

was as general in ancient Kashmīr as it has from necessity remained to the present day in many parts of the mountains right up to the Hindukush watershed.<sup>16</sup>

It only remains to point out that supplies reaching Chilās from the south could have been carried thence without serious difficulty, as they are to-day, to the central portion of what is now Gilgit, by the route leading up the Indus valley to Būnji and thence up the Gilgit river. As this route throughout runs over low ground in the valleys, between about 3,600 and 4,400 feet above sea-level, it is, of course, open to traffic throughout the year. But in view of the great summer heat experienced in the confined valleys, it is probable that, in the days when human transport alone was practicable, the far shorter line was preferred that leads straight to the north of Chilās by the Kinar-gāh valley and after crossing two high but easy passes strikes the cultivated central tract of Gilgit a few miles below the present fort and station.<sup>17</sup>

Gilgit easily reached from Chilās.

## SECTION II.—CHILĀS AND ITS PAST

Apart from the Chinese notice relating to a route through Chilās which has just been discussed I am able to trace only one early reference to the territory. It is to be found in Albērūnī's *India* and offers some interest, cursory as the passage is. In his account of Kashmīr, the importance and value of which I have had occasion fully to explain elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> the great Muhammadan scholar tells us that passing into the open plain of the Kashmīr valley from the entrance gorge of Bārāmūla, 'you have for a march of two more days on your left the mountains of Bolor and Shamīlān, Turkish tribes who are called *Bhattavaryān*. Their king has the title of *Bhatta-Shāh*. Their towns are Gilgit, Aswira and Shiltās, and their language is the Turkish. Kashmīr suffers much from their inroads.'<sup>2</sup> In the three localities mentioned as the chief seats of these tribes it is impossible to mistake the present Gilgit, Hasōra (Astōr) and Chilās. Nor can it reasonably be doubted that whatever caused Albērūnī to describe their inhabitants as 'Turks', he means by them the same Dard tribes whom we know from plentiful evidence to have held this region ever since classical times.<sup>3</sup> Considering that Kashmīr was wholly inaccessible to Albērūnī and the regions beyond, if possible, even more so, we may well feel surprise at his information about those distant mountain tracts being as exact as it proves to be. I have indicated elsewhere that the explanation of this detailed knowledge lies probably in the fact that Albērūnī employed Kashmirian Paṇḍits for the Indian studies he carried on during his long stay at Ghazna and in the Punjāb (A. D. 1017-30).<sup>4</sup>

Albērūnī's notice of Chilās.

Local knowledge derived from such Kashmirian informants obviously accounts for the perfectly correct statement that the traveller entering the open Kashmīr valley from the gorge of

'The mountains of Bolor and Shamīlān.'

<sup>16</sup> Regarding the system of forced carriage of loads, included in modern Kashmīr under the general term of *bēgār*, cf. the passages discussed in my notes on *Rājat*. v. 172-4; viii. 2509-13. It is interesting to note that the last-named passage specially refers to the forced carriage employed for military transport on an expedition directed to the Kishangangā valley about Shardī in A. D. 1144. For other references, including one by Albērūnī, see my note, *Rājat*. II. p. 361, note 50.

<sup>17</sup> The road from Chilās Fort to Gilgit via Būnji, now made practicable for camel transport, is reckoned at 89 miles, while the distance up the Kinar-gāh Nullah and across the Kīnijut and Khomar passes is estimated at 60 miles.

For the route leading up the Indus see Northern Trans-frontier map Sheet 3 NE.; Mason, *Routes in Western Himālaya*, pp. 86 sq.

<sup>1</sup> See *Rājat*. II. pp. 360 sqq.; also *Memoir on the ancient geography of Kaśmīr*, pp. 21 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> See *Albērūnī's India*, transl. by Sachau, i. p. 207.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. my notes, *Rājat*. i. 312-16; II. p. 431, for the numerous passages of Kalhaṇa's chronicle where the tribes occupying the mountain tracts to the north of Kashmīr are referred to by the Skr. name of *Darad* or *Dārada*; also for references to ancient notices of the same ethnic designation in that region.

That Albērūnī uses here the term 'Turk' in the same vague way as when he speaks elsewhere e.g. of the 'Turks of Tibet', meaning the undoubtedly Tibetan population adjoining Kashmīr on the east, has been pointed out by me in *Rājat*. II. p. 363, note 64.

<sup>4</sup> See *Rājat*. II. pp. 359 sq.