

woven. Now it is the Ladakhis who reign for a time in Baltistan; then, again, the Baltis overrun Ladakh. For this reason we shall do well to collect what remains of Balti chronicles.

ENGLISH TEXT

(Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir, Ladak . . .*, London, 1842, vol. ii, pp. 251 ff.)

At one period, as they now relate, the royal race was nearly extinct, the last Gylfo (Rgyal-po) having left an only daughter, whose hand was sought in marriage by twelve vuzirs, or great men of the country; and ere a choice was made, a Fakir, holding a rod of gold in one hand and a purse containing the same metal in the other, was observed sitting on a large stone in the village of Shikari (Si-dkar). He was always to be found there, and appeared to have made it at once his resting-place and his home; and he soon acquired a reputation for extraordinary sanctity,—and the more so, as no one could tell whence he came. The young Begum was given to him by the consent of all parties, and to this union the Rajahs not only of Iskardo (Skar-rdo), but of Katakchund (Mkhar-man; Khartaksho of the maps), Parkuta, Tolti, Rondu (Ron-mdo), and Astor, trace the origin of their families. To this day, when the heir apparent arrives at years of discretion, he is seated on the same stone, which is called the Burdo-Nest (Bu-rdo = 'son-stone'?), . . . in great state, amidst the shouts of the assembled multitude. The reigning Gylfo (Rgyal-po) first makes him salaam, and afterwards the inhabitants of Shikari (Si-dkar) present their homage. Then the principal commanders of the army, of which there are more than one hundred, come forward with their congratulations and their presents. Then follows the game of the Chaughán (polo) . . ., shooting at a mark with matchlocks or arrows, at full gallop, and the musicians and dancing girls display their attractions to the surrounding crowd, and the young Gylfo (Rgyal-po) proceeds thence to the Harem, where he receives the compliments of his lady relatives.

But the more authentic knowledge of their history, as detailed to me by Ahmed Shah, commences with Ali Shér Khan, who built the great stone aqueduct by which water is brought across the valley from the Satpur stream, and by which, also, a quantity of useful soil that would otherwise be washed away is banked up and preserved. He built also the fort on the rock, and raised an elevated platform, planted with chunars (Platanas), close under the Killah (*Qila*), and containing the tombs of the Gylfos (Rgyal-pos). When he and his son, and successor, Ahmed Khan, were dead, Abdul and Adam Khan, his other sons, quarrelled, and Abdul Khan, who built some of the Durwasus (*Darwāza*) or gates, already noticed, so oppressed the neighbouring Rajahs, that they sought assistance from the Mogul Emperor of Delhi, Aurangzyb, who sent an army from Kashmir. Upon which, Abdul Khan made his submission, and the brothers then went in person before the Mogul, who told them to divide the succession; but they died on their return in Kashmir.