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important discovery. He was sure that the name of Mr. Leigh Smith would be handed down to futurity as one of the great Polar explorers of the Victorian age.

The PRESIDENT, in concluding the discussion, said that those who were interested in Arctic discovery would, after that evening's discussion, be glad to see it prosecuted in two directions, one, that which was pointed out by Captain Beaumont, from Smith Sound along the north coast of Greenland; the other from the spot which Mr. Leigh Smith had reached in Franz-Josef Land. Without wintering in Franz-Josef Land, it would be impossible to determine whether that route could be followed or not. Strong reasons had been advanced in its favour by Sir George Nares, qualified, however, by prudent cautions. How far the open water was continued to the northward it was impossible to say, nor was it yet known whether the coast trended eastwards or directly northwards. If it went in the latter direction, and there were no great disadvantages from its contour, that would seem to be the route by which the greatest progress could be made towards approaching the Pole. It was an honourable ambition among Englishmen not to be outdone by the discoverers of any other country; and whilst the main object of the Society was geographical discovery, they could not be insensible to the honour to be attained by those who pushed exploration furthest in the polar regions. He for one would be very glad to find explorations carried on both along Franz-Josef Land and the north coast of Greenland. These, however, were matters which would very shortly be considered by minds far more fully informed on the subject, and far more competent to come to a decision than he was.

A Journey through Semirétchia to Kuldja in 1880.

By E. DELMAR MORGAN.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, January 31st, 1881.)

THE Russian military province of Turkistan extends from the Aral Sea on the west, nearly to the 85th meridian east of Greenwich on the east. Its greatest length along the 43rd parallel is about 1200 miles, its greatest breadth from north to south along the 73rd meridian is 400 miles. It comprises the governorships (oblasti) of Syr-daria, Semirétchia, and Ferganah, the temporary circuit (okrug) of Zerafshan, the Kuldja region conquered in 1871, and the department of Amu-daria acquired in 1873. It occupies an area of about 400,000 square miles, equal to one-twentieth part of the whole Russian empire, or nearly to Germany and Austro-Hungary taken together, not much less than France, Great Britain, and Italy combined, and thirty-six times larger than Belgium. But in population Turkistan is very deficient, numbering little over three millions, and the extent of land capable of cultivation is insignificant, not exceeding one-fiftieth of the whole superficies, or 5,400,000 acres; whilst the larger part is neither fit for agriculture nor pasturage.

The inhabitants of Turkistan belong to two great races, the Indo-Germanic and the Mongolian. These again may be divided and subdivided into an infinity of branches and tribes. Suffice it to say, however, that by far the largest number, about one-half, belong to the Altaic

or Turko-Tatar branch of the Mongolian race. These are the people known as the Kirghiz or Kazaks, as they call themselves, who roam over the great plains and mountains on the north and east, leading a semi-nomad life; whilst the sedentary population, grouped in towns and villages on the south, are for the most part Aryans or Indo-Europeans. Through these two sections Russian colonisation is beginning to take effect,—here restraining within certain bounds migrations of pastoral tribes encroaching upon their land, and to some extent influencing their customs, there competing with the native industrial and commercial classes, opening up new channels of trade and material prosperity. Over all these is the Russian administration, making roads, establishing postal and telegraphic communications, building schools, bridges, and other public works.

It is perhaps unfortunate for progress in Turkistan that the government as at present constituted is essentially military. Every official, no matter what his functions, obeys the orders of a military governor-general. Every question concerning the development of the resources of the country has first to be considered from a military point of view; the civil or, as we should say, practical side being subordinate. Of course, as long as there was fighting to be done, opposition to overcome, and insurrections to subdue, a strong military rule was indispensable; but since 1876, when the revolt in Ferganah was effectually put down, the most refractory and warlike of the tribes have become submissive, and peace reigns throughout the length and breadth of Turkistan. General Kaufmann's remark was that unarmed any one might safely travel in any part of his province; adding that this was in singular contrast with the state of affairs in the Caucasus, where at least fifteen years after the subjugation of the mountain tribes, no Russian's life was safe unless he were armed to the teeth and provided with a strong escort. My own experience fully confirms this.

As an illustration of the safety of travel in these regions I will instance the case of a young lady whom I chanced to meet at Kuldja. She had travelled from her home in Wilna to Tashkend, a distance of about 3000 miles, entirely alone, to take a situation as teacher in the girls' school, trusting to the good faith of these semi-barbarians, and she never had to complain of a single act of rudeness or incivility. And I was told at Verny (Vernoe) that the higher officials, who wish their sons to receive all the advantages of the best education, are accustomed to send them quite alone to St. Petersburg and Moscow, and that they never fail to reach their destination safely.

There are two post-roads to Turkistan from European Russia. The more direct southern one starts from Orenburg, crosses the steppe to the lower Syr-daria, and proceeds up its right bank to Tashkend. The more northern and circuitous route leaves Ekaterinburg and passes through Western Siberia to Omsk, whence it takes a south-easterly

direction along the right bank of the Irtish to Semipalatinsk; then turning almost due south, it enters the governorship of Semirétchia near Sergiopol. Of these two routes, which meet at Chimkend, 75 miles north of Tashkend, the first is the more difficult, owing to the wild, inhospitable, and uninhabited nature of the country through which it lies. It was, moreover, unavailable in 1880 by reason of the bankruptcy and death of the postal contractor, so that all mails and most travellers were obliged to follow the West Siberian route. This accordingly I also decided to take; but shortly before starting from St. Petersburg, General Kolpakofsky, Governor of Semirétchia, with whom I had the honour of an interview, recommended a third and better way, by which government couriers and officials performed the journey rapidly and well. This line of communication also starts from Orenburg, and leaving the first-mentioned road at Orsk, skirts the eastern slopes of the Ural range in a northerly direction, afterwards continuing almost due east to Omsk, where it meets the more northerly post-road. Besides these great highways into Turkistan, caravan routes traverse the steppe in all directions, and innumerable paths and tracks across plains and mountains known to the inhabitants intersect and prolong the main lines of communication.

One day at Orenburg, reached in about sixty hours by rail from Moscow, sufficed to complete my preparations, to buy a sledge, and hire a servant; and leaving behind its smoke-stained, half-ruined buildings, slowly rising from the ashes of the great fire in 1878, I started on the 28th February, 1880, for my long journey to the East.

Near Verkh-Ouralsk, a small fortress-town, the river system of European Russia ends and that of Siberia begins. From this point the route lies along the line of Cossack settlements and forts which formerly served as a frontier to protect Asiatic Russia from the inroads of hostile tribes who scoured the great plains on the south. Now all this is changed; the forts are dismantled, and their garrisons are employed in other ways.

Of the few travellers I met, none were journeying for pleasure; they were mostly officials on their way to appointments in Siberia or Turkistan, or homeward-bound on furlough. Of the towns passed on the road, Troitsk is the most important, and is a favourable type of a steppe town. Founded 120 years ago, it has risen to considerable importance, owing to its trade with the nomads, who make it their place of rendezvous with Tatar and Russian merchants. Here sheep and hides are bartered for the wares and manufactures of European Russia. Troitsk, too, is the military centre of the district of Turgai which marches with Turkistan on the south and with the district of Akmolinsk of Western Siberia on the east. From it a caravan route crosses the steppe, and it may probably become the starting-point of a Central Asian railway, General Kaufmann having declared himself in favour of this direction

for the proposed line. Troitsk can boast solidly-built stone houses, a large bazaar, a gostinny door, a court of justice, a good gymnasium for boys, founded by the town, at which a good general education is given for the small sum of 12 roubles (1*l.* 6*s.*) per annum, mosques, and churches. Petropavlofsk is another steppe town, 330 miles beyond Troitsk, much frequented by nomads. Between this and Omsk the road passes through large forests, chiefly of pine and birch, while good-sized villages stand by the roadside. Their inhabitants, besides Cossacks, are emigrants from Voronej in Little Russia, and some are from the district (or oblast) of Tava in Western Siberia.

My first impressions of Turkistan, where I arrived the first week in April, were not very agreeable. Hastening southward in the hope of meeting spring and warm weather, which would allow me to explore the mountains and make collections, I found myself detained at Sergiopol by the impassable state of the roads. Though situated in 47° 56' 29" N. lat., i. e. nearly in the same parallel as Orleans, Sergiopol lies in a zone of cold winds, and for nearly three weeks I remained in this wretched little Cossack stanitsa, anxiously awaiting the disappearance of the snow and the breaking up of the rivers. An unusually late spring, however, had retarded everything; it was not till the 6th April that water-fowl began to arrive in the lagoons on the left bank of the Ayaguz, opposite Sergiopol, and the river itself did not move till the 14th. Five days later my things were all packed, horses were ordered, and I was on the point of starting for Bakhti, a Russian fort on the frontier south-east from Sergiopol, situated at the foot of the Tarbagatai range, when I received a telegram desiring me to proceed direct to Verny without any further explorations. This was as disagreeable as it was unforeseen, and I decided on appealing for permission to General Kaufmann himself, but the result was unsuccessful.

Sergiopol (formerly Ayaguz) received its present name from Sergius, a younger son of the Emperor; it is the capital of a large district, including the country southward as far as Lepsa and the foot of the Ala-tau range, but there is an idea of incorporating it before long for administrative purposes with the governorship of Semipalatinsk. A route passes through it to the Chinese frontier town of Chuguchak, distant only 192 miles, and by this a large trade was formerly carried on with China, before the overthrow of her power in these countries, a trade that may again revive.

To the traveller coming from the north, Sergiopol is the threshold of Turkistan. From this point, even though he be kept to beaten tracks, he will find a difference, and must be prepared to trust to his own resources rather than depend on the aid afforded by road passes and official introductions. Here he leaves behind him the rapid travelling and comfortable post-stations of Great Russia, and fairly enters a new and thoroughly Asiatic province. Physically, too, the country is distinct;

on the north-east rises the great treeless mountain chain of Tarbagatai, a branch of the Altai system, extending in an unbroken line for 400 miles from east to west, nowhere attaining the limit of perpetual snow, yet forming a distinct barrier between the Semipalatinsk governorship of Western Siberia on the one side, and Semirétchia or the Seven River district of Turkistan on the other. North of it the rivers flow towards Lake Zaisan and the basin of the Irtysh, south of it to lakes Balkhash and Ala-kul. Westward this chain is continued far into the Kirghiz steppe, under the name of Jinghiz-tau—low, rocky ridges of hills abounding in copper and other minerals, and resorted to by Kirghiz at all seasons of the year, but especially in winter.

Having plenty of time at my disposal, I determined to explore the Jinghiz-tau and become acquainted with the habits and customs of the people. My companion was an ataman of Cossacks, who had received the four crosses of St. George (only given for bravery before the enemy) for his services under Skobelev during the campaign of 1876 in Ferganah. Two Cossacks and a Kirghiz djigit or guide, all mounted on Kirghiz horses, formed our escort, while a camel laden with spades and pickaxes followed with his driver to enable us to carry out any investigations, and particularly with the view of exploring a curious cave known in the country as “Jingerrh-tash,” or sounding stone. For about three miles we followed the right bank of the Ayaguz, and then turned into the hills in a north-westerly direction. After riding about 10 miles, we stopped to drink tea at a Kirghiz yurta standing with several others on the bank of a small stream sheltered by a ridge of rocks. Its inhabitants earned a precarious livelihood by cutting the dried bushes of dwarf red willow for fuel and supplying it to the inhabitants of Sergiopol, the coal seams not being worked. After another ride of 10 miles, we had to pass the night at the hut of a Cossack shepherd.

In the morning we rode across the Ak-chau-li hills, 3000 feet above sea-level. To the south-west rose the solitary peak of Sandik-tash or “box hill,” a notorious haunt of robbers. Snow lay in considerable depth in the hollows, and would have rendered riding difficult had it not been for a hard crust on the surface which supported man and beast. At about 10 o'clock in the morning we arrived at an encampment of Kirghiz. Here we alighted, and received a warm welcome from Timur-bai, uncle of our guide, a man of some weight and importance from the functions he exercised of *bi* or judge, as well as for his services to the Russian authorities.

Shortly after crossing the Ayaguz, the post-road leaves this river on the right, and skirts low detached spurs of the Jinghiz-tau range, barren conical hills, without a tree to relieve their ugliness. The spring vegetation had begun shooting up, and clothed the rolling plain with verdure, giving it an almost cultivated appearance. The loamy soil was

half covered with herbaceous plants, resembling the familiar produce of vegetable gardens in Europe, and with the help of a little imagination one might almost have fancied oneself among fields of carrots, cabbages, and beetroot. No streams of water impart life to the scenery, no moisture sustains vegetation after it has once withered in the fierce heat of summer. In deeper hollows, where springs have forced their way to the surface, at distances of 20 miles apart, stand mud-built station-houses called "pickets" (doubtless from their having been Cossack outposts when the Russians first entered the country), pronounced "bikets" by the natives. These keep open the long lines of communication between centres of population, and serve as welcome resting-places for the tired traveller.

The winter had been so protracted, and the complete break down of direct communications between Tashkend and Orenburg had thrown so severe a strain on the only available post route to European Russia, that progress was almost impossible. The horses were so weak from starvation, that they could hardly get from one station to the other, even at foot's pace. More fortunate than some, I neither passed the night on the open plain, nor, still worse, was detained for days at one of the stations. Eight miles beyond the third picket of Kizil-ki or red hill, where the road again approaches the river Ayaguz, on its right bank well wooded with willow, stands a rude stone monument known as Kuzu-Kerpetch, the subject of a romantic tale of Kirghiz life about two centuries ago. Game of all kinds abounds here, and I saw hares, partridges, and black game; whilst on a willow-tree two berkoot eagles were keeping watch.

In another 20 miles there is a change in the uniformity of the landscape. The soil becomes sand or clay encrusted with salt; tough grass, heaths, and scrub wormwood impart a tinge of green to the surroundings, and vast sheets of water indicate that the lowest part of the country is reached, and that here must formerly have existed the connection between lakes Balkhash and Ala-kul, now enclosed in separate basins. From the Arganati hills above the station-house, the former of these lakes is visible only 20 miles to the west, receiving the waters of the Seven Rivers. Its shores, deserted in summer by all save the wild boar and the tiger, are in winter the favourite resort of nomads, who find shelter in the tall reeds from keen winds and storms, and food for their cattle in the scanty vegetation.

Much as I could have wished to have visited Balkhash—a paradise for sportsmen and zoologists—my steps led me in an opposite direction. Ala-kul, the mysterious lake with its island hill, conjectured by Humboldt to be the centre of the subterranean forces of the continent, had always excited my curiosity. To be so near and yet to leave unvisited scenes of such interest, would have been an omission. I decided therefore to disobey orders, and turned off the high road, taking once more an easterly course at the foot of the Ala-tau mountains.

The Dzungarian Ala-tau, the first step in the series of ascents to the highlands of Central Asia approached from the north, appears in the distance like a massive rampart with snowy parapet extending as far as eye can see towards the east, and bounding on the south the lake basins of Balkhash, Ala-kul and Sassik-kul. But on closer acquaintance it is found to consist of several nearly parallel chains, considerably lower than the main range, though adding much to its width. The outer hills, composed largely of Jurassic formations, are cut by the rivers Lepsa, Baskan, Sarkan and Ak-su, bursting through deep and almost impassable gorges into the plain below on their way to join Lake Balkhash. From the summit of the first ascent I distinctly heard the roar of cataracts in the higher ice-bound granite cliffs four or five miles off. Immediately before entering Sarkan, a large flourishing settlement of Mongol refugees and Russian peasants, situated at the foot of the hills, some huge boulders are seen to the left of the road. It is difficult to account for their presence otherwise than by referring them to an epoch when these plains were covered by a glacial ocean, and gigantic icebergs deposited their burden on the then submerged surface. Lepsa itself lies under the shadow of the principal range, in an amphitheatre of mountains bearing the local Kirghiz name of "Djeilau," or summer pasture grounds. Some years ago I heard Lepsa spoken of as the most picturesque spot in Turkistan. Then it must have been newly built, now its buildings have a dilapidated appearance quite out of keeping with the magnificent scenery. Although at an elevation of 3500 feet, its climate is temperate and healthy at all seasons of the year; rainfall supplies every need of the agriculturist, and even timber is not wanting in the higher mountains. Alpine scenery, lakes and waterfalls lend additional charms to its neighbourhood, and its rich and diversified flora, comprising Himalayan forms, make it a favourite resort of botanists. A little industry might make of it a terrestrial paradise. But Russian colonists in Semirétchia, Cossacks and emigrants from Little Russia, have yet to learn how to make use of the ample materials by which nature has surrounded them. Receiving free grants of land, with immunity from taxation and military service for fifteen years, the agricultural settlers, who mostly came from the government of Voronej, were at first satisfied. They felled timber heedlessly, and built themselves "mazankas" or homesteads, each with its cattle shed and wattle fence; they raised wheat and other kinds of corn; they kept bees and sold honey. Their only complaint was that a market could not always be found to dispose of the abundant produce of their land. Their condition altogether contrasted favourably with that of their Cossack neighbours, who were mostly of Siberian or Great Russian origin. But times are now less prosperous. Complaints are heard of bad harvests, owing to severer winters, doubtless in part attributable to the destruction of forests, of new regulations against felling timber, of the

strictness with which these are enforced, of their constant disputes with Kirghiz about the land. Moreover, they are in ignorance as to their future position when immunity from public burdens ceases. They dread the remodelling of their land tenure, and being placed on the same footing as their neighbours the Cossacks. All this renders them discontented, and they talk of migrating. But to return to my visit to Lake Ala-kul.

I started from Lepsa on the 29th April with my Tatar servant and a Kipchak guide, furnished with a document in Russian and Turki from Colonel Lissofsky, district governor, desiring all local authorities to lend me every assistance in their power. Before we had gone 200 yards our axletree broke; so we unharnessed the horses and performed the rest of our journey on horseback. Riding over fine grassy downs in a northerly direction, we crossed the outer range called here Bas-rek, 4500 feet by my aneroid, and then gradually descended. About midday we came upon a number of Kirghiz seated in two large rings, men in one and women in the other, on the ground, celebrating, as I afterwards learned, funeral obsequies for their departed relatives. Our sudden appearance, and the guide's imprudent and unnecessary demand for horses, caused a rapid dispersion of this singular and to me novel assemblage. In a few minutes horses were caught, and there was a *sauve qui peut*, the younger women, who are always the best mounted, taking the lead and soon distancing pursuit. While this was going on, I rode forward to a knoll, where I became the centre of an excited crowd, all talking at once and evidently in bad humour at our unwelcome interruption and the proceedings of the guide Urassan-bai. Some elderly females approached close, raising their voices, and from the expression of their features I gathered that their remarks were the reverse of favourable. Finding, however, that they produced no effect, and that I was not aggressively disposed, they calmed down, and as I slipped a silver coin into her hand, a fair Amazon surrendered her steed to me with the best possible grace. Continuing our ride, we crossed the Chinjali at Kizil-djar, where it flows between red auriferous sandbanks. On our right was the grass-covered plain of Kizil-Ashi at the foot of Chibungtu, a high group of hills separating us from the Tentek. This river issues from the mountains by three sources, upon each of which stands a colony of Little Russians. We passed the night at the aoul of Malai bek Sultanof, a well-to-do Kirghiz sultan, and the following morning descended to the plain through which the Tentek hurries its impetuous course towards the lakes. This is a dangerous river to cross in flood time, and particularly after noon, when its torrent is swollen by melting snows in the higher mountains. Near the ford lies the Russian settlement of Utch Aral ("three islands"), where I saw peasants at work with yoked oxen. About 10 miles further the land was inundated, and deep watercourses, thickly fringed with tall reeds, had to be crossed. Here we halted for a time.

Towards evening we reached a large sheet of water, pronounced by the guide to be Ala-kul, and he pointed to a hill saying that it was Araltiube. This was inaccurate, for on returning to Lepsa and consulting the map it was evident that the particular lake I saw was not Ala-kul, but a more westerly sheet of water, either Uyalli-kul or Sassik-kul, forming a link in the lacustrine chain connecting Ala-kul with Balkhash. No doubts, however, crossed my mind at the time, or interfered with my enjoyment of the scene, as, selecting a spot free from reeds where the waves splashed a pebbly shore, I spread my rug and passed the night with sextant and artificial horizon. In the morning the broad belts of reeds margining the lake were literally alive with water-fowl, and daybreak was ushered in by a noisy chorus from swans, geese, cranes, and ducks of all kinds.

A phenomenon here worthy of notice is the frequent occurrence of thermal springs. I did not personally visit those east of Lake Ala-kul, but at Arassansky post-station in the plain at the foot of Hasford Pass, 20 miles before reaching Kopal, sulphur springs are formed into baths highly esteemed in cases of rheumatism and other ailments. Again in the Borokhoro range, in a beautiful wooded defile of the Upper Kash, hot sulphur baths with a temperature of 122° Fahr., as measured by myself, are formed out of natural solid rock. And it is remarkable that in both these localities cold springs occur side by side with hot. This juxtaposition has at Arassan led to the accident of mixing the two, thereby diminishing the temperature and, it is said, impairing the efficacy of the cure. In the Borokhoro natural baths resorted to by natives, a thin cold stream issues from the rocks, and has been adjusted by a simple contrivance in such a way that a bather may have a jet of cold water trickling on his eye. This has been devised as a cure for ophthalmia, a prevalent complaint in this region. At the coal mines north-west of Kuldja, a jet of hot steam escapes from the ground, and has also been used for curative purposes by means of a chamber hollowed out of the hillside. These and naphtha springs, solidifying into beds of asphalte, as I understand they do on the shore of Lake Balkhash, are indications of latent subterranean forces at work in Turkistan. Earthquakes occur more or less frequently near Tashkend, but active volcanic eruptions are nowhere seen. Yet one more feature remains to be noticed. Scattered over the whole country between Sergiopol and Kopal, anciently forming the kingdom of Dzungaria, are tumuli or circular mounds varying from 10 to 100 feet in diameter. Rows of stones are placed round them, and in some cases rudely carved figures of warriors are found in a recumbent position upon them. These stone figures represent men with thick moustachios, but without beards, holding in their right hand a cup, and grasping with their left a double-handled sword stuck into the belt. At the back of the head are a number of small plaits of hair, quite unlike the long tress worn by

Mongols of the present day. These monoliths are about seven feet long, and those I saw had been either sawn in half or otherwise defaced, and used as gate-posts and benches by the inhabitants of Sergiopol. I excavated four of these tumuli to a depth of 20 feet, but without discovering anything of interest, except a copper coin with the tamgha or seal of Tamerlane.

From Lepsa there is a direct route to Kuldja across the mountains, and I had hoped to have availed myself of it in order to see this town before proceeding to Verny; but learning that the passes were blocked with snow at this early season, and that there would be some difficulty in obtaining permission, I decided to follow the post-road which crosses the mountains much further to the west by a pass 3350 feet high, made by a former governor-general of Western Siberia, Hasford, whose name it bears. From its summit a fine view is obtained, looking north over the plain, through which the rivers Ak-su and Bien wind like ribands. On the south-east lofty mountains rise above the snow-line, where the upper tributaries of the Karatal take their rise, flowing westward to join Lake Balkhash, whilst down their southern slopes the Borohudsir, Ussëk, and Horgos pour their waters towards the Ili. With this region I became better acquainted on my way back, when I followed the Borohudsir to its sources in the lofty valley of Yugen-tass. At Kopal, situated at the foot of a range of mountains, telegrams were waiting directing that I should proceed at once to Verny, whither I journeyed without loss of time, crossing the Kok-su by a bridge at Tsaritsin and the Ili by ferry at Fort Ilüsky. The great range with snowy peaks at the foot of which lies Verny is called by the Russians Trans-Ili Ala-tau, and forms the southern boundary of the Ili valley and of the so-called *steppe* country. Beyond it rise range after range of lofty mountains enclosing Alpine lakes and valleys, nowhere descending below 5000 feet of absolute height, and giving birth to the great rivers of Asia. Verny, originally a Cossack stanitsa and afterwards a fortress, has developed into an important city. As the centre of the Seven River governorship, it is the place of residence of General Kolpakofsky, and the principal military and civil officers. Under the auspices of M. Gourdet, a French architect in the Russian service, I was introduced to the lions, including the new palace of the governor, designed by him, the gymnasium beside it, botanical garden, &c., &c. But the most interesting sight was the Almatinka valley (the Kirghiz name of Verny is Almati, from Alma, an apple), when its apple-trees were white with blossom, mingling with the delicate pink of the apricot bloom, and reaching as far as the governor's summer residence, 2000 feet above the town. On either side the steep declivities, clothed with luxuriant grass, were stained with dark red beds of peonies, and at our feet purple and lilac irises coloured the ground, from which shot up tall flower-stalks of lilies and hollyhocks, with buds ready to open in a few weeks' time.

From Verny I made an expedition to Lake Issyk-kul with a young engineer officer. Leaving the Kastek Pass on our left, we followed the post-road to Pishpek, crossing the mountains by the Kurdai Pass, and descending into the Chu valley at Constantinofka, where this river is spanned by a wooden bridge.

At Pishpek I met General Kaufmann, and witnessed the interesting ceremony of presenting rewards and decorations to native chiefs and others. A numerous assemblage awaited the arrival of the *Yarim Padi-shah*, as he is called, ranged in a wide circle in front of the house where he was expected to alight. Among those present were Shabdan and Manapai, sons of Djantai, late manap of the Sari-bogish tribe; Baitik, chief of the Sultús, conspicuous for his height and handsome velvet robe, with gilt epaulettes denoting his rank in the Russian army. He it was who invited the rebel Sarts to a feast, and after entertaining them with pilau and other dainties, had their heads taken off.

On either side of the doorway were ranged tables with bread and salt offerings from various classes of inhabitants,—Dungans, with their leader in green silk halat and white turban, before whose fanaticism the Chinese melted like snow; Tatars, Sarts, and grimy Russian colonists led by their priest, a tall, handsome man, who drank vodka like water, and as General Kaufmann drove up, slipped on a gorgeous vestment, and advanced, crucifix in hand, to pronounce benediction. The investiture of the following morning might have had some resemblance to a durbar, except that it lacked the glitter and splendour of the Indian ceremony. Here all were equal before the representative of the White Tsar, and sat patiently on the ground for hours waiting his arrival. The General, in white undress uniform, with black and yellow ribbon and white enamel cross of St. George—a recent mark of distinction conferred upon him by his sovereign—walked round, stopping to exchange a few words through his interpreter with each recipient, who, besides the medal or halat as the case might be, received a document in which were recited the services for which it was bestowed.

A botanising excursion into the mountains with M. Fétisssof's native collectors helped to pass time at Pishpek, and as soon as the governor and his suite had passed we started for Lake Issyk-kul. We stayed for an hour at Tokmak, less than twenty years ago a Kokandian fortress, afterwards a Russian district town, and now chiefly remarkable for its bazaar, one of the best in the country. The land in the Chu valley is well cultivated by Dungans, of whom a large colony is settled near Tokmak. They are refugees from Kashgaria, whence they fled for their lives on the return of the Chinese, suffering terribly in crossing the high passes of the Alai in winter. Their condition on arriving at Fort Naryn was described as deplorable.

We came in sight of the west end of Lake Issyk-kul at Kutemaldi. Here I left the road, and walked about a mile and a half to the rivulet

of this name, believed by some to be an artificial dyke constructed by Kirghiz. I found it, however, to be a natural watercourse, and its feeble current trickled towards the lake, which has at present no visible outlet.

A rapid drive of 140 miles along the Kungé, or northern shore of Issyk-kul, brought me to the Russian settlement and fortress of Kara-kol at its eastern extremity, 600 feet above the lake, and 6000 feet above sea-level. Why it should have been placed 10 miles from the shore instead of on it, is a question I never heard satisfactorily answered. My stay at Kara-kol was unfortunately limited to a few hours, but in this short time I managed to call on M. Kolpakofsky, brother of the General and district judge, and M. Kurtkofsky, chief of district, residing at his pretty villa on Djirgalan Bay.

Returning by the route I had come as far as Djil-Aryk post-station at the foot of the Bome Pass, I crossed to the right bank of the Chu by the Semeonofsky bridge, and entered the valley of the Lesser Kébin, where I found encampments of the Sari-bogish tribe, whose chief Shabdan had undertaken, by General Kaufmann's desire, to find me guides. He received me with hospitality, placed a felt tent at my disposal, and conversed through an interpreter. He said that he and his sons and young men were preparing to march to the Naryn, to assist in the anticipated operations against China, a power they all detested, and he thought it would be a good thing if England and Russia were to combine their forces against the common enemy. He showed me his herd of Tibetan yaks, and on wishing me good-bye before retiring to the seclusion of his kurgan or walled garden, expressed a hope that we should meet on the Naryn.

Early the following morning I set off with a Kirghiz guide, and one led pack-horse for my baggage, to cross the mountains by a pass 8600 feet high, descending on the opposite side by the bed of a torrent obstructed with boulders, the small Kirghiz horses scrambling down with cat-like activity.

I returned to Verny on the 4th of June. My business here was to obtain permission from the Governor-General to proceed to Kuldja, which was finally granted after much delay and difficulty by his Excellency.

So many accounts of the Mahomedan insurrection of Western China have appeared in books and newspapers, that it is unnecessary that I should give an historical sketch of it here. Suffice it to say, therefore, that on the repudiation by China of the treaty negotiated at St. Petersburg in 1879 with her envoy Chung-how, orders were despatched to the Governor-General of Turkistan to prepare for war, and, as I approached Kuldja towards the end of last June, troops were concentrating upon it, and there seemed every probability of a grand expedition, crowned perhaps by a triumphant march to Peking.

From the summit of the pass at Altyn Immel, an easy descent leads to an arid stony plain, having the appearance of a desiccated sea-bed with ridges of rocky hills rising from it, and snowy mountains bounding the

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distant view towards the north. The road is everywhere good, and our progress would have been tolerably rapid had not orders been received at the post-stations to keep horses in readiness for General Kolpakofsky, whose arrival was hourly expected. At each station Kirghiz elders were waiting to welcome him; felt tents had been pitched for his accommodation, and djigits were ready to gallop off at the top of their speed, and carry forward the news of his approach. One of these, mistaking us for the chief, and without stopping to inquire, set off as hard as he could.

The first cultivated land is seen at Borohudsir, a Russian settlement of about fifty houses, built of the usual material of the country—unbaked bricks, whitewashed and looking neat and clean, with rows of willows and poplars planted by the sides of dykes fed from the Borohudsir river. A well-kept government garden of fruit and other trees, with shady walks, gives the place a civilised look. A battalion of Turkistan riflemen had arrived the day before from Tashkend, and were parading in front of the barracks, marching as briskly as if they had only just started, and were ready to carry Russian civilisation on the points of their bayonets across the Gobi steppe and Great Wall of China. Borohudsir is now connected by telegraph with Europe, and on passing through it on my way home I sent a message to St. Petersburg. Between it and Kuldja are ruins of the Chinese towns and fortresses of Djar-Kent, Ak-Kent, Korgos, Chimpanzi, Alimptu, Chin-cha-ho-dzi, and Suidun. The remains of New or Manchu Kuldja are seen on the right of Suidun, and those of Baiandai on the left, 10 miles from Old or Taranchi Kuldja. Parks of kara-gatch or black elms and irrigating works mark the sites of once flourishing and populous colonies now falling into decay. The only remains of Chinese industry are bricks of a dark colour and remarkable durable quality used to pave some of the station-houses, and a few pieces of furniture carved in elm, screens and ceilings. Suidun is chiefly inhabited by Dungans, distinguished by their bold, independent bearing and superior energy among all inhabitants of these countries. They are in fact the avowed champions of Islam against Chinese Buddhism, differing from their co-religionists in the West in this important particular, that they have fought *with* and never hitherto *against* Christians, and of course affording a marked contrast in their activity and resistless energy to the passive, dormant, and degraded fanaticism of Persia and Turkey. Little is known of their past history, except that Mahommedans appeared in China as early as the eighth century, probably on the invitation of an emperor of China who asked for their assistance in subduing an insurrection of his own subjects, and then allowed them to remain and settle in China.

Whether this western section, the Dungans of the Ili valley, are related to the Mahommedans of Yunnan, of whom recent travellers have spoken, is uncertain. In language, dress, and manners, they are Chinese, but hold opium smoking in contempt, and, like other Mahommedans,

shave the head and wear skull caps. As to their future, it is difficult to form an opinion. China advancing from the east has already taken from them Manas and Ouroumtchi with terrible retributive vengeance; whilst Russia, having already more Mahommedan subjects than she knows what to do with, is indisposed to offer them protection in her territory. In this way, placed between two hostile camps, they may disappear for a time, only to burst forth anew probably elsewhere, with that extraordinary vitality characteristic of Islam in the extreme East. Some hundreds of them are said to be leading a predatory existence in the mountains on the frontier.

Kuldja, to which a diligence or covered Chinese cart with two horses driven tandem runs daily from Suidun, is the only large town that has outlived the events of 1863-66 in the Ili valley; the ascendancy of its Mahommedan population having enabled it in the early days of the insurrection to throw off the Chinese yoke. Always the resort of a mixture of races, Kuldja has become, since its occupation by Russia, more than ever a half-way house between East and West. In its crooked lanes and streets flanked by mud walls, with here and there a handsome gateway of Chinese moulded bricks, are to be met many nationalities,—Taranchis with dark, sunburnt faces, and downcast treacherous look, half ashamed of their bloody deeds, when they turned scythe and sickle into sword and spear, and administered the *coup de grâce* to many an unfortunate Manchu; handsome but effeminate Sarts trading in the stuffs and wares of Bokhara and Kokand, Solones and Sibos from the Trans-Ili colonies, pigtailed Kalmuks with flat face and high cheek-bones, and wild Kirghiz, white-shirted Cossacks, and smart Russian officers, booted and spurred, make up its busy life.

Approaching the town from the west, its general appearance loses much by the withered tops of tall poplars, touched by severe frost two or three winters ago; for, like most eastern towns, Kuldja is surrounded by gardens. Passing the Russian suburb, laid down on a scale of magnificent distances, we enter the citadel, within massive mud walls 30 feet high and wide in proportion, with four entrances, one on each side, defended by outworks of equal proportions with the walls. Two thousand Kalmuks were, it is said, driven by Taranchi taskmasters to build these mural defences, and one-half are said to have perished during the work. Inside the citadel is a handsome mosque, built in Chinese style, with decorated gateway, spacious courtyard, schools, and offices. Seen from a height, the rest of the enclosed space appears to be full of flat-roofed, mud-built houses, opening on courtyards, with occasionally a more substantial building. Passing through the citadel and out by its eastern gate, we find ourselves in an open space, divided by an avenue of trees, in which are some good brick houses and shops occupied by Russian and Tatar merchants, who are doing a good trade in tea, manufactured goods, silver, tobacco, &c., &c. Near these are the Sart shops

and open booths, in which all kinds of trash are exposed for sale ; a street with open watercourse and trees on either side, leads to the Chinese bazaar, and beyond it on the extreme east of Kuldja the Chinese quarter. This is the most interesting part of the town ; it is in fact a glimpse of China. All the shops have counters, and are served by men and women, the men emaciated and prematurely old from opium smoking, some mere living spectres ; the women with elaborate chignons and small cramped feet, walking as if they were on stilts. Here may be purchased all kinds of curious things from the middle kingdom ; red and yellow bannerets are displayed outside these shops, with inscriptions in Chinese characters denoting the owner's name and business. Here, too, apothecaries dispense their drugs and make up recipes, some of their medicines being considered generally good specifics against headaches and all the ills to which flesh is heir.

Of course I was curious to see the Chinese Roman Catholic chapel. Vespers were going on when we looked in, and found the congregation, numbering about twenty, mostly women and girls, on their knees, devoutly joining in the responses, whilst a layman officiating said the prayers in Latin, but with a pronunciation wholly unintelligible to a European ear. Waiting till service was over, we spoke through an interpreter with the officiating acolyte. He showed us a Latin bible and book of prayers, from which he read a few lines. This had belonged to Padre Italiano, the missionary, who disappeared one day during the insurrection and was never heard of again.

A visit to a paper manufactory and a Dungan restaurant in the most crowded part of the bazaar concluded our tour of the town. On its outskirts are some private gardens or parks well laid out. The best of these is Airam-bagh, or deers' park, occupied by General Kaufmann during his visit last summer ; near it is another, formerly General Wartmann's residence, and now the property of Consul Shishmaroff, late of Urga, who probably knows more about Mongols than any European living. In a third was encamped the headquarters of the army. About a mile to the south of Kuldja flows the river Ili, crossed here by a large ferry boat towed by swimming horses. The environs of the town are well cultivated with all kinds of corn, wheat and barley in particular, lucerne, and poppy. Large plantations of this are seen in all parts of the Ili valley from Suidun to the confluence of the Kash and above. Their brilliant coloured flowers light up the grey tints of the mud walls.

At Kuldja I remained nearly three weeks, and at last, having purchased horses and obtained guides, set off for the river Kash, one of the three principal feeders of the Ili. In a charming spot (Chijan-togai), beautifully wooded with elms, in park-like scenery on the right bank of the Kash, a deep and boisterous river, I found encamped the cavalry division of the expedition under the command of Colonel Matvéief, a military

geographer of high standing. With him I passed a couple of days. The valleys of the Upper Kash and its tributaries are inhabited by Kalmuks, with whose mode of life I was glad of the opportunity of acquainting myself. Returning to Kuldja, I made an excursion to Sairam-nor, the "lake of wide tranquillity" of the Chinese, about 7500 feet above sea-level, going by the Talki defile and returning by Kizim-chik and across the mountains, following the Pelliuchi stream to the infantry camp at Mazar. Here Colonel Kuropatkine received me very kindly, and offered to find me a companion to the Musart Pass, which I had arranged to visit. Finding, however, that this would detain me too long in Central Asia, I decided, not without regret, to return to England, and accordingly set out on my homeward journey on the 1st of August.

The PRESIDENT, in introducing Mr. Delmar Morgan, said he need hardly remind the Meeting of the great interest at this moment attached to Kuldja, as being the border country between those two giant empires of the Eastern Continent, Russia and China, and indeed as being the apple of discord which had very nearly led to war between those countries. Kuldja was a portion of the Chinese empire until about fourteen or fifteen years ago, when the Dungans or Chinese Mahommedans, afterwards joined by the Taranchis, broke out in revolt, massacred the Chinese, and effectually established their independence. They celebrated their independence, however, by making themselves very disagreeable to the Russians, who in consequence went to war with them, and after some years subdued them. About that time Kashgar was also in a state of revolt, and China, having organised an expedition against that country, received assistance from Russia, the result being the overthrow and reconquest of the country by the Chinese, who thereupon called upon the Russians to restore them Kuldja. The Chinese ambassador proceeded to St. Petersburg to negotiate the points in dispute. The terms he agreed to were these. The Russians offered to restore Kuldja on condition that the Chinese defrayed the cost of the war in which they had assisted them, and gave them certain commercial privileges. But when the ambassador returned to Peking he was thrown into prison, and ran considerable danger of losing his head for having made concessions which were considered derogatory to the dignity of China. War was on the point of being declared; considerable forces were massed at the time Mr. Morgan was there; but happily war had been averted, Kuldja at present remaining in the hands of the Russians.

After the reading of the paper,

The PRESIDENT said, with one solitary exception, he believed Mr. Delmar Morgan was the only Englishman whom what Lord Erskine called "the restless foot of British enterprise" had taken to Kuldja. The exception was Mr. Ashton Dilke, who some years ago read a paper before the Society on the Valley of the Ili.* Mr. Dilke would now favour them with a few observations.

Mr. ASHTON W. DILKE, M.P., said it had been a very great pleasure to him to listen to Mr. Morgan's paper. He himself was in Kuldja in 1873, and since his return had not seen any one from those parts. As travellers there were exceedingly few, and books about the country, even in Russian, still fewer, he was very curious to hear how far the natives had changed. He did not think they had changed very much. He could bear witness to the wonderful accuracy of Mr. Morgan's information.

* 'Proceedings' (Old Series), vol. xviii. p. 246.

He himself travelled over the country with considerable care, taking notes of what he saw and heard, and he recognised almost every one of the exceedingly difficult and crabbed Tatar names of villages and streams which Mr. Morgan mentioned. When he heard that that gentleman had been forced to remain three weeks in Sergiopol, he pitied him from the bottom of his heart, though he himself spent only a few hours there. The news of the bankruptcy and death of the contractor who held the post-road between Orenburg and Tashkend was of peculiar interest to him (Mr. Dilke), for he once crossed that road. He did not wish to rejoice in the death or even in the bankruptcy of any fellow man, but he received that information with an inward smile of content, when he thought of how many days of misery that man had caused him to pass. In 1873 he had considerable difficulty in getting on with the Russian authorities. Personally they were everything that was civil, but the route was very closely guarded against Englishmen on account of the expedition to Khiva, which occurred that year. He travelled on the Chinese frontier of Siberia, and therefore took the same route to Turkistan as Mr. Morgan, but he was sent back from Semipalatinsk. No Englishman would at that time have had any possible chance of penetrating via Orenburg. After that he got down to Vernoe and went to Kuldja, chiefly relying not on any permission which he had obtained, but on the fact that General Kaufmann and Kolpakofsky were away at the time, and that the Russians had sent a large number of Polish officers to serve there, who were not sorry, if they could do so without prejudicing their duty, to give a foreigner, who was supposed not to be on particularly good terms with the Russian heads of the district, a lift now and then, or rather to allow him to give himself a lift, by winking at his irregular proceedings. In that manner he managed to penetrate to Kuldja, and cross the frontier to the north of Kuldja. He went down to Lake Ebi-nor which lay in the plain below. Then he came back to Kuldja and followed the valley of the Ili upwards, seeing the great mountain of Khan Tengri, 24,000 feet high, close to which he crossed the plain of Musart. Thence he went to the Issyk-kul, after which his route was the ordinary post-road. Perhaps Mr. Morgan exaggerated the badness of the Cossacks. Along the bottom of the mountains 20 or 30 miles eastward of Vernoe there were villages of Russian settlers, chiefly Cossacks, and those villages struck him as having reached a very high degree of prosperity, showing a considerable knowledge of agriculture. They had no market for their corn, it all being bought up by the post-road contractor, who made an exceedingly good profit of it. Mr. Morgan had stated that the Kirghiz had begun tilling during the last few years. It had only just begun when he (Mr. Dilke) was there, and some Russian officers prophesied a considerable future for it. He did not then think that the progress would have been so rapid. There was no doubt that the change of this nomad and pastoral to an agricultural and settled race would be one of the most curious things that the present generation had witnessed. There was a distinction between the different races of Cossacks as to their fighting qualities. The Caucasian and the Siberian Cossacks were good fighters, but the Don Cossacks were looked down upon by the remainder of the Russian troops. The statues which Mr. Morgan saw and the barrows on the plains were exceedingly curious. He had almost given it up as a hopeless task to account for them. The only explanation he could offer with regard to the statues was that various races at different times had taken the habit of making them from the races which preceded them. He could not in any other way account for the curious variations of feature in the statues, which were found from a little to the east of Kuldja right away to the south of Russia and Roumania and Bessarabia. Mr. Morgan had described a statue holding a cup in one hand and a sword in the other. Most of those which he (Mr. Dilke) saw had a hand

over an object which was sometimes a cup and sometimes something else which he did not recognise. The river Kutemaldi was like the shield which had a golden and a silver side, about which the knights quarrelled. He himself once quarrelled with a gentleman in that very room, who asserted that the river Chu ran into Lake Issyk-kul, while he (Mr. Dilke) said it ran out. The real fact was that when the lake was full it ran into the river; at other times the river ran into the lake through the Kutemaldi. He understood Mr. Morgan to say that though the Dungans were Mahommedans, they had never fought against a Christian race; but surely they did fight against the Russians when the Russians took Kuldja, though at the same time there was going on a sort of internal fight between the Dungans and the Taranchis, which ceased on the appearance of the Russian invader in their midst. He thought Mr. Morgan had perhaps underrated the Catholic colony, or they might have degenerated. When he (Mr. Dilke) was there, one man not only read Latin perfectly intelligibly, but translated the Lord's Prayer into Tatar. He said that there were one or two besides himself who also understood Latin. The name of the priest whom Mr. Morgan had referred to as *Padre Italiano* was then *Padre Toma*. Kuldja was a very interesting country, being the meeting-place between two or three races. The mountain districts on the north and the valley to the south were inhabited by Kirghiz, but there were also the settled Taranchis, who were Tatars; the Dungans, who spoke a Chinese language; and the Kalmuks, these latter being descendants of the Kalmuks who used to live close to Astrakhan. During the last century they emigrated towards China, and were given land to settle on in the district of Kuldja. They had some very curious prophecies, one, undoubtedly ancient, that as they had left Russia, so some day the Russians would follow them; and another that whenever the winters became cold the Russians would come. It was an undoubted fact that the river Ili, which was very rapid, did freeze several winters in succession just about the time of the Russian occupation of Kuldja. The same proverb about the cold coming in with the Russians existed in several places in Russia. Kuldja belonged to Turkistan entirely and completely, and to him it was incomprehensible, not so much that the Russians should ever have given it up, as that the Chinese should ever be able to take it and hold it. The population was very fierce and not likely to allow itself to be handed over without a struggle. Kuldja was not like Kashgar which lay open to the east. The passes, he believed, were only three. That of Musart was said to be practically impassable, the glacier being so bad that camels had to be let down by ropes. In the first reports about the cession of Kuldja it was said that the Russians were going to retain the valley of the Tekes. Then there was a pass through the valley of the Yulduz, through which Colonel Prejevalsky once went, but which seemed to be long and difficult. There was also the main pass of the great road to Sairam-nor. The bridges on this were in bad repair. After the Chinese abandoned them they were blown up, or swept away by torrents. The road was not passable for artillery. In former years Kuldja was a Chinese penal settlement, guarded by an enormous force of soldiers; it was said that 70,000 of them were killed, for hardly one escaped the great slaughter by the Dungans in 1868. Kuldja was open and accessible on the western side to any force from Russia. He should like to ask Mr. Morgan if he had heard what territory the Russians proposed to reserve for the benefit of the natives who did not wish to live under Chinese control. The upper valley of the rivers down to Kuldja itself and even to Suidun was exceedingly fertile, but the country which might naturally be expected to be reserved was below Suidun to the old frontier. The change between those two parts was very marvellous, the upper being a flourishing, smiling valley, closely cultivated on the Chinese system, while the lower was for the greater part a barren steppe, inhabited by serpents and tarantulas.

Sir DOUGLAS FORSYTH said that the death of the Ameer, Yakooob Khan, had preceded the overthrow of his rule. He had a very strong conviction that if Yakooob Khan had lived the Chinese Government would never have got into Kashgar. He (Sir D. Forsyth) congratulated Mr. Morgan and also Mr. Dilke on their having been in Kuldja, which was to himself for a very long time a sort of promised land. He had looked in that direction with longing eyes when he crossed the Himalayas on his expedition to Kashgar, and his friend Major Trotter had formed most ambitious schemes for proceeding there and taking valuable observations. But unfortunately circumstances prevented their getting so far, but they heard of the presence of an Englishman there, and read some interesting letters from him which appeared in the newspapers. He could quite coincide with Mr. Dilke's description of the country from his experience of the country upon the other side of the mountains. It appeared that General Kaufmann took credit for the wonderful safety with which people could travel in his dominions. He (Sir D. Forsyth) had always had great admiration for General Kaufmann's administrative ability, but Major Trotter would support him when he said that the same degree of safety prevailed on the south side of the mountains. In the territory under Yakooob Khan, anybody who travelled properly accredited, and, indeed, any ordinary traveller, might go anywhere. He had seen bales of goods lying on the roadside untouched, and the people never went about armed. Mr. Morgan had referred to the *diligence* going backwards and forwards between Kuldja and the neighbouring towns, but there was a daily *diligence* from Yarkand to Kashgar and other towns in that part of the country. He suspected that it was rather a sign of Chinese civilisation, that these large two-wheeled carriages, capable of holding about a dozen people, and with four or five horses, did the journeys daily. The Musart Pass was simply impassable. The top for about 60 feet was a glacier, and it was almost impossible to take laden camels over, but history related how just to the north of that part the hordes of the Juths, Goths, and Huns passed from Mongolia. The son of Genghiz Khan removed the seat of his government from Karakorum to a place called Almalik near Suidun. Both Genghiz Khan and Jagatai, when they sent forth their armies to conquer and plunder the provinces to the west, sent them in three directions: one was down by Issyk-kul in the direction of Tashkend; another was by Kashgar through Kokand; and the third was over the Pamir to the river Oxus. Then they came back through the Yulduz valley, which was described as one of the most fertile valleys in the world. A native of Yarkand once said to him, "You consider Kashmir to be the paradise of the world; we consider Yulduz to be a paradise compared with Kashmir." The armies used to return there and hold a sort of open-air parliament, at which they divided the spoil, elected chiefs, and formed their plans for other campaigns. Until Mr. Dilke spoke, he had been under the impression that the easiest route towards China was through the Yulduz valley, but he now fancied there must be an easier pass a little higher up above Kuldja, leading direct to Manas. The Russians were most anxious to get the best trade route to China, the Siberian route being very long and inhospitable, and he had no doubt that in the future the great route to China would pass through Kuldja. The whole of that country abounded in coal, and he believed coal was to be found almost the whole of the way to China. Baron Richthofen, in his report, particularly mentioned this, and if there was any idea of making a railway, that would probably be the line it would follow.

The PRESIDENT, in conclusion, said that after hearing Mr. Morgan's description of the scenery at Vernoe, Mr. Dilke's account of the valleys that surrounded Kuldja, and Sir Douglas Forsyth's account of the beauties of Yulduz, he should expect to see streams of English tourists and travellers making their way there, as soon as the country was more freely open to Englishmen. These descriptions of the natural

beauties of the country brought to his mind a story told him by Mr. Grant Duff. That gentleman was standing upon a terrace looking over the Bay of Naples on a most beautiful evening, when all exclaimed, "How lovely the scene is!" and expressed an opinion that probably there was nothing in the world so beautiful. A Russian lady, the daughter of a governor of a province of Siberia, who happened to be present, said, yes, it was very beautiful, "but oh, if you could only see Siberia!" He did hope that the time might come when Russian jealousy might be appeased, and when other enterprising English travellers would be able to add to the store of knowledge collected by Mr. Morgan and Mr. Dilke.

Journeys in the Interior of South Central Africa.

By F. C. SELOUS.

Map, p. 192.

MR. F. C. SELOUS, a gentleman well known in South Africa as an enterprising traveller and a hunter of great determination and experience, communicated to Sir Bartle Frere, in the course of last year, brief accounts of two of his principal explorations; one across the Zambesi in the direction of Lake Bangweelo, and the other in the neighbourhood of the river Chobe. Although unprovided with instruments and, as he himself states in his letters to Sir Bartle, unacquainted with their use, he made sketch maps of his routes, and they form a distinct addition to our geographical knowledge of the interior. His communications are addressed from Klerksdorp in the Transvaal, the first bearing date February 4th, and the second March 20th, 1880.

1. JOURNEY NORTH OF THE ZAMBESI, THROUGH THE MANICA COUNTRY.

In the latter part of 1877 I crossed the Zambesi about 80 miles to the east of Victoria Falls, and followed its course along the northern bank to the mouth of the river Kafükwe (the Kafue of Dr. Livingstone). Our party left Panda ma Tenka (the trading station south of the Victoria Falls) on the 22nd of October, crossed the Zambesi on the 30th, and reached the kraal of Mwemba, a chief of the Batonga tribe, on the 3rd of November. On the 13th of November we arrived at the Tchaisa, a small tributary of the Zambesi, on the left bank, and obtained from Senhor Lorenzo Monteiro, a half-caste Portuguese trader established on an island in the vicinity, guides for our further progress and also much information about the road. The country of the Batongas had been recently laid waste by parties of Shakundas, who are freed or runaway slaves from the settlements near the mouth of the Zambesi, armed by the Portuguese. On our march between the Tchaisa and the Kafükwe we passed through many villages which had been burnt and wrecked during the raid, and saw dead bodies of the Batongas lying in the footpaths. On the 24th we arrived opposite