge off most of their bad qualities to their prolificness and the climate in which they live.

Climatic influence, *plus* canal irrigation, may have had much to do with it, as some theorists persistently urge. Certainly the adjoining Marwats, with their sandy soil and dry air, are almost the reverse of what has been said of their immediate neighbours. Fine, tall, muscular, well-bred Pathâns, with ruddy complexions. Fair and handsome women, not ashamed of a rather mischievous face and a fairly good ankle. A people frank, open, and truthful, mainly agriculturists, with a profound contempt for the Bannuchi. The Waziri has previously been sketched; where he has settled within our border, he seems, in spite of climate, to have improved rather than deteriorated; he has lost none of his characteristic virtues, but has been somewhat weaned from his passion for plunder, and is rapidly learning the rudimentary lessons of civilization.

Interesting as may be the climatic, historic, or ethnographic characteristic condition of Bannu, it is still more so from its strategic position on the Border; one which on all hands is admitted to be of exceptional importance. To say this, is only to echo the opinion of those best informed military authorities who have had exceptional opportunities for judging, and who have given special attention to the subject. Whether we accept the view, that our true strategic position cannot stop short of the Kandahâr-Kâbul

line; and recognise what is, perhaps of more importance, the desirability of bringing the border tribes behind this line into our own recruiting field, as soon as political circumstances permit; or whether, as one of the authorities referred to has put it, we propose to leave this factor of strength to become in the future the steel point of the enemy's lance, ready to be turned on to our most vulnerable point—the importance of Bannu remains undiminished. It is the centre on which converge, or whence diverge, several of the main roads between our frontier outposts—from Kohât and Thal, from Dera Ismail Khân, Tânk, and the Gumal. From it we could at any time most effectively control the Khost Valley, the Mangals, or the entire Waziri country. It would be the initial point for a road by the Dawar Valley to Ghazni, which, as already described, involves no special difficulties, and a distance less than 150 miles. When the railway to it is constructed, Bannu will become the natural base for the alternative route to Kâbul by the Kurrum, from which we could best outflank an enemy advancing by that route. To a great extent this has now been recognised, and under the present administration much has been done. Railway communication has been brought up to Khushalgarh on the one hand, and to opposite Dera Ismail Khân on the other. The frontier road, which in places was little better than a track, from both these points has now been converted into a first class military road, bridged and metalled throughout. The important streams, like the Kurrum and the Gambila—sources of constant danger and frequent loss of life—have now been crossed by bridges that, if necessary, will carry a broad-gauge railway. A survey for a new line of railway from the Sind-Sagar system, *viâ* Mianwali and Mari, Kâlābagh and Isakhel, to Bannu itself, has been finished, and it is to be hoped that no plea of financial difficulty will be permitted to stand in the way of the early completion of a project so vitally important.

As a position for any large garrison, the present cantonment of Edwardesabad has been charged, and perhaps not without reason, with certain disadvantages as regards climate. The irrigated part of the valley is said to be as malarious and unhealthy as Peshawar formerly was, probably to a great extent for a very similar reason. The Bannuchi makes the same water serve for drinking, washing—whenever he does wash—and irrigating his field: only he frequently reverses the order, and lets the water flow over his highly manured fields first. A pure water supply, which could easily be obtained, would do much to remedy this; and there are excellent sites for sanitarium that might, and undoubtedly ought, to be made use of. The Ghabar Mountain, over 6,000 feet high, lies within the Batanni country, midway between the Kurram outpost and Peyzu. It possesses many facilities for a sanitarium, and its occupation would bring advantages both to the tribes and ourselves. While going a little further afield, the Upper Dawar, the Jadrân highlands, or the mountains around Khost, would offer a climate equal to Kashmir.

One other matter in connection with our position on this part of the Border is too important to be overlooked. Whatever the merits of the Kurram route, as an approach to Kâbul may be, the construction of a railway to Bannu will undoubtedly make it still more the point of departure from which operations might be most properly undertaken. Our furthest post west in the Kurram direction is Thal, 167 miles from Kâbul, and some sixty-six miles from Kohât, which is again thirty miles from a railway. From Bannu, following approximately the course of the Kurram River, to Thal, is about forty-two, or about ten miles more by the Gumati or Barganattu Passes, by either of which it can be turned. Here, again, this route is in the hands of the Waziris, a wedge of whose country is driven right into the middle of our territory, and for all practical purposes the road is closed

to us. In fact, until lately, it was unmapped, and Major Holdich's assistant was only allowed to make a plane table survey of it in 1882 under the most stringent conditions—one of which was that he never slept on the far side of the Border. The railway completed, the construction of a thoroughly efficient road direct from Bannu to Thal, should be promptly insisted on, and the opening out of the Dawar Valley be at the same time taken in hand. There is no need to anticipate any special obstructions. During the winter of 1878-79, the Thal-Bannu route was used by a detachment of our cavalry, the whole of the Jhind and Kapurthalla contingents marched by it, and up to the beginning of 1880 convoys were regularly sent under a *badraga*¹ escort. The Dawaris have, over and over again, asked to be brought under our protection; and so far from either route proving a source of trouble, nothing is wanting but a little firmness and tact to insure Waziri acquiescence in the case of both, once it is made clear to them that the British Government will insist, and they are keen enough to see they would have much to lose by obstruction, and everything to gain by assisting us.

¹ Safe conduct.



CHAPTER XV.

BORDER ECCLESIOLOGY.—A SHORT DISCOURSE ON THE PATHÂN CHURCH.

THE superstition of the Pathân is said to have no limits, but perhaps in this respect he does not, after all, differ very materially from the Christian of the Middle Ages, who notoriously "lived in an atmosphere charged with the supernatural." On the Border, miracles, charms, omens, are believed as a matter of course, just as the miracles of the Church, magic and witchcraft, spirit-rapping and table-turning, were—in some cases it might even be said still are—accepted by the average worshipper in the West. There is no necessity, therefore, to be too severe on the former in respect of his belief; the wonders accomplished during the *Jandah* festival at Peshawur by Pir Bâba in Buneyr, or Kuka Sahib in Khattak, are not more incredible than the stories about the fish thronging to hear St. Antony preach, the restoration of amputated limbs by the virgin of the palace at Saragossa, or the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius at Naples. In spite of much outcry about the spirit of the age, the progress of Rationalism is slow; prayers, alms, fasts, pilgrimages, reverence for saints, and respect for their modern representatives, are among the binding and fundamental duties of the Pathân—as of several other people much nearer home. All classes and both sexes resort to the "sacred

shrine," interesting devotees confess their sins, talk of their "pure prophet," and "blessed religion," and yield as implicit obedience to their holy men, as, for instance, an Irish peasant does to his parish priest.

Wherever the demand for miracles is so considerable the supply is pretty certain to equal it. The Border Muhammadan has few or no relics, images, pictures, or crucifixes—in fact, hardly one of his sacred shrines boasts any building more imposing than a big heap of stones—and the collection of rags that resemble dilapidated scarecrows, is the only outward and visible sign of the offerings of the faithful. But a visit to some of the *zidrats* of the Border, equivalents to the Saint Cuthberts, Becketts, Nicholases, or Dunstons, will ensure a cure from fever, ophthalmia, rheumatism, and most of the ills to which mortal flesh is heir. Others will protect the believer from the evil eye; render his cattle prolific, or, on too frequent occasions, vouchsafe the desires of intriguing lovers. The earth from the grave of Akhund Darwaza at Peshawur, or of Akhund Musa near Jelâlâbâd, is a specific for burns or snake-bites; and lunatics can be restored to mental health by going to the last resting-place of Mian'Ali at Ali-Boghân. Women, who are not blessed with children, can obtain their wishes at quite a number of shrines; and the pious pilgrim, who cannot afford a journey to Mecca, can do himself almost as much good by paying a round of visits to holy places in his own locality, and feeding the local institutions.

He has his own primitive fathers, compared to whom Clement, Ignatius, or Polycarp are quite modern creations. The Pathân, like the Irishman, again, dates back to the early patriarchs, and apparently, the older they are, the longer their graves have become. Near Bâlâbâgh in Nangrahâ, the grave of the patriarch Lot, *Hazrat Lût*, is over 380 yards long. The *Zidrat* of *Mehtar Lam*, who corresponds to Lamech, the father of Noah, is in Laghmân; and the ark of Noah himself is said, after the deluge, to have rested

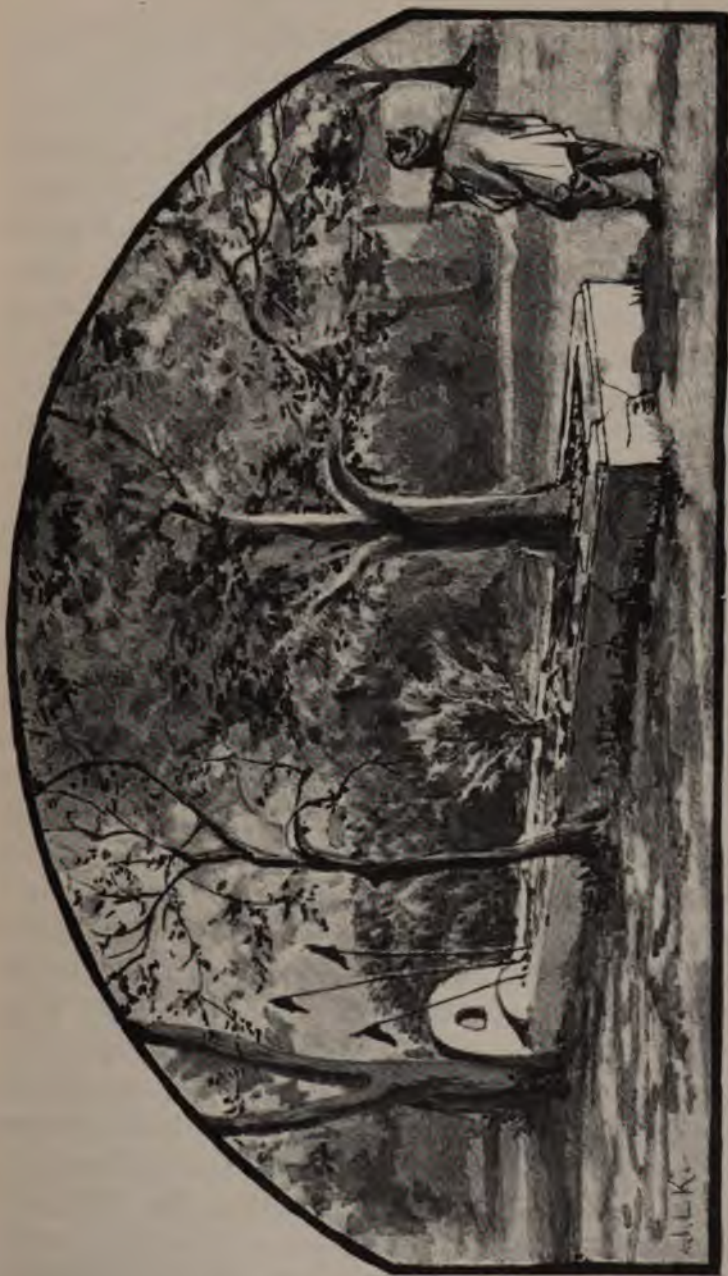
on the Kund Mountain, the adjoining valley being called Dara-i-Nuh, the Vale of Noah, to this day.

The prophets *Ayub* (Seth), *Sis* (Job), and others, are nearly as famous, and of proportionate dimensions. Fifty feet is a moderate length for a prophet of this importance. Minor dignitaries who have fallen as martyrs (*Shâhid*) or warriors (*Ghâzi*) fighting against the infidel Hindus, or Kâfir British, are honoured in a similar way. *Nao-Gaja* "nine-yarders," is the term by which they are known in the Punjab. As their sanctity increases so does their reputed stature; one celebrity, buried in Peshawur cantonment, kept on growing till his tomb bid fair to entirely obstruct the thoroughfare, and the district authorities had to put a wall round him. "Shrines of the mighty" they literally are, but not even the most austere Puritan could complain that anything had been wasted upon art or decoration. A long, low heap of stone or brick masonry, or even mud, suffices to cover the most famous. The reputation of the Border Saint does not depend upon either palaces or shrines made with hands, any more than his officiating priesthood does on canonicals.

Of modern ecclesiastical offices and dignitaries he has a goodly number with sufficiently long-sounding names; and if a Pathân clergy list was to be published, the *Valor ecclesiasticus* might perhaps be broadly defined somewhat as follows:—

· *Astânadârs*, literally holy place-possessors, might stand for Lay Rectors with a traditionary devout reputation, or the descendants who, by virtue of the sanctity of an ancestor of pious memory, enjoy the present endowments or benefits of the *Astân*, *Zîdrat*, or shrine. Theoretically the Sayud is the direct descendant of 'Ali the son-in-law of Muhammad; practically he is a bishop or primate of the church, who would be usually addressed by the title of *Shâh*, "Your Grace," and to whom the Pathân would figuratively take off his hat.

Pirs would, however, stand almost at the top of the precedence



A Nao-Gaja near Peshawur.

list, for they would be saluted as *Bâdshâh*, "Your Excellency." "The congregation should rise when a Pir joins the assembly, and remain standing till he is seated." He often has charge of a shrine, and the Pathân Burke would show him as descended from a saint of repute. Ecclesiastically he is as powerful as the Dean and Chapter, having all sorts of exclusive hereditary rights and privileges, receiving a tithe of the fields and flocks. "His social position is independent of his merits," and, says Bellew, "all Pirs are comfortably off, if not rich."

A Miân might have the status of a Rural Dean, in that as a prelate he is becoming more or less obsolete. The Miâns have abandoned the world in order to devote themselves to teaching the doctrines of Islâm, but they still hold positions of dignified ease, luxurious benefices, the Barchesters of the Frontier. Some of them possess special powers to combat pestilence and famine; others are experts in discovering who are the sinners among their neighbours, and in pointing them out with the finger of scorn.

Sahibzâdas, the sons of holy men, occupy about the same position in regard to Sayuds, Pirs, and Miâns, as Colonial Archdeacons do to Deans or Bishops, though all four classes are equally place-possessors, often comfortable place-possessors.

It is not necessary that any of the foregoing should be on the active list, but the Mullah is the ordinary hardworking parish priest, who has taken holy orders, perhaps with the title of *Maulvi*, the Muhammadan D.D.; has to attend to the services of the mosque, teach the creed, and look after the schools. The most numerous of all, he is the most important factor in ordinary Pathân life, and his influence is immense. The residentiary Canon or Precentor may be represented by the Imâm, whose business is to intone the service and lead the congregation. The Fakir is a mendicant friar, generally a Dominican or Black Friar. The Shaikh, an elderly gentleman, who has relinquished worldly plea-

asures, or whom worldly pleasures have left stranded, and who has become a Lay Brother, or the disciple of a saint. And, last of all, comes the Talib-ul-ilm, or seeker after wisdom ; a curate with a taste for dining out ; or it might be said, the reverse of an almoner. The latter dispenses alms and distributes doles ; the seeker-after-wisdom does just the contrary.

If the Border curate is the bottom of the scale, the nearest approach to the head of this church is probably an Akhund, literally a teacher, but the famous Akhund of Swât was, for almost half a century, practically the Border Pope—a character so famous as to deserve a subsequent discourse all to himself.

Nothing perhaps is such good evidence of the deference paid to a dignitary of the Pathân church, as the general security in which he lives. He is almost the only man whose life is sacred from the casual bullet or the hasty knife ; for whose blood the Pathân tariff does not provide a rate.

Not long ago, in the Peshawur district, a man went so very far to the bad, as to shoot a Mullah. It might have been an accident, or he mistook his man, or pure villany ; anyhow the Mullah died, and like many another outlaw, the murderer had to fly over the Border. First he tried Buneyr, but the news had preceded him, and he was refused shelter. He then tried the Swât valley with no better success, the country of the Akhund would have none of him. "You shot a Mullah," said the Mohmands, to whom he went next. "If it had been any ordinary tribesman, or even a Sahib, we would have stretched a point, but you must go." Even the Afridis, small reverence as they pay to spiritual advisers, looked askance, and would have nothing to say to a ruffian whose hands were dyed with the blood of a pious man. Wearied at length of being hunted from tribe to tribe, he bethought himself of repentance. "None of you will have me," he said, "then I will at any rate do something to make you. I can but be a martyr. I will go and kill a Sahib." So back he came to Peshawur cantonment, and walked

down the Mall to look for a victim. Not finding one handy, he turned off and went for a rough rider sergeant, in difficulties with a troublesome horse, at whom he took deliberate aim. As luck would have it, the first bullet was stopped by a range finder the sergeant had on him, but before the latter could go for his assailant, the Pathân got another bullet through the sergeant's helmet, and made a bolt for it. A plucky native ran in, and the man was ultimately secured, tried by the commissioner the same evening, and under summary powers hanged the next morning. Perfectly satisfied, as he declared, with himself at having expiated his offence, and with only one request to make, which was granted—that his body might not be burnt. Some day perhaps they will put up a *Nao-Gaja* for him.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BASE OF THE SUFED KOH.

By the Kurram valley to Kâbul has become almost as familiar to the present decade of Englishmen in India, and has furnished almost as good a text as the "Overland Route" did to the last. Nearly ten years ago, in November 1878, our troops were in full possession of it, scattering in all directions the followers of Amir Sher 'Ali. Less than a year after, an avenging force under Sir Frederick Roberts was pushing forward, by forced marches, past the old Kurram Fort, up the "White Cow" ascent, across the pine-clad Paiwar, among the glens of 'Ali Khel, through the defile of the "Thousand Trees," and over the "Camel's Neck;" caring nothing for the snows of the Sufed Koh, deaf to the Jâji drums and bagpipes, brushing aside the Mangals and Zaimukhts, finding no pleasure nor delight in "Khushi,"¹ but anxious only to get to Kâbul, and exact retribution for the dastardly murder of the ill-fated Cavagnari and our embassy. In May 1879 Yakub Khân had come into the British camp at Gandamak, and signed a treaty by which, not only were the foreign relations of Afghânistân to be entirely subordinated to British influence, a British Resident to be established in Kâbul, but our Frontier was to be rectified by the inclusion within it of Peshin, Sibi, and Kurram,

¹ The abode of happiness.

and from the latter place there was to be a line of telegraph to Kâbul. By the middle of 1880 Yakub's complicity with the murder of our Resident had been established, he had been removed to India, and Amir Abdur Rahmân set up. The pendulum had swung again, the treaty had been abrogated, and October found General Watson announcing to the Turi *Maliks*¹ the withdrawal of our forces from Kurram.

The Miranzai, the western extremity of which valley now marks our border limit, and perhaps the pleasantest part of the Kohât district, has been arbitrarily divided into an Upper and a Lower, though the river which runs east down the latter is a feeder of the Kohat *toi*, or stream, and goes thence to the Indus, while the Ishkali, which runs west along the Upper, is a branch of the Kurram. Both Upper and Lower, equally with the Kurram, lie along the base of the great Sufed Koh range, the white peaks of which tower over everything else, a gigantic barrier between this and the still more famous "Khaiber" route to Kâbul. There is no very great dissimilarity between the characteristics of the Miranzai and the Kurram, except that, as in so many other cases, by far the best of the country lies across the Border. It is a land of mountains, small and great, of rocks, and of stones. The rivers that rush down the steep slopes are at one time dangerous torrents, at others yielding with difficulty a little water from the holes dug in their bed. With small and circumscribed, but well cultivated, valleys, where grain and fruit flourish abundantly, varied with "raviney" wastes, growing little beyond the dwarf palm which affords materials for one of the few staple industries the country possesses. These again are interspersed by grassy tracts, on which are pastured abnormally small cattle, and exceptionally fat-tailed sheep. Once past Thal, and the banks of the Kurram river reached, there is a marked change for the better. More or less all along are corn-fields and fruit-gardens, mulberry

¹ Head-men.

groves and fertile glades, passing up to ridges crested by oak and olive, yew tree and pines; the range behind again culminating in the snow-capped peak of Sita Râm, which rises over 15,000 feet high. Some parts of the valley have the reputation of being unhealthy, for the same reason as Bannu, but there are few more fertile spots along the Afghân border than the Kurram.

To pass from the place to the people. Though, according to Bellew, it is not improbable that the whole region comprising both sides of the Sufed Koh, and the districts at the base from Paiwar to the Indus, was, in the shadowy past, subject to one tribe, which he thinks corresponded to the Assarytæ of Herodotus—of which the Afridi is the modern representative, it is, in the present, certainly occupied by a great number of tribes and septs, Bangash, Turi Jâji, Zainakt, Orakzai, Afridi, and many more, having perhaps a sort of distant family connection, but differing from one another widely and materially. Some of them are not even usually classed among Afghâns at all, and may probably have got not a little mixed with the swarms of Turks, who came in with the invasions of Subaktigin and Timur, or with the Scythic stock before that, though, for all practical purposes, no better term can be found for them, than Pathân.

Tradition has it, that the Bangash were of Arab origin, descended from Koresh, Muhammad's apostle to the Afghâns of Ghor, whilom living about Gurdez in Zurmat; but, pressed by the Ghilzais, emigrated eastward, sometime towards the end of the fourteenth century; or just subsequent to the invasion of Timur, settled in Kurram, and with the assistance of the Khattaks themselves doing a little invasion from the south, ousted the Orakzais and pressed them further up the slope. Local story further goes on to say that, to accomplish this, they fought a battle lasting three days and three nights, which only terminated by the appearance on the scene of the proverbial horseman in white, who declared that "the plain was for the Bangash, and

the hills for the Orakzais," a legend still quoted in support of proprietary rights. By and by came the Turis, who, at first subordinate, gradually in their turn displaced the Bangash; and became, what they still remain, the dominant tribe. Originally the Bangash would seem to have been divided into two main branches, named *Gâr* and *Sâmil*, titles which Bellew, by a somewhat elaborate theory, traces back to the Buddhist and Magian influence upon Muhammadanism; the bitter enmity between the factions earning for them the title of "Bankash," or "root destroyer." Be this as it may, the distinction still remains, and is a notable factor in frontier politics, affecting not only the Bangash, but almost all the surrounding tribes, and is only rivalled by the still more rabid enmity existing between the Shiah and the Sunni forms of Muhammadanism. Some Sunnis by religion are *Sâmil* in politics, some Shiahs are *Gâr*, and sometimes both cases are reversed; so that, in addition to the usual cause for quarrels, the possibilities of ringing the changes in the matter of tribal feuds are innumerable, and complicated enough to enable even a Pathân to thoroughly enjoy himself.

The Kohât, Miranzai and southern part of the Kurram Valley are mainly Bangash; those towards Kohât mostly Sunnis; the bulk of the remainder Shiahs. The Westerns wear their beards long, with a few short Jewish ringlets on either side of the face, shaving the rest of the head: the Easterns clip them short; otherwise there is not much difference. Physically they are quite up to the average Pathâns, though they are not generally credited with great fighting qualities. A few deal in salt, but they are eminently an agricultural rather than a pastoral people. Reported hospitable, many of them are undoubtedly treacherous and cruel, not specially disposed to wanton violence, but "much addicted to thieving." They are rather the victims of raids by their neighbours, than raiders themselves, and have generally behaved well from an administrative point of view. Their situ-

ation is such, they have had the sense to see that in this lay their best chance of security.

The Turis, the most powerful tribes of the Upper Kurram Valley, are generally credited with having migrated from their legitimate home on the banks of the Indus some three or four centuries ago, first as dependants or *hamsayahs* of the Bangash, then gradually setting up on their own account, and now it is the Bangash of the Valley who are *hamsayahs* of the Turis. Both they and the adjoining Jâgis differ considerably in appearance, dress, and customs, from most Pathân tribes. Edwardes calls them Hindkis, and speaks of the original emigrants as numbering only sixty families, but they must have rapidly increased and prospered, and could now turn out 5,000 to 6,000 fighting men. They are not very big nor very good-looking, and have somewhat of the look of the savage about them, but they are strong, hardy, and compact, and as essentially horsemen, as the Waziris, in spite of their well-known breed of horses, are essentially footmen. The Turi is a model moss-trooper. Profusely armed, he has probably a couple of brass-bound carbines at his back, two or three pistols in front, knives of many sizes and sorts in his waist-belt, and a sword by his side. His mount, often a small sorry jade, is necessarily wiry and active; for, in addition to the Turi and his armoury, it has to carry his entire wardrobe packed under the saddle, certain wallets containing food for man and beast, some spare shoes, nails, and a hammer, an iron peg, and a picket rope, all the requisites to enable this distinguished highwayman to carry on distant and daring raids, which is the Turi road to distinction. The local Dick Turpin is honoured with the title of *khlak*, the Turi equivalent for the hero of the hour. The newly-born Turi is introduced to ordinary life by a number of shots fired over his head, to accustom him to the sound, and prevent him shrinking when his turn comes to be shot at. Nor does he usually have to wait long

for this, for he is at feud with pretty well all his neighbours, Waziris, Zaimukhts and Mangals, and most bitterly with the Jâgis; even a Bangash has to attach to himself a Turi *badraga* or safe conduct, an excellent word for a most ragged but faithful little ruffian, who protects him from all other Turis.

“Malise! what ho!—the henchman came;
Give our safe-conduct to the Græme.”

And to violate a safe-conduct once given, whatever form it takes, is as exceptional on the Pâthan Border, as in the Scotch Highlands; no greater insult could be put on the Khân or the clan giving it. Plowden tells of a Turi Malik who gave his cap as a *badraga* to an Afridi *kâfila*, which was plundered, and fell himself in revenging it.

He is hospitable, this moss-trooper, even to allowing the women of the house to wait on strangers, and in a way he is religious. He divides mankind into straight and crooked men. The Shiahhs—and all Turis are Shiahhs—are straight, the rest crooked. To a stranger the question takes a masonic form; the Turi salute is a finger placed perpendicularly on the forehead for a straight man, and a contorted one for a crooked man. If the stranger is well advised, he will give the countersign with a perpendicular finger. When the Kohât district was first annexed, the Turis were inclined to give trouble, but the first and only expedition sent against them, in 1856, found them at once ready to submit. Their embassy made haste to explain “after compliments,” how they had fallen in with evil counsellors, and acquired bad habits in regard to their neighbour’s property, but finding the British Government protected its subjects, bound themselves to good behaviour in regard to those subjects in future. And they seem to have loyally kept their bargain, acting heartily with us against the Kâbul Khels in 1859; when, besides doing a good deal of useful service for us, they, like Major

Dugald Dalgetty, having a knowledge of the use of war, failed not to make some small profit for themselves. Subsequently they resisted the Amir's demand for men and money in 1877, and took part with us against the Zaimukhts in 1879.

Westward of the Turis, again, and along the hills from the Paiwar to the Shutargardan,¹ are the Jâgis, who differ but little, except that they are Sunnis, a reason quite sufficient to account for the feuds between the two. Fine hardy mountaineers, though poor, and dirty withal, a condition hardly separable from their mode of life and the houses they occupy, or rather share with all their live-stock, and a great volume of the rankest smoke from the pine logs, with which they keep out the rigorous cold of winter on the upper parts of the slopes. There are other tribes of more or less importance on either side of the Kurram Valley, but before passing to any particulars of them, it should not be forgotten that the tribes just referred to were, a while ago, subjects of our own.

As noticed already, this was one of the clauses of the treaty of Gandamak, and when we evacuated the Turi country again in 1880, their independence was recognized. They were to have no connection with the Amir of Kâbul, but to be free to administer their own affairs, to keep up some sort of an armed force, to raise a little tax on their cultivated lands, and, in return for our recognition, were to take our advice. As might be expected, this arrangement soon fell through, and laid the foundation for some lively little quarrels amongst themselves, which lasted the greater part of 1882-83. While, as was almost equally certain, their neighbours took the opportunity of raiding them in force. Sometimes it was the Jâgis, sometimes the Zaimukhts, and when the Turis retaliated, the Amir of Kâbul, who had not forgotten his former unsuccessful attempts to coerce them, complained of their misbehaviour, and threatened the direst punishment. So that the result of our action has been to leave the Turis very much between the devil and the

¹ "Camel's neck."

deep sea. The moral is obvious. Here is a large tribe, affording excellent material for irregular cavalry, with all the elements for forming a prosperous colony, anxious to be our subjects, and to whose independence we are pledged, and who, if we do not bring into our Border again, are likely to have no choice but to fall under the authority of the Amir, or worse; and so, in all probability, be lost to us as fighting material for good.



Leather and Horn Powder-flasks from the Kurram Valley

CHAPTER XVII.

THE KHATTAKS.

OF all the frontier Pathâns there are perhaps few more favourable specimens than the Khattaks. Brave and industrious, warlike and hospitable, they have lost none of the best qualities they showed under a roll of famous tribal leaders, whose deeds have been recorded in the only chronicle of the Khâns that has come down to us. Ever since they became British subjects, their record has been uniformly good—a striking instance of what excellent citizens a strong Government can make out of what, at first sight, might appear the most unpromising material.

A tribe whose importance can be judged from the fact that the last census showed it as numbering some 118,000 in the Peshawur and Kohât districts, of which a large proportion may be put down as eminently “fighting men.” A people whose country has been described as the most specially desolate and unblessed on the entire frontier, that of the Southern Khattaks the most so. Stony, barren mountains, deep, abrupt valleys, with nothing much in the way of water, but the brackish torrents that rush down them, with a few forlorn straw huts that do duty for villages, whose farmsteads are represented by an occasional patch of corn on the face of a hill, or an insignificant green valley visible from some height. They have no highways, save those made by us, whose village

roads are mere tracks, straggling over hills, and among the roughest ravines, or paths worn out of rocks, always difficult, and occasionally dangerous. Their forests are a few clumps of wild olive, or here and there a jungle patch. But their weird valleys are varied by regions composed almost entirely of the most valuable salt. At Bahâdurkhel is a bed of bluish-gray salt estimated to be over 1,000 feet thick and fifty miles long. In this valley the roads are made of salt, the streams are brine, with snowy borders of crystal, and where the blocks have only to be cut out, and loaded on any beast that can be used as a pack animal.

It is not astonishing, therefore, that the Khattaks are rather salt-carriers than agriculturists. Tall they are, of good stature and strength, and if not handsome, not altogether bad looking, with more of the appearance and manners of the people of Northern India, and less like those of Afghânistân than most Pathâns. Inveterate gossipers, whatever their occupations, great affecters of the *Hujrahs*, or village clubs, enthusiastic dancers, noted pipers—the pipes would astonish a Highlander, and the dances make a stir in Drury Lane. They are a meat-eating, milk-drinking people, and used to be a wine-drinking one. Their most famous leader wrote an ode in praise of it: "The sun is a mere rushlight," declared Khushhal Khân,—“compared to a well-filled goblet”—and they make loaves, or rather cakes, excellent in quality, but about the size of a waggon wheel. It is said—a shocking but not uncommon charge,—they do not always speak the truth, but they are hospitable and festive, ready to kill the fatted calf, or rather the fat-tailed sheep, for the Britisher who will go and take his chance of "pot-luck." And even the salt carrier will produce a dark slab of Pathân cake, possibly from under his pack-saddle, with an invitation to the traveller to "stay and eat."

They have probably had more quarrels with their surrounding world than most of their neighbours, which is saying a good deal. There is hardly a neighbouring tribe or clan with whom at one

time the Khattak has not fought. With the Bangash on the north, for a while their allies in the Kohât district, they had the most severely contested battle; and again with the Niyazis of Isa Khel, and Mianwali on the south. On the west they had many a murderous combat with the Waziris, while the Marwats are their hereditary enemies. "Friendship is good," say the latter, "with any one but a Khattak—may the devil take a Khattak"; and both they and the Bannuchis have several most uncomplimentary proverbs against them. Three times have they warred against the Afridi, and for a century or so the Khattak was the bitterest enemy of all the Yusafzai tribes. The battles of the Peshawur Valley between Khattak and Yusafzai are like the historic quarrels between the Percys and the Douglasses, they were fought out to the death. At Misri Banda, a sort of Pathân Otterburn, the Yusafzais lost a number of their chief maliks, or Khâns: the Khattaks their great leader Yahiya and many of his kindred. Sometimes it was the Khattaks who were beaten back to the foot of their own hills, sometimes they were in full cry after the flying Yusafzais across the plains of Peshawur. In those days every traveller was a fair victim; the freebooters who infested the roads are spoken of as either avoiding a party strong enough to resist, or watching till the party should be weak enough to attack.

Under the firm rule of our Government, all this has changed. The Khattaks have now neither war nor feud with tribe or clan, and if among themselves the remains of old wrongs still smoulder, they are carefully restrained, or confined to individual acts of vengeance. In the main, the Khattaks of the nineteenth century busy themselves with their own affairs, their salt carrying, trading and tilling; while the hot youth to a great extent take service in the British army, and are reported capital soldiers.

Their national dance has already been referred to as a special characteristic. Any assembly, or occasion for rejoicing, furnishes sufficient excuse. It is danced by a number of men with drawn

swords to the music of the *Surnai*, or flageolet, and drums, round a huge blazing fire. First slow and measured movements to time, the swords alternately waved on high or cutting imaginary enemies; then gradually becoming quicker, the music more spirited the dancers shouting their war-cry; finally they revolve like a band of demons, their swords gleaming, their songs more exciting,



Khattak Horsemen in Chain Armour.

till the whole party is exhausted. One section of the tribe is held in particular sanctity, the Kâka Khels, who are the descendants of the great Khattak saint, Rahimkai, whose shrine is at Naushera, a noteworthy place of pilgrimage and the scene of many miracles. The reputation of the Kâka Khels extends far beyond that part of the country, and is more or less of a talisman away in the distant wilds of Afghânistân. Another only less noted section are

the Fakir Khels, the descendants of the elder brother of the noted Khushhal Khân the first, who retired from the world at the instigation of the saint. Curiously, the eldest son of the late Khân, Sir Khwāja Muhammad, has, in a similar way, become an ascetic.

Perhaps the most marked peculiarity of all, is the power of the hereditary Khâns, or tribal chiefs, who among the Khattaks, in contrast to the intensely radical feeling among Pathâns generally, always seem to have possessed exceptional influence, and to have been looked up to as the real leaders of the people. In many cases they exercised, and still continue to exercise, distinctly feudal rights. Of waste and uncultivated lands they claim ownership, take from cultivators a share of the produce or cash rents, and levy a percentage on the salt trade. They could call the tribes to arms to take the field; themselves naturally taking the lead, and for some time at least, all the Khattaks rallied under one leader. The result is, that the chronicle of the Khattak Khâns has a special interest of its own, and being in its way almost the only history of the doings of Pathân chiefs, told by one of themselves, is worthy of more than a passing notice.

There is rather a characteristic, though familiar, story as to the way the Khattaks came by their name. In the good old times when the tribe lived in the Shwâl Valley, west of Bannu, near the Ghul peak, now a summer retreat of the Waziris, four brothers came down from the hills for a hunting trip in the plains, where they fell in with four Pathân young women, from their dress evidently maidens. As the ladies came near, the eldest brother, Lukmân, suggested that it would be high sport to sieze one each for a wife. The brothers agreed, and proposed to draw lots for choice, but Lukmân, as senior, claimed the right of first choioe, and unable to see their faces, selected the one most gaily dressed. When all were appropriated and examined, Lukmân's prize proved to be old, shrivelled, and "disappointing exceedingly."

"The youth was by her veiled face and fine apparel gulled.
He lifted her veil, and chanced on his grandam."

The three remaining ladies seem to have had their full share of good looks, and though pride compelled Lukmân to stick to his selection, the joke went against him. It was suggested that he had *Pa Khatta larye*—"got into the mud," which is the Pathân equivalent for "putting his foot in it," and ever after, the mud—*Khatta*—stuck to him, and all his belongings, for they were known as Khattaks. This Pathân 'elderly ugly daughter' whose name transpired to be Sabâka, "of a dark complexion and stout figure, but withal intelligent" had at least two sons by Lukmân, and each of the other damsels a numerous progeny; though by the irony of fate, somehow they all came to be called Khattaks. At least, so says the "Khân of high renown," Khushhâl the Khattak, in his own notes, which his grandson embodied in the *Tarikh-i-Murâsa*, or "the bejewelled chronicle."

From the settlement in Shwâl, the tribe emigrated eastward to what is now the British district of Bannu, where they found two other kindred tribes, the Honai and the Mangalai, who about 1150 A.D. had taken possession of the valley, after it had been pretty well depopulated by a century and a half of ravages by Mahmud and his Ghaznavi successors. After a while, say about 1300 A.D., followed the closely related family of Shitaks, who driving off the Honais and Mangalais, settled down amicably with the Khattaks, and for some time shared the lands between two branches of the Kurram river, where is now the cantonment of Edwardesbad. Shortly the Khattaks found they needed more elbow-room, and extended themselves eastward again. Leaving the Bannu country to the Shitaks, who became the ancestors of the Banuchis, or rather furnished the original stock for all the subsequent mongrel grafts, they spread themselves gradually and surely east and north. Up towards Junoghar, "the Virgin's peak," or Kafir Kot, "the infidel's

stronghold," as tradition variously describes a mass of pre-eminent peaks, that in the distance might well be mistaken for the outline of some huge impregnable castle—up to the Teri valley, which is still the chief settlement of the western branch; over the whole south and east of what is now the Kohât district, uniting with the Bungash to drive the Orakzai up Tirah and the spurs of the Sufed Koh; and finally reducing the country as far as Nilâb, the "blue water" of the Indus near Attock. In the main the different branches of the Khattaks hold these lands still, and subsequently Malik Ako, the contemporary of the Mughal Akbar, extended them to the south-east part of the Peshawur district, where he founded Akora, the present capital of the division.

This Malik Ako, who "laid the foundations of Khattak fame," was perhaps the first recognised Khân of any consequence, and the founder of a line of chiefs, who in one way or other are among the most famous of the Border Pathâns. Ako seems to have been a shrewd, as well as valorous warrior. When Akbar returned from Kâbul, and founded the Fort of Attock, he found the road from Naushera to the Indus a terror to travellers, and in durbar appointed the Khattak chief, whose people were certainly not the least of the terrors, a sort of Warden of the Marches, offering him a title. But the Malik said, "No, lest my tribesmen be jealous; instead let me impose a transit duty on cattle." An "ear tax" he called it, to be shared by the tribe. The ear tax soon extended to ferry dues, a well tax, a house, a salt, and a land tax; finally to a royal grant of the country from Naushera to the Indus. He built a serai for travellers, and entertained liberally. "If he had aught in the morning, it was all expended by the evening;" but whether he kept the road clear of freebooters is not so certain. He undoubtedly cleared it of Hindu fakirs and their kind, for he showed Akbar two large earthen jars full of earrings, from the ears of the *jogis*¹ put to death for declining to become Muhammadans.

¹ An order of Hindu mendicant priests.

"I have made no other calculation of the numbers put to death," said he.

He and his successors, nominally at least, held their seigniories under the Delhi Emperor, and though each chief seems to have ruled a goodly number of years, they were in the end generally murdered by some relative. Ako, for instance, ruled for over half a century—1550 to 1600—but in spite of what a Khattak poet calls, "wielding the silvery blade," viz., spending his money to win men's hearts, he was eventually killed by his own clan. His son, Yâhiya, "of lofty stature and in due ratio brave," enjoyed about twenty years of power and of feuds, before he fell fighting the Yusafzais. His grandson Shâhbâz, a man of talents, "in bounty Hatim's peer," but undoubtedly cruel, was killed after twenty-one years of rule, in a foray with robbers, 1641.

Then came the most famous of all, Ako's great-grandson, Khushhâl, who stands out among his fellows, distinguished as a warrior, a poet of some skill, a man of some education, who contributed to the history of his people, and who, as a chief, is still referred to as "the Khân of high renown." He served in the armies of Shâh Jehân, by whom he was honoured and rewarded. He repressed the Yusafzais and other tribes raiding the Peshawur Valley, and though he was subsequently seized and imprisoned for six years by Aurangzebe, that monarch had to let him out again, and send him back in state, as the only man who could restore and maintain order on the northern Border. His spirit, however, was broken by his imprisonment, though some of his best and most spirited odes were composed during this period; and shortly after his return, he retired from public affairs in favour of his sons and grandsons. He lived in his retirement for many years, and died in 1809 at the age of seventy-six, his dying request, that he might be buried where "the dust of the hoofs of the Mughal cavalry could not light upon his grave," his

last resting-place concealed, lest his enemies "might seek it out and insult the ashes of him, at whose name, whilst in life, they quailed; and by whose sword, and that of his clansmen, their best troops had been scattered like chaff before the gale." Asraf his son—one of some twenty-four, Raverty says fifty-seven—who began to rule in 1659, the year after his father was seized by Aurangzebe, continued till 1682, and eventually finished by dying in a Mughal prison. Afzal, a grandson, was the ruling chief for nearly sixty years—1682 to 1741; inherited all the literary tastes of his grandfather, and was the author of a history of the Khattaks from which this sketch is taken.

In his time, however, a split occurred. One son who did not get on well with his father, established himself at Teri, which from that time became an important place, and a separate chieftainship. A small section had previously split up in Ako's time and moved down to Shakardarra, where they established themselves, and became known as the Sagri Khattaks. For a while the Teri chief was subordinate to the elder branch, residing at Akora, but when the Sikh invasions came into the Peshawur Valley, the Akora overlordship was entirely broken up, only a few petty Khâns surviving the wreck. The Teri Valley was practically unaffected, and through a line of three or four distinguished Khâns, the chieftainship passed by regular descent to the worthy representative of his race, who has just died, Nawab Sir Khwâjah Muhammad Khân.

Born in 1824, Sir Khwâjah was always distinguished for his steady loyalty to the British Government. During the second Sikh War he rendered conspicuous assistance to our force at the risk of having to fly for his life. Again his good services were equally marked in 1857, and from first to last, during all recent Afghan troubles. The head of a warlike and turbulent race, he has—as Macgregor wrote—"though tried in a hundred different ways, never faltered in his allegiance." In 1873 he

was made a Nawab and a K.C.S.I., and until a few months ago, he lived in undisturbed enjoyment of his well-earned dignity, a fine example of a gallant, courteous, hospitable, faithful Border Pathân chief, coming of a stock, in their way, hardly less distinguished than many a line of heroes chronicled in Western story.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PATHÂN HIGHLANDS AND HIGHLANDERS.

WHEN our Border policy is sufficiently advanced to insist on a road between two positions as important as Bannu and Thal, and we have so far tested the "kindly feeling" of the Waziris as to venture to look into the Dawar Valley, which, with some other items of communication and exploitation to be referred to anon, may fairly be described as necessary complements of any policy worth the name, a little further prospecting might with advantage be done in the adjoining valley of Khost. Shut in by a circle, rather than an amphitheatre of hills, it lies between Dawar and the Kurram, and is really open only where a branch of the latter, known as the Shamil River, makes its exit. This, by a branch road leading out of the one from Bannu to Thal, would be the natural approach, but it can be entered from the Upper Dawar Valley, past the village of Darpakhel, from the Kurram Valley, and, with still more difficulty, from the west. Though it was visited by several officers and some of our troops in 1879, not much more seems to be known about it than about the Dawar. Some forty miles long, not so broad, but quite as fertile as the Kurram, watered by three streams—branches of the Shamil—it is reported to afford plenty of timber, fuel, and pasturage; to produce very good rice, wheat, and tobacco, which the Khostwals trade into

Bannu ; and large quantities of asbestos. The climate is excellent, the people about as mongrel a lot as their kindred Bannuchis and Dawaris. They have no very large villages, but many small ones ; are numerous and well-to-do, paying no revenue to any one, save when the Kâbul troops have been able to get so far and collect it by force : and to do this the Kâbul forces have either to come by Ghazni and the Jadrân highlands, or the Mangal country.

The Jadrâns have already been referred to as a tribe whose industry is proverbial and whose country is particularly blest. Hyât Khân describes it as consisting of "beautiful mountains, the rich green slopes watered by numerous torrents and shaded by dark firs, where fruit-trees of many sorts grow readily, and the air is fresh and invigorating"—just the place that Bannu would like to have for a sanitarium. Nevertheless, it does not produce enough for the needs of the tribe, which the same author estimates, but probably over-estimates, at 15,000 fighting men ; or possibly, like some other highlanders, they consider the noblest prospect is the high road to British territory, for they come in large numbers every year to seek employment. Not naturally quarrelsome, their position between the Mangals and the Ghilzais necessitates their being always ready to fight ; and not the least curious of their tribal customs, is one ruling that an unarmed Jadrân is liable to be fined an ox, to be eaten in full tribal assembly.

The Mangals—possibly hailing from Mangalai or North-West China, who muster pretty strong—probably 8,000 fighting men—on the southern side of the Kurram Valley, and hold a tower on the Paiwar—are not very well known, nor have we had many dealings with them ; but the little that is known is mainly to their discredit. Both they and the Zaimukhts made every use of their opportunities to harass the communications of the Kurram force under General Roberts, at times causing considerable anxiety. Their particular function seems to be theft, though they have no scruple about murder when a safe opportunity offers. Opposed to