

equidistant between Sarai and Bolghar, and about six miles south of the modern Saratov, where a village called *Uwek* still exists. Ukek is not mentioned before the Mongol domination, and is supposed to have been of Mongol foundation, as the name Ukek is said in Mongol to signify a dam of hurdles. The city is mentioned by Abulfeda as marking the extremity of "the empire of the Barka Tartars," and Ibn Batuta speaks of it as "one day distant from the hills of the Russians." Polo therefore means that it was the frontier of the Ponent towards Russia. Ukek was the site of a Franciscan convent in the 14th century; it is mentioned several times in the campaigns of Timur, and was destroyed by his army. It is not mentioned under the form Ukek after this, but appears as *Uwek* and *Uwesh* in Russian documents of the 16th century. Perhaps this was always the Slavonic form, for it already is written *Uguech* (=Uwek) in Wadding's 14th century catalogue of convents. Anthony Jenkinson, in Hakluyt, gives an observation of its latitude, as *Oweke* ( $51^{\circ} 40'$ ), and Christopher Burrough, in the same collection, gives a description of it as *Oueak*, and the latitude as  $51^{\circ} 30'$  (some  $7'$  too much). In his time (1579) there were the remains of a "very faire stone castle" and city, with old tombs exhibiting sculptures and inscriptions. All these have long vanished. Burrough was told by the Russians that the town "was swallowed into the earth by the justice of God, for the wickedness of the people that inhabited the same." Lepechin in 1769 found nothing remaining but part of an earthen rampart and some underground vaults of larger bricks, which the people dug out for use. He speaks of coins and other relics as frequent, and the like have been found more recently. Coins with Mongol-Arab inscriptions, struck at Ukek by Tuktugai Khan in 1306, have been described by Fraehn and Erdmann.

(*Fraehn, Ueber die ehemalige Mong. Stadt Ukek, etc.*, Petersb. 1835; *Gold. Horde*; *Ibn Bat.* II. 414; *Abulfeda, in BÜSCHING*, V. 365; *Ann. Minorum*, sub anno 1400; *Petis de la Croix*, II. 355, 383, 388; *Hakluyt*, ed. 1809, I. 375 and 472; *Lepechin, Tagebuch der Reise, etc.*, I. 235-237; *Rockhill, Rubruck*, 120-121, note 2.)

NOTE 5.—The great River Tigeri or Tigris is the Volga, as Pauthier rightly shows. It receives the same name from the Monk Pascal of Vittoria in 1338. (*Cathay*, p. 234.) Perhaps this arose out of some legend that the Tigris was a reappearance of the same river. The ecclesiastical historian, Nicephorus Callistus, appears to imply that the Tigris coming from Paradise flows under the Caspian to emerge in Kurdistan. (See IX. 19.)

The "17 days" applies to one stretch of desert. The whole journey from Ukek Bokhara would take some 60 days at least. Ibn Batuta is 58 days from Sarai to Bokhara, and of the last section he says, "we entered the desert which extends between Khwarizm and Bokhara, and which has an extent of 18 days' journey." (III. 19.)

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## CHAPTER III.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS, AFTER CROSSING A DESERT, CAME TO THE CITY OF BOCARA, AND FELL IN WITH CERTAIN ENVOYS THERE.

AFTER they had passed the desert, they arrived at a very great and noble city called BOCARA, the territory of which belonged to a king whose name was Barac,