

who had arrived safely at Zanzibar, and was preparing to proceed to the interior of Africa. There had been only one drawback to the success of his expedition. Through the kindness of the Governor of Bombay and our countrymen there, Dr. Livingstone had provided himself with a number of buffaloes, thinking they would be particularly useful to him, from their being safe from the attacks of the *tsetse* fly, which destroys the native cattle; but unfortunately nine of those animals had died. Dr. Livingstone was, nevertheless, in high spirits when he wrote. He (the President) hoped that he would meet with the same success as on former occasions, when he had been without the services of buffaloes or other animals.

The Paper of the evening was as follows:—

1. *Observations on two Memoirs recently published by M. Veniukof on the Pamir Region and the Bolor Country in Central Asia.* By Major-Gen. SIR H. C. RAWLINSON, K.C.B., M.P., &c.

SIR HENRY RAWLINSON commenced by saying that the subject to be brought forward this evening was one which was curious, not only in a geographical, but in a literary, and to some extent, he might say, in a political point of view. The countries between the northern frontiers of our Indian possessions and the Russian empire have for many years past been regarded with very considerable interest, but no part of that intervening space had excited so much curiosity as the portion lying between the following boundaries:—Kashmir and Afghanistan on the south, the valley of the Jaxartes on the north, Turkestan on the east, and Bokhara on the west. This region of country is marked in many maps as a *terra incognita*. It was not, however, totally unknown, for a certain degree of information, as they would presently see, had been obtained from various sources regarding it. Geographical sportsmen had been merely accustomed to regard it as a manor which had been very little shot over,—one moreover abounding with game, and to the covers of which, accordingly, they were very desirous of obtaining access. Under these circumstances, English geographers had been recently much surprised to learn from Russian sources that a detailed description already existed of a great part of this region, and so authentic appeared the announcement that it became the duty of the Geographical Society to inquire into the nature of these new materials, with a view to placing the information which might be obtained from them at the disposal of the public. The result of our endeavours to obtain such information had led to the present communication.

It appeared that, some four or five years ago, notices had been published in the Russian papers, and in Russian periodicals, concerning some remarkable travels through these little-known countries. The first intimation he (Sir Henry) had of such notices

was derived from a note published by Mr. Michell in his work entitled 'The Russians in Central Asia,' which note was copied from a Russian memoir by M. Veniukof, published in the Proceedings of the Imperial Geographical Society of St. Petersburg. Shortly after this M. Khanikof, the well-known Russian Orientalist, who takes much interest in the prosecution of Geographical as well as Oriental science, wrote a letter on the subject to Sir Roderick Murchison, which he (Sir Henry) had now in his hands. In this letter Mr. Khanikof gives an account of a certain manuscript which he had lately had an opportunity of examining, in the archives of the topographical department of the Ministry of War at St. Petersburg; and which appeared to him so extraordinary that he thought it advisable to draw up an abstract from it, and send it at once to England to be submitted to the Geographical Society of this country, with a view to elicit information on the subject. He (Sir Henry) would now read an extract from the translation of the paper by M. Veniukof. After discussing the geography of Central Asia, and the difficulty of getting information concerning it, the writer says,—

"I here allude to the 'Travels through Upper Asia from Kashgar, Tashbalyk, Bolor, Badakshan, Vokhan, Kokan, Turkestan to the Kirghis Steppe, and back to Kashmir, through Samarcand and Yarkend.' The enumeration alone of these places must, I should imagine, excite the irresistible curiosity of all who have made the geography of Asia their study. These fresh sources of information are truly of the highest importance. As regards the 'Travels,' it is to be inferred from the preface and from certain observations in the narrative that the author was a German, an agent of the East India Company, despatched in the beginning of this, or at the latter part of the last century, to purchase horses for the British army. The original account forms a magnificent manuscript work in the German language, accompanied by forty sketches of the country traversed. The text has also been translated into French in a separate manuscript, and the maps worked into one itinerary in admirable style. The Christian name of this traveller—Georg Ludvig von ——— appears over the preface, but the surname has been erased. Without entering into details respecting these materials, I shall proceed to give extracts from that portion which relates immediately to the Bolor and the surrounding region."

Now the announcement that there was extant a volume of travels, illustrated by forty sketches of the country, and, he might add, rendered further valuable by a series of thirty astronomical determinations of latitude and longitude, referring to all the most important sites between the English and the Russian frontiers, was an attraction of irresistible interest to geographers. It certainly seemed extraordinary that a country at which we had been nibbling from the frontiers for the last fifty years, should all the time have

been, as it were, at our disposal throughout its whole extent. But the announcement was so circumstantial that we could hardly doubt of its accuracy, and the Geographical Society accordingly at once took steps for placing the materials before us, by requesting Mr. J. Michell, a young man of great promise, and thoroughly acquainted with Russian, to translate for the Society the two papers published by M. Veniukof, in which copious extracts from the mysterious German manuscript were given. The translation is now finished, and he (Sir Henry) had the papers on the table, and would read extracts from them, as he proceeded with his remarks.

Before, however, entering on any Geographical discussion, he felt it necessary to say a few words on the general question, which was one of considerable interest and importance. If this manuscript were genuine, it was one of the most valuable contributions to our knowledge of Central Asia that had ever been given to the world; on the other hand, if it were not genuine, it was one of the most successful forgeries that had ever been attempted in the history of literature. The subject was so fraught with difficulty, arising from the nature of the arguments on one side and on the other, that although he (Sir Henry) had studied it for weeks and for months, and had gone through the task of tracing step by step the route of the supposed German traveller, it was only recently that he had arrived at a definite opinion, and that opinion was that the Travels were nothing more than an elaborate hoax. But he must warn the meeting that, in stating this to the Geographical Society, he took upon himself very great responsibility. The Travels had been accepted as perfectly genuine in Russia. The most skilful and experienced Geographers and Orientalists of that country had accepted the alleged discoveries without hesitation. Maps constructed from these Travels had been adopted by the Russian Government as the basis of their great maps of Central Asia. The rivers and mountains, and names of places which were given by the anonymous traveller had been drafted into these maps, and from them transferred to the German maps, and from the German to the English. The great map of Central Asia, for instance, recently published by Kiepert of Berlin, dealt very largely in this material; and even Stanford's map of Central Asia, the best we have in England, accepted many of the Geographical features, taking them, in all probability, from Kiepert.

Sir Henry's condemnation might appear very decided, but he thought that after a detailed examination of the text of the manuscript 'Travels' it would be allowed to be well founded. There were in the first place a number of incredible statements

at the outset about the object of these Travels. It was stated, for instance, that a German officer resident in India had been employed by the East India Company at the commencement of the century,—having under his orders a certain Lieutenant Harvey, and an escort of forty Sepoys,—to obtain a large supply of horses for the Government service. It was said that these gentlemen proceeded with the Sepoys into Central Asia, and obtained 130 horses in one place and 980 in another, which were duly forwarded to India. The German traveller afterwards represented himself as having endeavoured to reach the Russian frontier in the prosecution of his journey, having sent back his escort and Lieutenant Harvey. He was attacked in the Steppe by the Kirghis, and obliged to return to Samarcand, from whence he passed by Kashgar and Yarkand and Kashmir, to India.

Now, as a preliminary step to enquiring into the truth of these statements, he (Sir Henry) obtained permission at the India Office, to have a search made in our official records, with a view to the identification of the individuals concerned; and the result of that search was that there was no transaction of the sort to be traced. There was no German employé in the Indian service at the time stated; there was no requisition for horses; and there was no Lieutenant Harvey in the army during any part of the period to which the narrative could be referred. This negative evidence rather staggered him, and further consideration confirmed his doubts. He reflected that at the time in question Upper India was in the hands of the Mahrattas, and Kashmir was in those of the Affghans. To have sent a small escort of forty Sepoys through such countries into the wilds of Central Asia was therefore a moral impossibility. And for what purpose was the mission to be sent? They were to obtain horses for the Government service; but the only horses procurable in Tartary are what are called Kirghis *Yaboos*, a sort of stout ponies, which are serviceable enough as pack-horses, but which are quite unfit for cavalry purposes. Moorcroft and Trebeck proceeded afterwards, it is true, into Central Asia in search of a particular breed of horses that it was thought advisable to import into India. But it was not to the Pamir plains, the country of the *Yaboos*, that their steps were directed, but towards Bokhara and Khorassan, where Turcoman horses of high breed could be obtained. Moreover, the mountainous and difficult country where the German traveller states he purchased his first batch of horses is one through which it would be impossible to convey the animals to their destination. He talks, indeed, of purchasing and transporting his horses—132 being obtained in the heart of the mountains, and

980 in the Pamir Steppe near Lake Karakul—as if he were travelling in a civilized country intersected with high roads; but the very reverse is known to be the case. The locality, indeed, where he describes the first batch of horses as having been purchased is in reality in the centre of a mountainous country where a horse was never heard of; the only animals used by the inhabitants being yaks. He says that he there obtained 132 horses, and despatched them to India in the custody of Lieutenant Harvey; but they were plundered by the Mahrattas on the way to Calcutta, and on his returning to claim the price of them, the claim was refused, and he got into trouble with the Government in consequence. It was owing apparently to this misunderstanding that, according to his own showing, he left the service of the Indian Government and went to Russia, where he deposited this manuscript in the archives. But the whole story is so suspicious that there is no trusting it. To make out a “prima facie” case of authenticity, it would be necessary, indeed, in the first place to identify the individual who wrote the manuscript, and it must be required moreover of the Russian authorities to show how that manuscript got into their archives before they can expect us to give any credit to the statements it contains.

But, on the other hand, the question arises, If this is a forgery, what could be the object of it? and this is a point that Khanikof, in discussing the subject with him (Sir Henry), pressed upon him very strongly. He met the allegation of forgery by the simple question, “*Cui bono?*” Unless the man were a monomaniac, why should he have devoted a life to the mere purpose of imposing upon geographers?

Another circumstance which is, it must be admitted, in favour of the authenticity of the document, is the elaborateness of the narrative, and the appropriateness of the local names. On the Kashmir frontier we find Thibetan names. In the mountains the nomenclature belongs to the Kaffir language. In Badakhshan we have Persian vocables; and the etymology of the Turkish names to the north is unexceptionable; in one instance even we have a genuine Zungarian title. All this shows that the author, if an impostor, must have gone through an enormous amount of reading and careful study to have prepared a Journal with so great an amount of verisimilitude. The country being practically but little known to us, and means being thus wanting for tracking the traveller's footsteps, stage by stage, he (Sir Henry) had long doubted as to the true character of the narrative, and occasionally even now a transient impression would come over him that, after all, the Travels

might be genuine. However, he was fortified in his suspicions by the opinions of thoroughly competent judges. Among these he might mention Lord Strangford, who had looked over the manuscript with much care, and agreed with him that the travels were apocryphal. As he had said before, the country described by this anonymous author was not altogether unknown to us. The English had been for some time past very much interested in the countries to the north of India; and there had thus been a large amount of information concerning them accumulated in one way or the other—either in regularly published works or in papers in scientific journals. He had made out a list of such authorities, in order that geographers who desired to investigate the subject farther might see what a repertory of geographical knowledge could be brought to bear upon it.

In the first place, there was Elphinstone's 'Account of the Kingdom of Cabul,' with Macartney's Map and Memoir. When Elphinstone was sent to Cabul in 1808, he was supposed to have possessed the most accurate and extensive information of any man of the time, regarding the statistics and geography of the countries on the North-Western frontiers of India. He had been employed for years past in the political department of Northern India; he had access to all the public records, and in fact it was for some time previous to his mission his special vocation to collect information on these regions. Now, if when Mount-stuart Elphinstone was preparing for his journey, there had been in existence any such information as that a German employé and a Lieutenant of the East India Company's service had been into Central Asia, was it conceivable that he should have known nothing about it, especially as the German traveller says he sent duplicate copies of his maps and papers back to India with the horses from the Pamir Steppes? This was one of the most cogent arguments against the authenticity of the narrative; for it was Elphinstone's especial duty to collect all preliminary information available in India before he departed on his mission, and he started on his journey not a year and a half after the date of the manuscript in the St. Petersburg archives.

After Elphinstone's there appeared another very important work on the same countries, namely, the 'Travels of Moorcroft and Trebeck.' These gentlemen travelled extensively in Central Asia, and collected a large mass of information regarding the countries on the North-Western frontiers of India; and Horace Hayman Wilson, than whom there never lived a more accurate or laborious critic, published and annotated their travels after their decease; yet not a trace, either in Wilson's notes or in Moorcroft and Trebeck's

Journals, is there to be found of this previous mission of the German and his coadjutor Lieutenant Harvey.

The books and papers which he (Sir Henry) had studied in order to fit himself for discussing this question, and ascertaining the authenticity or otherwise of this manuscript, were the following:—

1. Elphinstone's 'Cabul,' with Macartney's Map and Memoir.
2. Leyden's 'Baber,' with Waddington's ditto.
3. Wilson's 'Travels of Moorcroft and Trebeck,' with Map (vol. ii. part 3, chap. vi.).
4. Vigne's 'Travels in Cashmere and Ladak, vol. ii., c. ix. (with Map).
5. Wood's 'Journey to the Sources of the Oxus,' with Map.
6. Burnes's 'Cabool,' with Kaffir Vocabulary.
7. Cunningham's 'Ladak and surrounding Countries,' with Map.
8. H. Strachey's paper on Thibet, with Map, Geographical Journal, vol. xxiii.
9. Captain Raverty's papers in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal on Kaffiristan, 1859; Swat, 1862; and Cashkar or Chitral, 1864; also his later paper on the Kaffir language in the same Journal.
10. Paper on the progress of the Cashmir series, by Captain Montgomerie, drawn up by order of Sir A. Waugh, in Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal for 1861, with Sketch Map (a very useful paper for notices of Gilgit and Yassin).

Thomson and the Schlagintweits may also be consulted for the Geography of the Kara-Korum range, and Godwin-Austen in the Royal Geographical Society's Journal, vol. xxxiv., for the glaciers of the Muz-takh; Court's paper on the Kafirs, with Map, in Asiatic Society's Journal for April, 1839. Amongst native authorities the most valuable notices are—1. Mir Izzet Ollah's Journal, edited by Wilson, in the Royal Asiatic Society's Journal for 1843; 2. Khwaja Ahmed Shah's Narrative of his Travels from Cashmere by Yarkand and Kashgar to Bokhara and Cabul, published in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal for 1856; and lastly, the Report of Abdul Mejid's Journey from Peshawar to Kokan and back, printed in the India Government's Political Records for 1861. And last, not least, is the compilation, lately published by Mr. Michell, and consisting of translations of Russian documents relating to the Geography and Political History of Central Asia. Also notice Gardner's Journals published by Mr. Edgeworth in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal for 1853.

The Second volume, Part III., Chapter VI. of 'Moorcroft and Trebeck's Travels,' is especially devoted to the countries between Kashmir and the Oxus; and the 9th chapter, 2nd volume, of Vigne's 'Travels in Kashmir' is devoted to the same subject, and contains a mass of valuable information concerning it. Wood's journey is also full of interesting matter relating to the same region. Cunningham's 'Ladak,' again, is a most admirable work; and Henry Strachey's 'Memoir' is the most valuable of all papers on the geography of Thibet.

There are three papers, also, by Captain Raverty, in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal, which deserve especial notice. Although Captain Raverty himself was only on the frontiers of the countries

which he describes, the papers he wrote regarding them contain a mass of most accurate geographical and statistical information, and do him great credit. He seems to have had the art of extracting from his native informants all that they knew of real value, and he has shown great skill in arranging his materials so as to make them generally useful.

Thus it would be seen that although we had no person who had actually travelled through the particular tract of country described by the German anonymous writer, yet investigations had been made all around it, both by Europeans and natives, and the mass of information we had obtained from these united sources was such, that if any person like Mr. Arrowsmith, brought up in the study of practical geography, would take the trouble to test and compare the several routes and supplement them with the miscellaneous information otherwise available, we might have a thoroughly trustworthy map constructed of the countries between the Russian frontier and the Indus, a work which, Sir Henry added, was still a desideratum in geography. The last paper cited on the above list was also remarkably curious and very little known: this was the Journal of Mr. Gardner. Now, Mr. Gardner was an Englishman, who appeared really to have travelled some 30 years ago in a zigzag fashion through all the countries between Samarcand and Kashmir; but he kept his Journals in the most eccentric style, and no doubt exaggerated grossly. In the form in which the journals are now published, they are hardly of any use; but they may still be some day, it is to be hoped, reduced to order. Mr. Gardner, indeed, is still living in India, and he (Sir Henry) trusted Mr. Edgeworth, his editor, would obtain from him further materials to verify his various routes, and amend the vicious orthography which now disfigured the Journal.

Sir Henry then stated that, having given this preliminary sketch, he would proceed to read certain portions of the journal of the so-called German traveller. He remarked that if we had a man writing a journal of travels in a known country, we could of course trace him day by day and step by step, and there could then be no question whether the narrative were authentic or not; but, unfortunately in the present case, wherever the ground was accessible to direct inquiry this anonymous traveller was vague in the extreme; whilst, on the other hand, when he was once launched on a "terra incognita" he was proportionally diffuse and circumstantial. For instance, the extracts from the Travels that have been alone furnished to us commence from Kashmir. That is a country which we now know pretty nearly as well as India itself.



It has been, indeed, lately triangulated and mapped, under the direction of the Surveyor-General, Sir Andrew Waugh, as carefully and almost as minutely as England has been mapped by the Ordnance Survey. As the author, then, starts from Kashmir we can join issue at once, because we are there on known ground and can test his accuracy from our own knowledge of the country. He begins by saying, "Having quitted Srinagur, the capital of Kashmir, on the 8th of May [the date of the year not being given]. . . . I passed on the 9th of May in sight of a volcano, Darmundan, which is always smoking and throwing up stones, but rarely emits flames." Now he (Sir Henry) would ask our Kashmir travellers, and he saw many of them present at the Meeting, if there was any such thing in the whole valley as an active volcano. The notice of a volcano within a day's march of Srinagur was a direct proof of mendacity. Then on the 10th he crossed the Indus below the embouchure of the Luimaki. This again is noteworthy. He leaves Srinagur, he it observed, on the 8th, and he crosses the Indus on the 10th. Now, the direct distance from the town of Srinagur to the nearest point of the Indus, cannot be under 120 miles; Godwin-Austen occupied twenty days in marching from Srinagur to Iskardo, and he (Sir Henry) believed the Indus could not be reached from Srinagur at any point under fifteen days; yet this writer pretends that he crossed the great river on the second day. Then, again, he speaks of the Indus as the "Sindu;" while in reality there is no such specific name as the Sindu known in that country. The word "Sindu," indeed, in the language of Kashmir simply means "river." The Indus is there called the Senge-Khabap, "the Lion Cataract," or the Gyamtso, "the big river" of Thibet. The writer then proceeds to say, "When we approached Sindu (from the south-east, the direction of Srinagur), we saw rising in front of us five high snowy mountain summits; these were, namely, Satchar, Olatam Imbra-Embura (the Seat of God), Ardud, and Damarit; all these were tinged with purple by the rays of the sun." Now these names are one and all unknown, but there is at least some ingenuity in the invention of the name of "Imbra-Embura, the seat of God;" *Imbra* being the real Kaffir name for God. The only misfortune is that there are no Kaffirs within 200 miles of the frontier of Kashmir.

It is remarkable, indeed, that from the time he leaves the Indus our traveller never sees any Mahomedans—the natives are all heathens; whereas in reality, with the exception of the small community of Kaffirs north of the Cabul river, all the inhabitants from the Indus to the Oxus are Mussulmans. Our traveller continues—"To the left of these mountains, and high above the whole country,

rose the Bastam Bolo Mountain"—Here is a bursting name for the purpose of attracting attention! He (Sir Henry) would like to know what language that belonged to—"whose summit, to the middle of its snow-line, was encircled by white clouds, all the other peaks standing out visibly in all their splendour. Before us extended the broad valleys of the Sindu and Luimaki, whose meadows spread away like bright green carpets." In reality the Indus in this part of its course flows through narrow and precipitous gorges, where there is hardly footing for a mountain-goat, and can only be crossed by rope-bridges. There is certainly no ferry across the Indus, from the mouth of the Gilgit river to the frontiers of Hazareh. "On the high and sloping southern bank of the Sindu river could be descried the villages of Parabira, Sarlumba, Tarilumba, and Barilumba." (Here we have another ingenious attempt at deception, "*lumba*" being an affix in the language of Baltistan signifying "a mountain torrent," and is thus extensively used in the north of Little Thibet; but as far south as the Kashmir frontier the word appears to be never met with.) "The lower hills being clad with silver firs, cedars, and other fine trees, gave the valleys a charming and picturesque appearance." (Compare with this sylvan scene Vigne's description of the bed of the Indus at Acho.) "The blue stream of the Sindu, which is here 75 fathoms broad, flows on from east to west, interrupted occasionally in its course by rocks. The ferry-boats by which the river is crossed are two fathoms in length and of equal breadth; three or four inflated goat-skins are fixed on each side, and a large branch of a tree answers the purpose of a rudder. I did not succeed in finding the bottom in the centre of the river with a line 18 fathoms long, and even within a few fathoms of the bank the depth exceeded 7 fathoms. After crossing the Sindu we were finally clear of all Afghan jurisdiction and all Mahomedans. It was near an old town on the right bank of the river that we first touched the soil of the Chashgur-Gobi, a free and pagan race, remarkable for their hospitality, and who are continually harassed by their Mahomedan neighbours. Some of the older inhabitants of Gurbar villages, situated close to Olotam Mountain, keep guard at the above-named tower from sunset to sunrise, after which they return to the village, all further vigilance being unnecessary, as no person would venture to cross the river during the night. One of the Indians I had brought with me from Kashmir understood the Bili language, which is spoken here"—The "*Bili*" language is here first brought to our notice, but none of our philologists or geographers know of such a language. In the works of Vigne, of Cunningham, and of Raverty, vocabularies

will be found of all the mountain dialects between the Indus and the Oxus, but the "Bili" will be searched for in vain—"and with his assistance I was able to converse with the Gurbar guards at the tower; their dress consisted of black goat-skins"—this is taken from the known dress of the Kaffirs—"beneath which they wore a short shirt and wide and long drawers of chequered woollen stuff, and drawn close round the ankles. Their weapons were spears and large bows and arrows. Suspended on their right side was a long and broad sword, and a dagger-stick on the other side completed their equipment. Their head-dress consisted of a felt hat of irregular shape, narrow brimmed and turned up at the sides. A strong smell of leather, moreover, pervaded their presence. The first question they asked us was whether we were Mahometans: which, to their great delight, we answered negatively. . . . Here they offered us some dark-coloured wine, which they drew with a silver cup, out of large jars, and which we found to be very good. . . . The head man carefully inspected the whole of our party. . . . Becoming at last convinced of the truth of our statement, he expressed the liveliest pleasure, and at a given signal all the five pagans began jumping about in a strange fashion and exclaiming, "Imbra-bolli, Gish-bolli."—"Imbra," as before stated, is a real Kaffir word for God, and must have thus come from some genuine source. The author soon after resumes his journey, and the narrative proceeds thus:—"Advancing higher up the Luimaki we perceived a stone pillar with an inscription, the characters of which had nothing in common with Indian letters; the pillar occurred half-way up the valley, on the right side of the road; the rows of characters in it ran from top to bottom, and I concluded they were Chinese, but as I have no particular knowledge of this language I may have been mistaken."—Now this account, which would be most interesting if true, seems to be quite incredible. There is no alphabet in the East which runs in a vertical direction except the Chinese, and to find a Chinese inscription on the Peshawer frontier may be put down as a moral impossibility; but the compiler of these travels may have heard of the Kapur-da-giri inscriptions in the Yussufzye country, and may have introduced the notice of them into his own narrative without a very clear notion of the characters employed. "After proceeding three parasangs beyond the pillar we reached the village of Mestopan. . . . This is the last village of the Chashgur-Gobi, and, clustering close to the side of the mountain, resembles a swallow's nest. The flat stone roof of one habitation forms the court-yard of another above, in which manner all the villages of the Gobi tribe are built. The climate

in the lower part of the valley was mild and pleasant, but above I found it inclement and cold, owing to the proximity of lofty snow-capped mountains. The pastures, however, were very rich, and large flocks of sheep and goats were to be seen grazing on them. The natives here weave a narrow dark-brown cloth, called *daneh*, out of fine goat's wool, they also dress and prepare sheep and goat skins very skilfully, something in the manner of morocco leather. The smell of their leather is stronger than the Russian '*Yafta*;' hence all the natives who employ it in their dress have a strong leathery smell about them, which may be pleasant to those who are fond of it, but which to me was very disagreeable. Several pillars with large human faces cut on them, representing the features of the dead, stand on a small knoll beyond the village; these figures are covered with tatters of cloth, and offerings of provisions are placed round them. This holy place is called Immer-Umma."

On reading this description, he (Sir Henry) thought he remembered the last-mentioned words; and he referred accordingly to Mr. Elphinstone's account of Kaffiristan, and he there found (Elphinstone's '*Cabul*,' vol. ii., p. 397) that Moola Nejib, who had been sent from Peshawer to report on the Kaffirs, applied the name of "*Imr-Umma*" to the houses or rude temples in which their sacrifices take place, the name merely signifying "the house of God."—Although the Kaffirs described by Elphinstone did not occupy at all the same locality as the Gobis of the German traveller, still this coincidence of name applying to their respective temples was remarkable, and seemed a strong proof of authenticity. The narrative, however, went on to say—"Our arrival at the village was celebrated by fresh votive offerings of a black rabbit and a large snipe." And this passage destroyed any confidence to which the former coincidence might have given rise; for a rabbit—and especially a black rabbit—was an animal entirely unknown in the East, and could not possibly have been met with in the highlands of the Indian Caucasus.

Other points on which he (Sir Henry) has tested the authenticity of these Travels were the distances. The traveller, for instance, states that he left Srinagur on the 8th of May, and arrived at Kashgar on the 11th June, that is to say, in thirty-five marches. Now we must deduct ten days from this amount for the time during which he was not travelling. He remained, as he tells us, three days at Mestopan on account of very bad weather, three days at Balgi through a quarrel with the natives, two days at Kulsha, buying horses, and two days at Takhtomar through a second quarrel with the natives. That leaves twenty-five days for travelling from

Kashmir to Kashgar. Now, it must be borne in mind that there really is but one open practicable road from one of these points to the other. This is a road which runs from Srinagur to the Indus at Bonji, follows up the Gilgit River by Gilgit and Shirni to Yassin, crosses a range to Mastuch in the upper Chitral valley, then crosses the great range into Badakhshan, descends upon the Oxus, and follows up that river to the plateau of Pamir, which it traverses till it reaches Kashgar. From the best means he (Sir Henry) had of calculating, this route would occupy, in travelling, fifty days, or forty-five days at the very least. The route of Abdul Mejid, whose narrative would presently be read, conducted from Peshawer to Kashgar, very little less in actual distance, and he was three months on the journey—actually travelling sixty-five days. Yet this German traveller pretended to have passed by a much more difficult track, through the mountains, in twenty-five days. If that were the only objection to the document it would, in his (Sir Henry's) opinion, be fatal.

The narrative, as it continues, gives a variety of curious details which have certainly a general air of truth, although now and then occurs a passage which betrays the fictitious nature of the whole story; while with regard to the geography it is so utterly confused in the earlier portion of the narrative that no argument can be drawn from it, either for or against. The manner, however, in which the manuscript is stated to have passed into the hands of the Russian Government is remarkable, and requires some investigation. It is said that the German agent on one occasion sent 980 horses to Kashgar for the East India Company, but whether they ever reached India or not he omits to tell us. He states, however, that the first batch of 130 horses which he sent to India, under charge of Lieutenant Harvey, were plundered by the Mahrattas; that the Government, however, did not credit this story; and on his reaching India, accordingly, they refused to pay him, in consequence of which some very unpleasant discussions arose between them. This disgusted him so much that on his return from Calcutta he passed on to Russia, and out of pique placed his maps and journals in the hands of the Russian Government; though how this betrayal of his trust could have injured the English it is not very easy to see, for there is not throughout the narrative a single political allusion; and besides, at the time of the transactions in question, the beginning of the present century, no jealousy whatever had arisen between the Russian and the English Governments in regard to Central Asia. We were very suspicious at that time of the intrigues and machinations of France in the East, but

with Russia we were on terms of alliance and confidence, so that the pretended explanation of jealousy between us and Russia, of which our discontented agent could take advantage to enhance the value of his revelations, breaks down altogether, and stamps the whole story with unmistakable fraud and fabrication. It need hardly be added that, if genuine, the Travels as contributions to geography would have been equally interesting both to Russians and English.

Passing on to the pseudo-traveller's arrival at Kashgar, a large city and a place of great importance, the account that he gave of Kashgar struck him (Sir Henry) as a singular combination of truth and fable. He gave, in the first place, a very accurate table of the relative distribution of the inhabitants, showing an amount of local ethnographical knowledge which could only, as it would seem, have been acquired by personal observation; but in other respects he seemed grievously at fault. He stated, for instance, that the city contained only 1500 houses, and numbered, amongst its 15,000 inhabitants, 325 Armenians, who had a fine stone church dedicated to St. Sogien, and built in 1615. Now, we have had many accounts of Kashgar, some of them from native agents, and especially from M. Valikhanof, son of a Kirghis Sultan, who had been educated in the Russian service, and was an undoubtedly reliable authority; and all these authorities combined in giving the number of houses as about 16,000 instead of 1500, and the number of inhabitants as over 60,000. It was impossible also to believe in the existence of an Armenian colony at Kashgar in the beginning of the present century. Neither in the Chinese, nor Russian, nor native accounts, was there any allusion to such a colony; and it might be added that there was no St. Sogien known in the Armenian calendar. There were other discrepancies, too, in this Armenian story which discredited the whole narrative.

It remained to notice what was one of the most remarkable features in the anonymous narrative, namely, a list of thirty astronomical positions, calculated accurately to a second, both as to latitude and longitude. Now, any geographer must know that to keep a register of observations over a number of months, of latitudes and longitudes, was a very difficult affair indeed, requiring great care and much leisure; and he (Sir Henry) would venture to say that, travelling, as the German writer professed he was, in such a wild country, and amongst such wild tribes, the thing was wholly impossible. It was to be observed, too, that he never alluded in a single passage to his being provided with a sextant, or a quadrant, or a chronometer, or with any instrument whatever, necessary for

these determinations. There was not, indeed, a single actual observation given: but only the results. There was no account of any register of observations, nor of taking lunars, nor of any of the machinery by which the positions were determined. Now, M. Khanikof, who was an experienced astronomer himself, seemed to lay great stress on these observations as evidence of good faith. Finding, indeed, that the latitudes were all in error about thirty minutes, he conjectured that this error arose from the observer's not taking into calculation the diameter of the sun. But in reality there is no evidence throughout the whole narrative that the writer ever took a single observation. He merely gives a list of latitudes and longitudes at the end of his narrative, without any indication whatever how they were obtained; and his silence in this respect was one of the most suspicious features of the case. Sir Henry then stated that the time did not permit of his following the footsteps of the German traveller in any detail through the second portion of his pretended journey, namely, from Kashgar by Badakhshan to Kokand. The narrative, however, presented the same strange combination of truth and error which he had brought to notice in his previous remarks. The ascent of the Yaman-yar River, from Kashgar to the Lake of Kara-kul (the "Dragon Lake" of the Chinese) seemed to be genuine, but the description of the town and river of Bolor were probably fictitious. The positions, moreover, of Badakhshan ("Fyzabad" of Wood) and Vokhan were reversed, the latter being far to the east of the former, instead of to the west, as the "Travels" and longitudes would seem to indicate. Again, that there was ever a Chinese garrison in Badakhshan, as stated by the German, is opposed to our historical knowledge; and Malik Shah Buzurg resided at Fyzabad, and not at Vokhan. In continuation, the extent of the Pamir Steppe seemed to be much too contracted, and the positions of Tanglak and Terek-chai were transferred from the north to the south of the plateau; and it was further suspicious that in pursuing the valley of the Jaxartes to Kokand there was no mention of Oosh, or Marghilan, or any of the other large towns of the district.

Sir Henry, in conclusion, read to the Meeting the following passages from the Report of a real traveller in these regions, to show the difference between bonâ fide statements and the ingenious inventions of the German author. The traveller in question is Abdul Medjid, an agent who was sent in 1861 by the Indian Government with answers to certain letters received from Kokand. The Report is compiled by Major James, and has been printed in the 'Political Records of the Indian Government.' It is really full of

geographical interest to those who occupy themselves with the subject of Central Asia, and deserves the especial notice of the Royal Geographical Society. Major James reports as follows:—

“There are five routes by which Kokan may be reached from Peshawur, the most easterly is that by Cashmere and Ladak, crossing the Kara Korum range to Yarkand; this is the most circuitous. The second proceeds from Peshawur, through the Bajour and Upper Koner valleys, into Badakshan; this is the most direct, but, upon the whole, the most difficult route. It was taken by the Envoy who came from Kokan in 1854, because the easier routes to the westward were closed against him, in consequence of the existing state of relations between the Ameers of Bokhara and Cabul and the British Government. On his return to Kokan, he selected that by Cashmere and Yarkand. The three remaining routes proceed in the first instance to Cabul. The most westerly passes through Balk and Bokhara to Kokan: this is the best route of all, and is that taken by traffic; the only lofty range to be crossed is the Hindoo Koosh, and the road is practicable for laden camels throughout; indeed after crossing the Oxus, wheeled carriages are in ordinary use; but inasmuch as the relations between the Ruler of Kokan and the King of Bokhara, and those between the latter and the Ameer of Cabul, were not on a friendly footing, it was not advisable for the party to adopt it. The other two routes—which are known as those of Pamir and Kolab—after crossing the Hindoo Koosh, lead through Koondooz to Badakshan, and there diverge. The eastern extremity of the valley of the Oxus is separated from Yarkand and Kashgar by a chain of mountains which supports an extensive tract of elevated table-land, and connects the Hindoo Koosh with the lofty range to the south of Kokan. This table-land is called the Pamir Steppe, and gives its name to the first of the above-mentioned routes which rises to it from Badakshan, and, after crossing its dreary plains, descends by the Taghlak or Teeruk Pass into the Kokan territories twelve marches east of the capital. The Kolab route crosses the Oxus north of Badakshan, and proceeds direct by the Kolab and Derwazah districts to the mountain range south of Kokan, crossing it by the Oshkoorgan Pass, four marches south-west of Kokan.

“Our party proceeded by the Pamir route, and returned by that of Kolab.

“Entering the Badakshan territories by a steep and rugged pass, he arrived at Rostak on the 31st of October, where Meer Yousuf Allee resides, a brother of the Meer of the country; this chief is very highly spoken of, and gave a warm reception to the party. He shortly after met with a tragic end, being slain by a nephew of weak intellect, together with other relations, as reported in the Diary which accompanied my No. 23 of 20th March last. Here the Moolla received intelligence of the death of the King of Bokhara, and was delayed four days on account of the rumours which followed that event, of the unsettled state of the neighbouring districts. On the 4th November he arrived at Fyzabad, the capital of Badakshan, and residence of its ruler Meer Shah, by whom he was hospitably entertained for two days, and furnished with an escort.

“Nine more marches through a mountainous country brought the party to the Punjab Fort, the residence of Meer Shah's brother-in-law, Shah Ameer Beg, where most of the mules and ponies were exchanged for ‘yaks,’ or the



large-tailed bullocks; here too the real difficulties of the road commenced, and the travellers were not much inspired by the tales they heard of the exploits and adventures of the Kirghiz robbers; snow had already fallen, and the road would soon be closed. On the 16th of November they ascended to Lungur Wakhan, which is the beginning of the Pamir Steppe.\*

"This region forms the summer pasture-lands of the Kirghiz and the hunting-grounds of freebooting parties. Troops of the latter sweep over the plains and carry off into hopeless slavery the surprised travellers, without respect to age, sex or rank; the captives are sold in the cities and villages of Kokan and Kashgar; between them and their homes are extensive deserts, and flight is rarely attempted. The slaves are vigorously worked, but Kirghiz wives are given to them, and the families they obtain are further ties to their new country; the majority of slaves in Kokan are Budakshanees, and the chiefs of the latter country make reprisals on the Kirghiz, reducing their captives to the same kind of slavery and furnishing them with wives of Badakshan. Thus two of the men sent by Shah Ameer Beg with the Moolla as guides and assistants were Kirghiz slaves; they now had families in Badakshan, and the chief felt that he ran no risk of their escaping on the road.

"The nomad tribes who bring their flocks and herds of sheep, goats, camels, and horses to the steppes in the summer, pitch their black tents (called *khirgah*) wherever pasture is procurable; they are described by the Moolla as strange uncouth fellows, living principally on mare's milk and horse-flesh. They had now left the steppes, and our party fell in with only one of their camps, where they met with such treatment as showed that a Kirghiz *khirgah* on the Pamir is to be avoided rather than sought for.

"Fourteen weary days were occupied in crossing the steppe; the marches were long, depending on uncertain supplies of grass and water, which sometimes wholly failed them; food for man and beast had to be carried with the party, for not a trace of human habitation is to be met with in these inhospitable wilds. The Kirghiz guides, furnished by Shah Ameer Beg from Punjab, were seldom at fault, but hurried on the party for fear of fresh snow falling, when it would be difficult to follow the track, and the whole would be likely to perish. The Moolla has given a very quiet statement of their difficulties and sufferings on this portion of the journey, but they were evidently of no ordinary character; the season was already advanced, and most of the road was even then covered with snow; the cold was intense, and on more than one occasion they passed the night as best they could, without a stick to burn or any kind of shelter; at some stages grass and water were not procurable, and three of the animals died on the road.

"The steppe is interspersed with tamarisk-jungle and the wild willow, and in the summer with tracts of high grass. Scattered over its surface are extensive lakes, the sources of the streams which, flowing eastward, fall into the rivers of Kashgar and Yarkand; two of these were passed by the party at

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\* As far as this point, the Moolla has followed the exact track of Wood, as described in his 'Journey to the Source of the Oxus.' Punjab is Wood's "Kila Punj," and "Lungur Wakhan" is Wood's "Lungur Kish." On ascending the Pamir Plateau, Wood proceeded due east to Sir-i-kul (probably Sari-kul, "yellow lake") and the Moolla N.N.E. to Kurreh Kul (probably Kra-kul or "black lake").—H. C. R.

Khürgoshe and *Kurreh Kol*, the former was one day's ride in circuit and the latter four days; the Moolla also crossed the Moorghabee River about midway in the steppe. In the vicinity of this river and the lakes deer and wild fowl abound; on such a journey they must indeed have proved welcome resting-places.

“One of the chief dangers to travellers in the steppe is caused by a noxious wind which prevails at certain seasons, called Dummuk, and the Moolla was cautioned, before leaving Punjab, never to sleep lying down; the effect of the wind is said to be that it causes swelling pains and sometimes insensibility: one of the party was seized with these symptoms during a storm.

“Snow, which had long threatened, fell at length on the last day's journey, which was accomplished with the greatest difficulty; the storm was violent, and the animals could hardly wade through the fresh snow or face the hurricane; all trace of the road was lost, and the party took refuge on a hillock, whilst the guides went in search of the track. They had been marching since daybreak, and it was now 2 P.M., but as the Moolla graphically relates, ‘all forgot hunger in looking after life.’ The guides returned with the intelligence that a herd of horses had been seen, and the party made for the spot; they found eight men only with the herd, and with difficulty procured shelter, in the khirgah, from the stormy night.

“On the following day, the 30th November, the spirits of the party revived, on finding themselves suddenly at the termination of the steppe: they were on the crest of the range south of Kokan, and commenced their descent through the Taghlak Pass. The road being covered with snow and very steep, was difficult to traverse, and men and animals were constantly falling. The lower slopes were covered with fir-trees, in a forest of which they found shelter for the night, in a cow-shed, where for the first time, his supplies being now exhausted, the Moolla felt himself obliged to overcome his scruples, and to dine off a steak of horse-flesh.

“On the 1st of December the party arrived at length in an inhabited country, and were fairly in the Kokan territories; still, however, there were no permanent dwellings, and the country, known as Osh Tippah, is occupied by the El-Bai Kirghiz, a tribe of wandering shepherds and herdsmen, whose pasture-lands are on the slopes of the adjacent mountains. The daughter of the chief received them courteously; and the Moolla remarks that, throughout the country, the women are not concealed, but take their share in all work, and ‘wear turbans like the men.’

“On the 5th of December they arrived at Goolshah, the first town they had met with. It is the residence of Alim Beg, a relative of the ruler, who had gone with an expedition to the Russian frontier; they were kindly received and hospitably entertained by Alim Beg's wife for two days. Badakshanee slaves were numerous in this household; many of whom had families, and seemed contented enough, but some wept much when they talked of their own country. The remaining seven marches were through a finely cultivated country with large towns and villages; they were well received by the local authorities, though Khodai Nuzzur Beg did his best on more than one occasion to obtain for his companion a less favourable reception.

“On the 17th of December the Moolla entered Kokan, after a continuous journey of nearly three months.

"On the 31st of January, 1861, the Moolla left Kokan, and was informed that an envoy would overtake him at Yar Mazar, the third march.

"The Kolab route having been fixed on, they crossed the Kokan range by the Koksoo or Drawoot Pass; in the seventh and eighth marches the road was deep in snow at this season, and very difficult. They passed through the hilly districts of Karataghin and Derwazee, both tributary to Kokan, and found the road difficult throughout; in some places the snow had to be beaten down by troops of animals before the party could pass.

"Having made twenty marches from Kokan, they arrived in the Kolab district, the independent chief of which is Surrah Khan, who is very hostile to the Cabul Government, and maintains friendly relations with Bokhara. With a view, therefore, of evincing his enmity to the former, and of ingratiating himself with the latter power, this petty chief caused the whole of the party to be seized at Khwaling, a town in his territory. For four days they were treated with rigour, kept separate from each other, and stinted in their food; they were afterwards placed together and treated well, though detained against their wishes for more than three weeks. Intelligence then arrived of the rebellion in Bokhara, and of the summons to their aid of the Afghan Sirdars by the people of Shuhr Subz. As it seemed probable that his friend would lose his power, Surrah Khan became as anxious to conciliate the captives as he had formerly been to cast indignity upon them. He at once released them, sent costly entertainments, and dismissed them with dresses of honour.

"The remainder of the road was good, and, crossing the Oxus on the third day, they passed through a portion of Badakshan and arrived at Khanabad, where they were again received with hospitality by the Sirdar Mahomed Azim Khan, and after a halt of five days set out for Cabul, where they arrived on the 6th of June; leaving that city on the 14th, they arrived at Peshawur on the 26th of June."

Mr. TRELAWNEY SAUNDERS spoke a few words in defence of the delineation of the part of Central Asia in Stanford's Map of Asia which had been founded on the map of the anonymous traveller. This part related almost exclusively to the course of the Bolor River, the course of which he maintained was laid down with every appearance of correctness.

Mr. CRAWFURD said there was no doubt about the document of the German writer being a gross and flagrant imposition, but that some adventurer, who has withheld his name, had practised on the Russian Government, less informed than it is now respecting India and the countries which lie between it and the Russian dominions. He (Mr. Crawford) perfectly well remembered every public transaction which took place on the northern frontier of India sixty years ago, namely, during the years 1805, 1806, and 1807, which was about the time that the German gentleman pretended to have been there, for he was himself at the time on the spot. He never heard of a foreigner being employed to buy horses for the army, and he was quite sure there was no Lieutenant Harvey in the service. With regard to the mention of a volcano, he (Mr. Crawford) believed there was not one in all India; and the nearest point to the Pamir countries at which one could be seen was the Bay of Bengal, which was at a distance of 2000 miles. He was satisfied there were no rabbits to be found in Central Asia. The rabbit was not indigenous in any part of India. As to the black rabbit, it was a complete imposture. The whole account was a bungling, awkward imposture, and the Travels a mere sham.

The PRESIDENT, in returning thanks to Sir Henry Rawlinson for his able analysis of the memoirs of the unknown German author as translated by M. Veniukof, said he could only account for the credibility attached to that narrative by such an able Russian geographer as M. Khanikof, by the circumstance that neither he nor any Russian geographer had explored the region of Pamir. As, however, this rugged, lofty, and sterile country lies midway between the British and Russian frontiers, he confidently hoped that its true geographical features would soon be accurately defined by the geographers of both countries, so that we may no longer have to speculate on the degree of truth which ought or ought not to be attached to the writings of so mysterious a person as the unnamed and unknown traveller of the beginning of the present century.\*

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*Tenth Meeting, April 23rd, 1866.*

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, BART., K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

ELECTIONS.—*William W. Blow, Esq.; John C. C. Boyd, Esq.; Hugh Cleghorn, Esq., M.D.; Edmund Foster, Jun., Esq.; George H. Gibb, Esq.; Robinson Hudson, Esq.; William G. M'Ivor, Esq.; John Keith Rennie, Esq., M.A.*

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY SINCE THE LAST MEETING, 26TH MARCH, 1866.—‘A Directory for the Navigation of the Indian Ocean,’ by A. G. Findlay, Esq. ‘Histoire physique, économique et politique du Paraguay, et des établissements des Jesuites,’ par M. L. A. Demersay. ‘Address delivered before the Maine Historical Society, 28th August, 1863,’ by G. Folsom, Esq. ‘Sur l’État de l’Atmosphère à Bruxelles, 1865,’ par M. E. Quetelet. ‘What shall we do with the Hudson’s Bay Territory?’ by T. Rawlings, Esq. ‘Notice of an Account of Geological Observations in China, Japan, and Mongolia,’ by R. Pumpelly, Esq. All presented by their respective authors. ‘An Account of the ancient and ruined City of Brahminabad in Sindh, situated on a Branch of the old bed of the Indus,’ by A. F. Bellasis, Esq. Presented by J. Brunton, Esq., C.E., F.R.G.S. ‘Voyage au Pole boréal, fait en 1773,’ par Constantine-Jean Phipps. Presented by E. Whymper, Esq. ‘Ten Months in the Fiji Islands,’ by Mrs. Smythe; with an Introduction and Appendix, by Col. W. J. Smythe, R.A., &c. Presented by the authoress. ‘A Catalogue of Authors who have written on Rio de la Plata, Paraguay, and Chaco,’ collected by Dalrymple; with additions by Sir W. Parish, K.C.H., &c. Presented by Sir Woodbine Parish, K.C.H., &c. ‘Beschryvinge van den Grieschische Archipel,’ door den R. v. K. Presented by

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\* With regard to the subject of this evening’s discussion, it will be necessary to consult a recent letter from M. Khanikof, which will be printed in the current Volume of the ‘Proceedings.’—ED.