

## CHAPTER XXI.

### BURNES, HÜGEL, VIGNE.

The three travellers whose names are read in the heading of this chapter have all more or less contributed to a better knowledge of the Kara-korum System, though most of what they have to say is only founded on second hand information.

Sir ALEXANDER BURNES, whose discoveries were very welcome to RITTER'S *Asia*, travelled in 1832 in the vicinity of our regions.<sup>1</sup> In a very clever way he compared his own observations with those of MOORCROFT, MIR IZZET ULLAH and ELPHINSTONE, and contributes to improve MACARTNEY'S map. The Shayok River he does not know from personal experience, but says: »The Shyook is said to be a vast river, formed of many small ones, and discharges the water and melted snows of the Karakorum mountains.»<sup>2</sup> And further: »The river of Ladak, and the Shyook, instead of existing as two minor tributaries of the Indus, form of themselves that great river; the one rising near the lake of Mansurour, and the other in the mountains of Karakorum. They unite N. W. of Ladak, and pass through the country of Little Tibet, or Baltee, and a snowy range separates them from Cashmere.»<sup>3</sup> As to the river of Kabul, he thinks it has its sources in the same neighbourhood as the Oxus; »but that river flows from the plain of Pamere, near Lake Sirikol, and not from the ranges of mountains which support that elevated region.» He brings order into the confusion regarding the two Cashgars, proving that the southern one, mentioned by Elphinstone, is only a small mountainous district. Here he quotes KLAPROTH'S *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*, II, p. 298, and is satisfied to find his own observations »on the two Cashgars confirmed by so high an authority as M. Klaproth».

Later on in his narrative Burnes again returns to the source of the Oxus, and makes the following rather surprising utterance: »It is stated that four rivers, which flow in opposite directions, issue from the vicinity of the lake Surikol: these

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Vol. II, p. 63 above.

<sup>2</sup> *Travels into Bokhara, etc.* New Edition, Vol. I. London MDCCCXXXIX; p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit., p. 270.