

He had five or six sons ; the eldest, whose name was, I think, Shah Murad, died just before I visited Iskardo (Skar-rdo) for the first time. He was a young man of great promise, and universally regretted. He died, it appeared, of fever, and amongst other remedies employed to cure him, I remember that one was having no furniture in his room but what was of a blue or green colour. . . . His own brother, Mohamed Shah, was by no means his equal in abilities, and having been intrusted with the government of Husára (Astor), by way of trial, abused his authority in such a manner, and showed himself so incompetent as a ruler, that his father determined to disinherit him, in favour of Mohamed Ali Khan, a son by another wife, daughter of the Shighur (Si-dkar) Rajah, whereas the mother of the deceased prince and Mohamed Shah was a daughter of the Rajah of Katakchund (Mkhar-man), from which family it was usual for the Gyfpos (Rgyal-pos) of Iskardo (Skar-rdo) to select a wife, as the mother of the heir-apparent. In consequence of this determination Mahomed Shah quarrelled with his father, and ran off, accompanied by two or three adherents, and put himself under the protection of Gulab Singh's Sikh lieutenant, at the castle in Purik (Bu-rig), near the frontier.

This happened after my first visit to Iskardo (Skar-rdo), in 1835, and from that time he became a puppet in the hands of Gulab Singh (of Jammu), who amused him, and worried Ahmed Shah, by promising to make him governor of Iskardo (Skar-rdo), if ever he took the country. Young Mohamed Ali Khan had been placed on the inauguration stone, and received the homage of his future subjects. He was about thirteen years of age, short, and very stout, with a mild and intelligent expression of countenance, and very fond of field sports. . . . Mirza Hyder is a little boy, a younger brother of Mohamed Ali Khan. Achmet Ali Khan is a natural son of Ahmed Shah, by a woman of lower extraction ; he has by far the finest features, and most intellectual head, of any of the family, was the best shot, the best rider, and the best swordsman.

NOTES

The story of the Faqir ancestor of the Balti chiefs reminds us of the Chronicles of Cig-tan (see the latter).

Regarding the great stone aqueduct of Sadpur (the barrage), which was stated to be the work of 'Alī-Sher-Khān, let me mention that it was visited by Miss Duncan in 1904. Miss Duncan's book, *A Summer Ride through Western Tibet*, contains several interesting photographs of these grand works (see pp. 304, 306), and a full description of the ruins. Miss Duncan was told by the natives that the barrage had been built by the last Buddhist Rāja of Baltistan. This is not impossible, considering the fact that Buddhist images have been preserved on the barrage until quite recently, as was ascertained by Miss Duncan. The following are a few notes from Miss Duncan's description (pp. 304-6) :—' The barrage crosses the river just where it leaves the lake, is about 14 feet high and 6 feet thick, and has two tiers of doors, six in each tier, each door 5 feet by 2 ft. 9 in., with deep, smoothly cut, semicircular grooves to receive the rounded edges of the dressed granite slabs, now lying in the water below, which were used to close them . . . High up on the buttress wall there is an oblong slab of slate-coloured stone, the middle part sunk, leaving a sharply cut, raised edge, which looks as if it had been a memorial tablet, but there is no trace of lettering on it.' Thus, unfortunately, the history of the origin of the barrage will probably remain obscure for ever, and we shall not be able to decide whether it is the work of 'Alī-Sher-Khān or of some earlier king. About 4½ miles from the barrage are found the ancient Buddhist sculptures and inscriptions which were noticed by Vigne (see vol. i, p. 365). Vigne calls the rock ' the Buddhu stone ', and speaks of a regular translation of the inscription in *J.A.S.B.*, which, however, I have not yet been able to trace. A translation of my own, based on Miss Duncan's and my munshi Bzod-pa-phun-tshogs' copies, has appeared in Miss Duncan's *Summer*