

**KHIVA AND TURKESTAN.
TRANSLATED
FROM THE RUSSIAN**

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Khiva and Turkestan. Translated from the Russian by H. Spalding

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PREFACE.

IN bringing this work to the notice of the public, the translator trusts that it will, in some measure, answer a twofold purpose: firstly, by affording exact and reliable information regarding the remote region of which it treats, a region all the more interesting to Englishmen that it lies in comparative proximity to Hindostan; and secondly, by representing this subject from a Russian point of view, and enabling us to judge the question from their stand-point. There are always two sides to a question, and never is this truth more indisputable than in cases of international rivalry or disagreement. Without wishing to be the apologist of the entire policy of Russia, the translator believes that an impartial study of her history will considerably modify the unfavourable opinions constantly expressed regarding her.

The great difficulty which Russia, on emerging

from barbarism, has had to contend against is her geographical situation with regard to the sea. It is true that she has, though only in modern times, access to numerous inland seas, such as the Caspian and Black Seas and the Baltic; but the ocean itself is only open to her, in an unrestricted sense, on the frozen shores of her northern coast, or the likewise frozen shores of Eastern Siberia. It is thus that, since Russia took her place in the conclave of civilised nations in the reign of Peter the Great, her existence has been an almost uninterrupted contest for a seaboard. Peter himself occupied Azoff, established himself on the Caspian, and annexed the Baltic provinces of Livonia, Esthonia, and Ingria; next came the conquest of the Crimea by Potemkin, under Catharine the Second, whilst finally, the absorption of Finland during the reign of Alexander the First completed the coast-line of the Russian Empire on the Baltic.

In this series of conquests and annexations, and in others, we see the natural struggles of a rising nation for unity, and access to the coast, not altogether through the impulsion of ambitious autocrats, but, we submit, chiefly through natural causes. Doubtless great wrongs were committed, and gallant nations, such as the Finns and Poles, cruelly trodden under foot; but such are the scenes

which usually accompany the development of a people's history, and we must never forget, when considering them, to look at the reverse side of the picture; at Russia herself, for instance, trodden down and ravaged for centuries by the armed heel of the restless and warlike Polish aristocracy. It would seem as wise to regret the Saxon Heptarchy as to allow ourselves to be prejudiced against Russia on account of her past annexations.

As regards the extension of the Russian Empire in Asia, we, as the Russians themselves truly remark, are the very last people who ought to condemn them, since the analogies between our empire in Asia and theirs are both numerous and striking. Both founded by private enterprise, both have proceeded from conquest to conquest and from annexation to annexation, owing to the operation of similar causes, till both are at length in what, in that vast continent, is comparative proximity, a proximity so close as to call forth the quite unreasonable fear of a Russian invasion. But the reader who peruses this volume will be able to judge for himself; he will see that Russia has been impelled, by the same causes as ourselves, in her career of conquest in Asia, and, what is more, that the same jealousy, the same vague suspicions of hostility which we are accustomed to harbour against Russia, influence the Russian mind to an

equal extent against ourselves. It is only by a closer intercourse between the two countries, and by each seeking to become acquainted with the thought and national tendencies of the other by studying its literature and periodicals, that this mutual distrust can be dispelled.

The Russians have conducted their enterprise to a successful issue in a manner foretold in the closing pages of this work. The main body of their troops is now retiring from the khanate, leaving behind a provisional government to assist the Khan until such time as the war indemnity shall have been paid. The success of the expedition will prove a blessing to the whole of Central Asia. One of the first consequences of the fall of Khiva has been the liberation of those Persian captives whose cruel fate is described in these pages, and the abolition of slavery in its chief stronghold. These facts alone should make us join in applauding the triumph of Russia. Science will gain by the exact surveys and maps that are being executed by Russian officers, whilst, from recent accounts, it appears probable that the river Amou will once again be made to flow by its ancient bed into the Caspian Sea. The official *Gazette de Turkestan* states that the existence of the dyke of Ourona, which turned aside the waters of the Amou from the Caspian into the Aral Sea, is a

fact perfectly established, whilst it has been ascertained by Colonel Gloukhovski and the Baron de Kaulbars, two Russian officers, that, at all events as far as the lake of Sari Kamysh, the return of the river into its old course would cause no injury to the population of the khanate.

As a fit prelude to the present work, we subjoin an extract from a recent number of the *Invalide Russe*, treating of the camel service during the late operations in Central Asia.

“The troops left Tashkend early in March. The muster of camels began in Tashkend two weeks before the commencement of operations. This muster proceeded according to order. Each district furnished its appointed quota of camels. A leader was appointed to each party of five or six, whose duty it was to conduct them during the campaign, and look after them during the halts. A foreman was appointed to several of these parties. The camels were counted, their leaders inscribed on the rolls, and apportioned to the different sections of troops. During the time of assembling at the appointed place the animals were, strictly speaking, without food. Being always weak in the spring, they thus became still weaker. Besides this, weak and sickly animals were found amongst the general mass, and these it was impossible to apportion. Thus

the camels left Tashkend under by no means favourable conditions. During the very first marches they began to lag behind and fall. As far as Kly the loss was not great; but there snow fell and caused a frightful mud, which froze at night, and made the march to Nourek very trying. As far as Temir Kobouk the loss of animals was considerable, though they found fodder and water everywhere. A committee appointed for the purpose at Temir Kobouk reckoned as follows:—254 abandoned, who were dead or dying; 102 unfit to march unladen; 202 weak, who could proceed unladen; the whole forming a percentage of 18·33 on the total number of camels with the Jisak column (3,040). On entering the sands of Kizil Koum, and during the further advance on the Amou, the loss in camels experienced was still greater. Fodder was wanting, and sometimes the water sufficed for the horses only. Meanwhile, it became necessary to make the length of the marches conform, not to convenience, but to the distance between the wells, without which it was of course impossible to bivouac. In consequence of this, marches of thirty-five and even forty versts occurred. Such distances in themselves necessitated a considerable strain on the strength of the animals, and to this must be added that, in the expectation of collision with the enemy, we were

obliged to march *en masse*; wherefore, during the march, the head of the column had to halt two or three times, in order to give the rear time to close up. These delays lasted half an hour or more, thus increasing the time of movement and delaying the arrival in camp till after mid-day. Thus, as the camels always assembled in camp at nightfall, a very limited time remained for feeding. The above-mentioned delays, besides cutting short the feeding time, acted very injuriously on the animals. Those experienced in their habits affirm that a camel suffers less from travelling for three quarters of an hour than from standing still under a load for half an hour. The column from Kazalinsk, which left Tamdy with 2,200 camels, and that from Jisak, which had 4,285 at Kly, arrived at Kala Ata with only a little over 3,000. If to the original number we add 600 camels obtained from the Kirgiz of the Kizil Koum and the Bokhãrese, and also from carts arriving from the rear, we see that less than half the original number of animals arrived at Khala Ata. Of this half, 2,700 reached Alty Koudouk on the 4th of May, and, on the 9th of May, only 1,700 departed from Adam Krylgan. Only 1,200 camels, about 20 per cent. of the original number, arrived at the passage across the Amou. On an average, the force lost fifteen camels every two versts. The animals in the carts are