

Bokhara, etc. They are celebrated for their swiftness, and known by their white colour."—H. C.]

NOTE 6.—These wild sheep are probably the kind called *Kachkár*, mentioned by Baber, and described by Mr. Blyth in his Monograph of Wild Sheep, under the name of *Ovis Vignei*. It is extensively diffused over all the ramifications of Hindu-Kúsh, and westward perhaps to the Persian Elburz. "It is gregarious," says Wood, "congregating in herds of several hundreds." In a later chapter Polo speaks of a wild sheep apparently different and greater. (See *J. A. S. B.*, X. 858 *seqq.*)

NOTE 7.—This pleasant passage is only in Ramusio, but it would be heresy to doubt its genuine character. Marco's recollection of the delight of convalescence in such a climate seems to lend an unusual enthusiasm and felicity to his description of the scenery. Such a region as he speaks of is probably the cool Plateau of Shewá, of which we are told as extending about 25 miles eastward from near Faizabad, and forming one of the finest pastures in Badakhshan. It contains a large lake called by the frequent name Sar-i-Kol. No European traveller in modern times (unless Mr. Gardner) has been on those glorious table-lands. Burnes says that at Kunduz both natives and foreigners spoke rapturously of the vales of Badakhshan, its rivulets, romantic scenes and glens, its fruits, flowers, and nightingales. Wood is reticent on scenery, naturally, since nearly all his journey was made in winter. When approaching Faizabad on his return from the Upper Oxus, however, he says: "On entering the beautiful lawn at the gorge of its valley I was enchanted at the quiet loveliness of the scene. Up to this time, from the day we left Talikan, we had been moving in snow; but now it had nearly vanished from the valley, and the fine sward was enamelled with crocuses, daffodils, and snowdrops." (*P. Manphul*; *Burnes*, III. 176; *Wood*, 252.)

NOTE 8.—Yet scarcely any country in the world has suffered so terribly and repeatedly from invasion. "Enduring decay probably commenced with the wars of Chinghiz, for many an instance in Eastern history shows the permanent effect of such devastations. . . . Century after century saw only progress in decay. Even to our own time the progress of depopulation and deterioration has continued." In 1759, two of the Khojas of Kashgar, escaping from the dominant Chinese, took refuge in Badakhshan; one died of his wounds, the other was treacherously slain by Sultan Shah, who then ruled the country. The holy man is said in his dying moments to have invoked curses on Badakhshan, and prayed that it might be three times depopulated; a malediction which found ample accomplishment. The misery of the country came to a climax about 1830, when the Uzbek chief of Kunduz, Murad Beg Kataghan, swept away the bulk of the inhabitants, and set them down to die in the marshy plains of Kunduz. (*Cathay*, p. 542; *Faiz Bakhsh*, etc.)

NOTE 9.—This "bombasticall dissimulation of their garments," as the author of *Anthropometamorphosis* calls such a fashion, is no longer affected by the ladies of Badakhshan. But a friend in the Panjab observes that it still survives *there*. "There are ladies' trousers here which might almost justify Marco's very liberal estimate of the quantity of stuff required to make them;" and among the Afghan ladies, Dr. Bellew says, the silken trousers almost surpass crinoline in amplitude. It is curious to find the same characteristic attaching to female figures on coins of ancient kings of these regions, such as Agathocles and Pantaleon. (The last name is appropriate!)