

and pay the teacher from half a *tanga* to a *tanga* a month. Education is not compulsory, but a certain coercion is exercised on the parents to make them send their children to school. For the higher forms of education, as it is by the Mahommedan standard, the pupils go from the *Maktab*, to the *Madrassa* or college. Here they study theology, law, medicine, poetry and history, with writing and accounts. Physics are unknown, and altogether the standard of knowledge is very inferior. Much too great importance is attached to theology and metaphysics, to the neglect of more practically useful studies. There are several colleges in each city, and all the shrines and more sacred tombs in the country have either a college or a school attached to them. The colleges are charitable foundations which have been established at different periods by pious individuals, and are supported by grants of rent-free land. Under the Amir's rule, all these establishments have been restored to their original prosperity, and many which had fallen to decay have been entirely rebuilt and enlarged. Most of them have cloisters, with accommodation for from twenty to eighty students or more, and a chapel and hospice are attached to each, with a considerable establishment of priests, teachers, and servitors. In all of them the teaching is strictly that of Islam, to the exclusion of everything not allowed by the *Shari'at* or unprovided for in the *hadith*, and they are all under the special patronage of the Amir, who from time to time visits some of the more important ones, and on all occasions of public rejoicing or festivity distributes bounty to the establishments and resident scholars.

*Games and Amusements.*—Those played by young people are *corchác*, = "wrestling," "romps;" *Bád-parg*, = "kite-flying;" *Mucca warstarídi*, = "marbles;" *Khanjar oyándi*, = "pitch-and-toss" into a hole with walnuts or pice; *Uzuc oyándi*, = "knuckle bones," dice playing with four bones; *Top chatáng*, = "ball-and-bat" or "rounders," in which the player is put out by a catch, and has to go out and carry in the winner on his back; and *Tushc Anasi Bálási*, = "mother and children in the hole," a sort of tip-cat played with bat and ball from a little pit.

Those played by grown-up people are *Shatranj*, chess; *takhna*, draughts; *kághaz-oyándi*, cards, called *kaphi* by the Khitay; *Tukhm chicdi*, cracking eggs by tapping small ends together for wager; *Dah chin oyándi*, gymnastics, athletics, &c., by professionals. Other amusements are *kaptar-oyándi*, = "pigeon-flying;" *Tukh* or *Cochcár* or *Kiklik-warstarídi*, = "cock or ram," or "partridge-fighting." There are besides other sports and exercises, such as single-stick, cudgelling, fencing, wrestling, archery, &c., but they are only practised by professionals of Chinese or Kalmák race who are now enlisted in the Amir's army. Amongst the athletic exercises occasionally indulged in by the troops are *úlak*, a sort of chevy-chase on horseback to gain possession of a slaughtered lamb carried away by an acknowledged champion, by pursuit and snatching from his lap; and *Miltic chicdi*, = "target practice," loading and firing on horseback at a cap stuck on a stake, whilst at full gallop.

The more refined amusements in which both sexes meet for society are tea-parties and musical concerts and dances, each of which is conducted with the observance of much ceremony and etiquette, according to rules and conventionalities appropriate to each. The dances are performed by women only, and not in public; only in the presence of invited guests, and are conducted with proper decorum. The musical concerts are performed by professional artists and singers, and the principal instruments used are the guitar; a sort of harp or violin called *cánún*; a sort of violin called *rabáb*; the flageolet; the cymbal; the triangle; and the tambour and the trombone. The musician or *naghmachí* does not play in public, only at private houses to which he is called to grace an entertainment. There is a class of mendicant minstrels and actors who go about the streets, and wander from place to place to make a living. They are of two distinct orders, viz., the *calandar* or *darvesh*, and the *báccí*. The two first are religious beggars and vagabonds, and go about in companies of five or six. They sing and dance and dress in a grotesque fashion, and affect a demented character, with dishevelled hair and patched garments, often covered with a cape of some wild animals' skin, such as of the tiger, bear, leopard, or wolf. They always carry a staff topped with a tuft of *yák-tail* hair, or an iron mace on which is fixed a string of steel rings. This they jingle in keeping time with their vociferous songs and dances of gesticulation. The *báccí* is a musician, conjuror, improvisatore, and actor. He professes acquaintance with the world of spirits, and glibly calls on Michael and all the angels who throw him into a cataleptic state, and the spectators are persuaded into the belief that he does all sorts of marvels.