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KÁFIRISTAN *and* ITS PEOPLE. By Sir GEORGE SCOTT
ROBERTSON, K.C.S.I.

[WITH PLATES VII AND VIII.]

IT may not be out of place to begin this paper by reminding you that Káfiristan is a country consisting of an intricate series of valleys, side ravines and gullies formed by spurs of the Hindu Kúsh and their sub-divisions, which run down on the Indian side of that great westward continuation of the mighty mountain barrier separating India and Afghanistan from the rest of Asia. The exact technical geographical position of this country need not concern us here; the only point of chief importance, in that connection, is that Káfiristan is a highland region, subject to snowfall and severe cold in the winter, while the heat of the summer months, though great, bears no resemblance to that stovehold temperature which is common in India at an identical season of the year. You must please bear in mind, then, that this region is hidden away between Afghanistan, Chitral, Badakhshán, and the independent *Khanates* north of Peshawar, and has nothing in common with the India you are accustomed to picture in imagination.

In considering the manners and customs of Káfiristan, the influence of climate and of the physical characteristics of the country must not be forgotten, although the importance of these two factors in modifying the habits of a people, need not be insisted upon further before such an audience as this. Roughly speaking the climate of Káfiristan is temperate. The heat does not exceed that of Italy in the summer, nor is the cold at moderate elevations—say up to 7,000 feet—greater than that of some parts of Scotland in the winter. The rainfall is inconsiderable; the arable lands depend mainly upon snow water for their moisture. Irrigation, consequently, is necessary nearly everywhere. An almost complete absence of wind, in the deep narrow valleys, is the last peculiarity which need be now mentioned.

I have decided to make a somewhat unusual departure this evening, and to offer my information about Káfiristan in the form of a true story. That method seems to me best suited for the short time at my disposal. It will, I think, prove convenient to you also; perhaps more so than if I were to attempt to string together a series of bald dry facts upon a subject which is practically unknown to many here to-night. My story will be illustrated at the end, but the pictures are intended, not so

much to depict the actual scenes I am about to relate, as to give some general idea of environment and to amplify the narrative.

Once upon a time in the little hospital for women which, as is the custom of all Káfir settlements, lies just outside the village of Kámdesh, Kazhírbri, the wife of Lutkám, of the Demidári clan of the Kám people, gave birth to a little son. Her age was only sixteen, although she had been married several years, and had long ago put aside the fillet which binds the locks of the girl for the headdress which is the national symbol of womanhood. When she heard her child was a boy, her rapture was such that she became half unconscious, so well did she know, poor thing, the terrible lot of women in her country, neglected in childhood, overworked as field slaves when they grew older, and despised, badly fed and passively ill-treated all their lives, except for a few short days in early maturity when kind human nature brightens with love even the moral and physical degradation of a Káfir woman. Presently Kazhírbri roused herself a little, for the baby, wrapped in a fragment of half cured goatskin, was gently placed in her arms, and she knew that the ceremony of naming him was to take place. She hoped her boy might be called Merik, as that was the name of a youth she had dearly loved, but whom she never could have married, nor ever thought of marrying, for he belonged to her mother's clan, and everybody knows a Káfir may not marry so near a relative any more than he may marry into his father's or his father's mother's clan. Kazhírbri remembered that one of her husband's ancestors had been known as Merik, so she almost held her breath as she strained her head to watch the baby's lips, when a wise old woman began rapidly to mumble over the child's forefathers in proper order. For that one mentioned by the reciter at the instant the suckling began to feed, would be the infant's name for life. Alas! Merik was mentioned and passed; the infant commenced to drink when the word Lutkám was in the air, therefore he became Lutkám Lutkám, that is to say, Lutkám the son of Lutkám.

After twenty-one days mother and child returned home, the proper ceremonies having been duly observed. Kazhírbri was still weak, for she had been very ill. But the end of the year was approaching and the Indian corn crop still had to be carried, so very soon she was to be seen toiling along the steep inclines, the baby tucked into the front of her single tunic-like garment, and a huge load crushing down her fragile body. Her husband was a kind-hearted man, but he had only one other wife at this time, and she was very old, so Kazhírbri had to work long before she was fit to do so, while he went to join his

partner at the grazing grounds to bring back the flocks and herds from beyond a neighbouring pass before the snow came. For otherwise they might fall an easy prey to a marauder, because no others of the tribe would be near enough to help. Then came the cold weather and the bad food, which alone women get, only occasionally supplemented by the great public feasts given by rich men qualifying, in that curious way, for high social and religious rank in the tribe. So she never recovered her lost strength, but two years later, when small-pox was making its periodic devastation, killing or crippling children by the score, Kazhirbri also caught the disease and died.

As I have said, her husband was by no means unkind for a Káfir, so although he had noticed her long continued incapacity for hard work with something like resentment, yet as she was the mother of his only boy, that is to say, his only son who had not slave blood in his veins, he had always refrained from active unkindness, nor had he ever thought of selling her. Indeed, while she lay ill, he did everything he thought might save her life. He sacrificed a cow to Imra and distributed its flesh, he also lit a big fire in the dying woman's room, where he invited a large company to dance to the music of a couple of squeaking pipes, played by neighbours, while slaves banged an accompaniment upon drums. The guests shuffled and stamped till the sweat ran down their faces. Káfirs are always in splendid training, but the reek of that sick room tried even their sinewy frames. Yet nothing would appease the gods, and one night the firing off of an old musket told all who were interested in her fate that Chandlu Kazhirbri, Lutkám istri, that is, Kazhirbri, the daughter of Chandlu, the wife of Lutkám, was no more. Lutkám thereupon gave a feast, which is still remembered for the quality of the wine handed round. Everybody came, high and lowly, as the donor was universally respected for his birth, his wealth and for the number of enemies he had slain. Dead Kazhirbri, her thin waxen features just discernible amongst the gaudy shawls which covered the body, was raised on her bed, from time to time, while, to the sound of music, relatives and friends danced round the corpse, some in tears and with grief-convulsed features, but many smiling and happy. In the intervals orators extolled her family and her husband's ancestors, while her toothless old mother crooned lamentations intermittently.

Lutkám, the son, was too small to feel his loss. He no longer was carried daily to the fields nor did he trot home over the steep hillsides, steadying his baby footsteps by frequent grabs at the red edge at the bottom of his mother's skirt, which is at a height convenient for the hand of a two-year-old child. But

he was now the delight of his father, who never tired of carrying him about, or showing off or playing with the mannikin. It was amusing to see the way the man was tyrannised over by his pigmy son, who always got his way in the end. Once for instance, he insisted upon going too near Imra's shrine, where children are not allowed. The father got angry because a sacrifice was being made in the presence of a large congregation; he even cuffed the boy to drive him back. Speechless with anger and surprise, the little fellow stamped and raged until his repentant sire gave in, and let him go where he liked, before sobbing himself to sleep between the parental knees. All the bystanders, and even the great priest himself, murmured, somewhat dubiously, that Imra would never mind such a tiny child as that approaching his holy place.

Gradually the fat little limbs hardened, and the small frame grew sturdy and healthy, so that, except for a little ophthalmia and a slight eruption of the shaved head, Lutkám the younger became as pleasant to look upon as an average English boy. With the growth of the body the mind also expanded; his surroundings educated him. At first he shrieked at the sight of the great wooden effigies under the shed—the village Walhalla—and even when his own mother's image was erected a year after her death, although he enjoyed the fun of the dancing and the feasts, and ever afterwards felt proud of the size and magnificence of the statue—because it indicated the grandeur of his family—still for a long time he dreaded the glare of the round eyes made of white stones. Next, he learned to merely wonder at the grotesque objects, and to play about them without concern; finally, he came to despise all, except a very few of his own ancestral monuments, and even to throw stones at them.

Until the age of eleven Lutkám's dress was a simple goat-skin and nothing more. His pursuits consisted mainly of long absences with his father at the pasture lands, where dairy produce, which constituted the wealth, or at any rate the income, of the family, had to be looked after. In the winter, when the flocks were brought nearer home, much of the boy's time was spent in the village, where he gradually developed in skill and strength until a stone shooter and toy weapons were replaced by a good strong bow with a sheath of iron-tipped arrows. When his father's blacksmith slave forged him a dagger, Lutkám knew the delights of manhood. Henceforward darkness had no terrors for him; with dagger on belt he could wander anywhere at night, for Yush, the evil one, who lurks in rocks to seize hapless travellers, has no power against a Káfir wearing the national weapon.

In this same year three important events occurred. Lutkám became entitled to wear the clothes of a man, he went on his first raid, and his father was killed in circumstances I shall relate to you. A friend who was passing through the complicated ceremonies compulsory for all who desire to be "jast" (or headmen) allowed Lutkám to participate in that part which qualifies boys to put on trousers, so his forehead and shins were smeared with blood and he was acknowledged a man.

Often, while tending goats and cattle, his father or the servants had been obliged to be on the defensive against marauders; he had also seen one or two very loose hill skirmishes in the grey of the morning, and once all had to fly for their lives from Patháns who were following Lutkám's uncle to get vengeance for a midnight murder in their village; but times had changed of late years, strong kings ruled in Afghanistan and in Chitrál, and Lutkám had never seen a man slain. Shortly after he attained manhood, as above described, during a sacrifice to the war god, Gísh, the wild under-priest, who used to get temporary inspiration at such times, suddenly declared the god demanded more offerings, and had given the single mandate "Attack!" The tribal elders at once met in excited conclave to debate this subject. As all tried to argue, to declaim at the same time, the outcry was great. Only occasionally was there a lull when the stentorian tones of the high priest vanquished and stilled, for the instant, all other voices. It was finally agreed that the god's orders must be obeyed, and that a neighbouring Káfir tribe should be raided, as it was obviously out of the question to assault Afghanistan or Chitrál, while in the valley specified there was good prospect of plunder.

No sooner was this decision made known than every male rushed for his arms, messengers were sent hot foot to all the other tribal villages, and in an incredibly short time the fighting men had assembled and started. The female augurs of Badamúk declared the omens propitious, so the expedition left in happy consciousness of supernatural approval. All the women left the fields, donned every bit of finery they owned, or could borrow, to dance incessantly day and night to the gods, in order that the tribe might get much loot and the men come back uninjured. Many brandished daggers or axes. At midnight or very early morning, the fitful blaze of a bonfire flashed now and again upon gleaming steel, or illuminated, for an instant, horned head-dresses, and strange clad sombre figures, bowed with weariness, but moving with fantastic energy; female voices, tired, but shrilly discordant, added to the feeble drum tap of a slave boy,

were the only sounds as this Walpurgis witch throng flickered out of the heavy darkness to be at once reabsorbed into it.

It was only by extreme celerity that the warriors could effect a surprise. They numbered 480, of whom Lutkám was almost the youngest. A wilder-looking party it would be hard to conceive. About one-fourth carried old matchlocks. All had bows and arrows and daggers, a few possessed spears, there were not more than half a dozen shields altogether, and not a single sword was to be seen. Most of the men wore nothing but goat-skins—the hairy side out. These garments were confined at the waist by a leather strap, dotted with iron studs, which besides the dagger, supported small leather pouches, or narrow wooden tubes, strung together like pan-pipes, for carrying gunpowder or articles of no size. A few individuals of the richer class had coarse cotton shirts and short wide trousers of the same stuff, a dozen or so had Shín caps on their heads and Chitráli or Minjáni robes wrapped round them, but tucked up at the waist so as not to impede the knees in walking. No order was maintained.

The advance was led by light-limbed young braves, with one or two of graver years, whose words were ever listened to with respect, for these men had terrible records, and one was covered with the scars of wounds. The swift noiseless step of the quick-moving Káfirs was strange to see; they moved as fast and silently as disembodied spirits, but their keen restless eyes, the frowning faces, the side to side head jerks, showed the concentration of their minds, and the eagerness with which they were searching the hill sides. They hurried along in single file, for the track was narrow. At a short interval came the main body with whom was Lutkám, and quite in the rear certain old men toiled along with one or two cripples whose physical infirmities compelled them to lag behind. For a boy Lutkám was a splendid walker, but he soon began to pant till he thought his breast would burst, and his shin-bones became like red hot iron bars.

For hours the march continued, along the face of terrible cliffs, through streams, or rarely over single pole bridges, and seldom across level ground for more than a few yards. Two high passes had to be climbed. At the second, poor little Lutkám fell down and was for some minutes unconscious, but he was hurried, encouraged or scolded by his father, and at length, without anything which could properly be called a halt, the Amzhi country was reached. The surprise was complete, the few Wai Káfirs about fled at once and an enormous booty in cattle and goats was collected. One or two shots were fired and all seemed over. Ardent young men wanted

to start back forthwith to be home first with the good news, but older hands looked anxious; they warned all to drive off the animals quickly and to keep together. Indeed, time was scarcely allowed to eat the thick cakes of bread or cheese, or the dried refuse of the wine presses. Such food was hastily dragged from small goatskin bags or from the receptacle formed by pouching up the body garment above the belt; it was swallowed rapidly while the eaters ran about and urged the animals forward. But soon shots fell near, and the enemy reinforced to his full strength, was upon them. Numbers were on the side of the raiders, but the Amzhi people were mad at the idea of losing their property. They raced along, high up the steep inclines, to charge down upon the front or sides of the convoy with the courage of desperation. Hand to hand fighting with daggers was occurring intermittently all along the line.

Furious as were the Amzhi, the captors raged at the thought of losing what they had won, and fought like Gísh himself. The two Lutkám were at the tail of the convoy with a large group of fellow tribesmen. As they crossed a spot where the narrow track broadened into a small level space, formed by a little bay in the hills, with the river as the chord of the arc, a strong band of the enemy flashed down the slope and fell upon them with a wild outcry. Lutkám, the boy, knew hardly anything of what then happened, for a gun fired close to his ear deafened him, and he stood paralysed with fear. There was a flash of weapons, a gleam of passionate faces with staring eyes, much swaying to and fro, and then it was all over. Hardly a minute could have passed, but the boy's father was lying on the ground, limp and still, with three others. Poor Lutkám could not stir, he could only gaze fixedly. He saw a friend rapidly cut off his father's head and bear it away, someone dragged him by the arm, he was pushed and pulled; then the whole rear-guard went on again. At this point memory stopped; he indeed half remembers other short furious incidents, but perhaps they were dreams. He recollects how he arrived at his village and how all the women came out in tears, with great lamentations, to meet them. Then he slept. When he awoke, at least one day had passed, his legs ached with stiffness, one of his mothers (that is, one of his father's wives) gave him food, whereupon he fell asleep again.

After the funeral rites, which included the fixing of a straw man to the severed head, and much pomp and magnificence in the shape of gorgeous raiment for the lay figure, enormous public banquets, and interminable dances and orations, the poor fragment of humanity was carried to the above-ground cemetery, to be deposited in the family coffer with vessels containing food

for the sustenance of the dead man's ghost. Then the dancing began all over again round a stuffed figure strapped on a bed, for otherwise it would have fallen to the ground many times as it was energetically jumped up and down or whirled about by great warriors, who outvied one another in showing honour to the dead Lutkám in this national manner. At length all the celebrations were ended and the last old woman had finished mumbling the dead man's pedigrees, in conventional sorrow, so Lutkám the son returned to the ordinary work of life—for a year at any rate. Then the wooden effigy would have to be erected with lavish entertainments.

Being young he soon forgot his troubles. It was consoling to stroll about in a dignified way, with an old goatskin thrown over his cotton clothes as a mourning garment, and to receive the sympathy of the people. Much pleasure was also to be found in leading conversation to the recent obsequies of his father and to mention, casually as it were, what enormous cost had already been incurred, and then to guess at what the effigy feasts would mean in the way of expenditure.

He was not yet twelve years old, so his uncle (father's brother) took charge of all affairs. This old gentleman was revered in the tribe because of the wonderful number of people he had slain; he now added to the popularity, thus obtained, by distributing his nephew's goods, with a bountiful hand, under the guise of paying adequate respect to the dead. The boy did not mind; he knew he was still one of the wealthiest of the tribe, for his father had been a skinflint, as well as a dauntless blackmailer all along the frontier, not to speak of his great accomplishments as a thief. He had never been lazy or careless when there was a chance, however remote, to get plunder or to steal, while he would sometimes go near to starving himself and his family in order to save. As a result, there were immense flocks and herds, and the rarest cotton velvet robes, as well as gorgeous shawl brocades from Peshawar, to be found in the rooms between the living apartments above and the cow stables on the ground floor, stored away in those great boxes which are used indifferently as receptacles for movable property or as coffins for the dead.

Lutkám now began to develop hereditary traits of avarice and cupidity; his soft boyish features had an odd mixture of childishness and business cunning. Of the four widows left by his father, Lutkám married one, thus becoming his own step-parent, so to speak, while his uncle took over the rest with the general management of the land. Lutkám's bride was three times older than himself, but a boy must of course have some woman to slave for him.

A year later a prime event occurred. Some Mussulmáns were travelling in the country under a doubtful permit. They were very brave or reckless men, bent on trade. Various Káfirs had received bribes from them, and had then gone away, but as no one uttered objections of any kind the merchants concluded all was right, or with Eastern fatalism determined to run the risk in the hope of big profits. One day before the party was expected at Kámdesh, five young men of good family started down the hill for a narrow level space of ground by the river's edge where certain overhanging rocks commanded the main path and afforded an excellent hiding place. Lutkám was taken also. Concealed in such a way that they could carefully watch the track by the water, the little company lay in wait all night and many hours afterwards. Villagers constantly passed by but did not see, perhaps did not care to see, what was going on. At length the traders appeared, one behind the other, four panting under loads, the fifth without a burden, as he was unwell.

Devoid of suspicion they reached the place of ambush, whereupon the Káfirs fired with steady aim, the matchlocks rested on the rocks. Although the range was not 20 yards, and although each marksmen had had a particular Mussulmán assigned to him, only two men were killed, and a third wounded. Springing down from their hidden position the Káfirs quickly slew both the Mussulmán that was hurt and the other who had escaped the bullets altogether, but the sickly youth was a few yards behind his friends. He stood for an instant, as if turned to stone, then he leapt back and fled like the wind. But no powers of speed could enable a fugitive to escape thus in Káfiristan. This boy, for he was scarcely more than a boy, blundered off the right track, ran under a bluff, to find himself brought up at a precipice; he doubled, merely to fall into the arms of two pursuers who shouted over their shoulders to Lutkám, close behind them, "O Lutkám, strike! strike!" Lutkám came up, drew his dagger, hesitated a second—and struck.

This proceeding was admitted to be a dubious one, so there was no dancing to the war god. Reticence was maintained on the subject, and the incident itself came to be stoutly denied by all concerned in it, who found sufficient reward in the merchandise they obtained even after important headmen had been propitiated by gifts lest they should denounce the affair.

Far different was another exploit, a year or eighteen months afterwards, when Lutkám and his friends killed at night, as they slept, three tribal enemies in the middle of their own village in the Kunar Valley. That enterprise was hazardous,

for the Káfirs crept right in amongst the foe, therefore the least bungling with the dagger would have meant their certain destruction. As it was, they managed to sever the ears of the victims, and to bring away a turban cloth as well. Kámdesh was reached in the evening, so they had to stop outside the village all night, in accordance with custom. Time passed easily, for troops of friends came to admire and congratulate, food also was brought and splendid raiment for the next day's functions. All was cheery, and the heroes occasionally stood up to sing the song of triumph and thanksgiving. As the rather melancholy notes floated over the silent houses, every one knew that not only had Mussulmán enemies been slain but that the tribe had suffered no loss.

Early in the morning, decked out in finery, carrying ornamental axes, the young braves marched to the dancing house with all the women of their families, who were bright with washed faces and radiant with enthusiasm. Each female carried a small wicker basket full of wheat. The heroes deposited the turban cloth on the ground in front of the rough stone altar, and with the women stringing out behind in a semicircle, shuffled and stamped in the most approved style. When there was a pause, to recover breath, the women showered wheat grains over the young men. It was a purely domestic affair, and members of other families passed by with scarcely a glance at the happy performers.

By the time he was sixteen Lutkám had become one of the most *sup-sap manji* (cunning rascals) in the tribe. Not that he was a bad boy. Far from it. According to his lights he was an admirable youth. He never offended public opinion, and even his sale to Mussulmán traders of his two half-sisters (daughters of a slave mother) for robes, gunpowder, sham jewellery and goats, was much applauded by his tribe and kinsfolk, for it proved that he was a good trader, a keen bargainer. As a matter of fact, the Muhammedans knew perfectly well they were paying an exorbitant price for the girls; but they were glad to get them, at any cost, for the double advantage of obtaining female slaves and at the same time converting Káfirs to Islám.

About this time Lutkám fell seriously in love with a young woman of his own age, who originally lived in the Dungal Valley. But her home had been burnt, and she, with her family, forced to fly over the mountain ridge to the south of Kamdesh.

In former days to conciliate the Muhammedans, their near neighbours, the Dungal people clothed their women after the Nursut fashion, that is, in dark blue trousers which hung in voluminous festooned folds, a long over-skirt of the same colour

and a similarly tinted skull cap which covered long plaited locks. In this garb—which from motives of economy she still retained—adorned with white metal ornaments, Lutkám's *fiancée* looked a really pretty girl. Subsequent to their marriage, he and she, for a week or so, were so desperately in love that they made an amusing and interesting couple. I frequently at that time saw them seated together at a top verandah window. They were always laughing softly and every instant glanced at one another, perfectly oblivious of the rest of the world. Of course he could not be seen walking about accompanied by his wife, so when he went abroad Lutkám consoled himself with the society of his brother-in-law. After about a month of connubial happiness he quarrelled in a mild way with his wife's brother and left her to go hunting. Thereafter she was like any other Káfir's wife, a mere slave to her lord.

On the frontier, Lutkám blackmailed, stole, raided, and occasionally murdered. At home he gave huge feasts, bore himself well in quarrels, made love and danced with energy, and tried to swindle everyone of his acquaintance. Indeed, his sole fault was that he was an indifferent public speaker. In time he attained the rank of "jast," or elder of the tribe, and everyone said with a wise shake of the head, "When he is older Lutkám Lutkám will be a very big man." Finally, when the Amir of Afghanistan advanced his claim to Káfiristan, Lutkám fell upon evil days. Many of his relatives were on the side of the Amir; indeed it was through Káfir partizans that the Afghans conquered the lower part of the Bashgul valley, whereupon the tribes of the upper portion saw the uselessness of further resistance. Lutkám thought the matter over for weeks, even months, beforehand. He trimmed, lied and doubled in a way remarkable even for a Káfir; but in the end he was wrong. All his flocks were seized and he is now a refugee in Chitrál, where, at the instance of the Government of India, he has been provided with land and is fairly content. He is a typical Káfir of the well-born class. He has always been a good friend of mine, and on more than one occasion has given me much help. I also have been able to do something for him in return. I yet hope to see him again for he is still young, so perhaps some day we shall meet and I shall again watch him dance or swagger, hear him lie cheerfully, and find him in the future as in the past, an amusing companion, a capital talker, and a trustworthy friend.

Before showing you the lantern slides, I wish to make two or three remarks concerning them. I wish particularly to say that they are of real scientific value. In Káfiristan I took a very

large number of photographs. I also brought away with me specimens of clothing, weapons, household utensils, musical instruments, etc. It is especially from my photographs that Mr. McCormick has drawn the pictures, which I hope you will agree with me are clever and beautiful. To give you some idea of how they were done, I may mention that the drawing of the women dancing, the last of the series, was carefully constructed from about five and twenty of my photographs—snap shot photographs with a kodak. One or two of the slides have been made direct from my photographs—they consequently will appear less clear than those which have gone through the intermediate process of being drawn in black and white by Mr. McCormick. Mr. Simpson has taken great trouble in making these slides from Mr. McCormick's drawings, and I feel greatly indebted to him for his work.

Mr. WILLIAM CROOKE, after remarking on the interesting paper communicated by Sir George Robertson, suggested that it might, with advantage, include more detailed information on the popular religion and folklore of a people who stand as it were on the watershed of two faiths. That they have been to some extent affected by Indian influence is clear from their adoption from that source of the fairy known as the Yech, who represents the Yaksha of Hindu mythology, the attendant on Kuvera, the god of wealth. It would also be interesting to work out the extent to which they have been affected by Greek influence, which was obvious in some of the exhibits laid before the meeting.

Mr. J. F. COLLINGWOOD wished to ask a purely ethnological question. He understood that Sir George Robertson spoke of Tatars as the inhabitants of the region described. It seemed to him, the speaker, that most of the photographs exhibited indicated a semitic facies; but there was one especially of two young men which showed unmistakably Mongolian origin. Could the author inform the members as to the proportions of the racial mixture in those people?

Dr. LEITNER: I did not expect the treat that we have all enjoyed in having Káfir life and customs portrayed in the shape of a charming story—an admirable precedent that readers of papers on little known tribes would do well to follow. What I expected from the notice were such additions to the Anthropology of the Káfirs as "measurements," for, although those of the Dards and Káfirs, who are ethnically kindred races, that I now hand in to the able lecturer, and to this learned Society for publication in its Journal, are only those of twelve persons,

though typical of eight tribes, more are wanted, and would be hailed with special satisfaction by the Anthropological Institute. Indeed, it may be said that the subject of the Káfirs is one which this Institute has peculiarly made its own, and its late President especially, Dr. Beddoe, examined the Káfir Jamshéd, a nephew of the famous General Feramory, whom I brought home in 1872, with an anthropological minuteness that will ever be an example to the students of our science. Several of you may remember the narrative which he gave of his adventures in the Amir's service, and the appeal he made on behalf of his fellow Káfirs then already threatened by Afghan extirpation, enslavement, and displacement. I can only add that his account of Badakhshán, to which he lent an Afghan battery as a Major of Artillery, was the first, as it is still the fullest and truest account of that country that we possess. What he then predicted has come true, and in spite of the efforts of learned and philanthropic Societies, in which your President took a worthy part, the Káfirs, *as a nation*, exist no longer. The vestiges of Greek art, of which the tripod in Sir G. Robertson's most interesting collection here exhibited, as well as the dagger, oil-lamp and footgear, which I have now brought, bear witness, are being more and more obliterated; the picturesque multitude of gods or deified ancestors, whose equestrian effigies in a country where horses are practically unknown, show an antiquity of Centaurs, will be submerged in the monotony of Mahommedanism, although the national dances, of which Dr. Robertson has described some, will linger on, and vestiges of their Bacchic hymns, to which Col. Holdieb has alluded, and their dialects, which I have been studying, will, as also perhaps the inscriptions in an archaic Greek character referred to by Mr. Senost, may yet recall, for a time, the ancient colony said to have been founded by Dionysus at Nyssa, and rediscovered, as compatriots, by Alexander's troops. Increased by Hiram refugees from the south, Buddhist emigrants from ancient Kabul and Kandahar, and Zoroastrians from Balkh, the ancient Bactria—all from Mussulman persecution, the Káfirs have resisted encroachments by Afghans and Pathans for 1,000 years, at last to fall before modern weapons of destruction. On the confines of Káfiristan, diseases and many vices had before been introduced by their neighbours, and the Bashgalis were compelled by the Mehters of Chitral to raid certain travellers. Otherwise, they ever possessed the splendid courage, the domestic affections and the classical beauty to which Sir George also bears his valuable testimony. Indeed, in their joviality, love of money, drink, fun and sport, fear of public opinion and endless discussions in their local parliaments, they rather bear resemblance to their

English "brethren." They are certainly neither Semitic nor Turasian, as one or other of the speakers—certainly not Sir George—may appear to think. They are not even a branch of the Iranian subdivision of the Aryan family, but practically pure Aryans with a strong basis of Archaic Greek. The "Yatsh," to whom allusion has been made, are not the "Yuechi," or white Hurs, but the "Yakshas," or the attendants on the Indian Plutus, Kuvera, the god of wealth; beings sometimes good and at other times evil, and forming a charming antithesis to their fairies. Mr. Clodd, for one, would greatly appreciate their folklore and that of the Dards, and an example of the anthropomorphic tendency of the Káfirs is their expostulation, when dying, on the Lughman side, "You may punish me, oh Deity, but I have enjoyed myself." (Cheers.)

Mr. READ alluded to the interest of any authentic records of such an interesting district as the Hindu-Kush, which, lying on the borders of so many different races, would from its physical character naturally preserve ancient customs and traditions likely to disappear in the more frequented tracks. Thus one might expect to find among the Káfirs traces of ancient civilisations like those of Persia, India, or Bactria, the latter art carrying with it an infusion of Greek culture. Any one familiar with the Lycian tombs brought home by Sir Charles Fellows,¹ and now in the British Museum, would at once see a strong resemblance between them and the Temple of the goddess Dizane. Such a resemblance might perhaps be a coincidence, but we find it somewhat confirmed by the shape of the tripod bowl used by the Diviner,² which would seem to be identical with classical objects of the same kind.

Description of Plates.

PLATE VII.

- Fig. 1. Dancing Axe (KAZHA) used by RÁMGUL Káfirs, shaft of wood, spiral ornament and knob at top made of brass, as is also the blade, used exclusively for ornamental and ceremonial purposes.
- Fig. 2. Dancing Axe (KAZHA) used by BASHGUL Káfirs, shaft of wood, carved, upper end tipped above with brass, below with iron. The blade is of good steel with one or two brass studs for ornament, and when struck with the finger nail should emit a particular sound. These axes also are only used for ceremonial purposes or as symbols of dignity. They are highly valued and descend as heirlooms from father to the son who succeeds as head of family.
- Fig. 3. Dagger (KATIR). The national weapon of the Káfir. Handle (KATIR MUSHT) iron; sheath (SHPIK) wood enclosed in iron or brass, except at back, often ornamented with silver studs; blade (PRUS)

¹ *Vid.* Fellows, "Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, more particularly in Lycia," London, 1852.

² Robertson, "The Káfirs of the Hindu-Kush," London, 1896, p. 421.

good steel, edge (AZHI) double point (CHÚR) strong. Used for every purpose for which a sharp-edged implement can be employed—for fighting, for a butcher's knife, for cutting food, etc., etc.

Fig. 4. Vessel for holding ghee (clarified butter). It is called in Káfir *GANOLKAICHUK*. Made of walnut wood elaborately carved. It is used as a domestic utensil and also at sacrifices to contain the ghee with which the fire is made to flare up.

Fig. 5. Winnowing scoop (*SHURUK*) made of any wood. Unornamented. Used by women.

PLATE VIII.

Fig. 1. Ornamented tripod used by the Waigul Káfirs, legs iron, bowl carved walnut. It is intended to hold food at meal times. In the Bashgul valley wicker hour-glass-shaped low tables (*CHÍRO*) are employed for this purpose.

Fig. 2. Female effigy (*JUKOR*=WOMAN and *DÁZI*=EFFIGY). As this is seated in a chair it would be called *SHINGIABAN DÁZI* or *PASHINGIABAN DÁZI*. Erected to memory of deceased person, one year after funeral ceremonies. These effigies are of all sizes—some very large.

Fig. 3. Earring or brow ornament worn by *WAIGUL* Káfirs. Made of silver. The ornamentation is probably intended for mammary glands. Bashgul woman's large earrings are called *CHUK*, the small variety *TUCH*, and particular kinds have special names, *KARMALI*, *KARWÁI*, *KARDUNAT*, etc.

SHRINE OF THE GODDESS *Dizane*.