

Yákúb Beg came out to oppose them with all his force. A severe fight took place in which the Russians lost 200 men killed, but they drove the Táshkand army back into their fort, and were then obliged themselves to retreat on the fourth day back to Chamkand. T.S.

Whilst this struggle was going on at the frontier, Alím Culí with Syad Sultán Khán and a large army was hurrying up from Khokand to the support of Táshkand, and on his arrival there rewarded the defenders and sent the heads of the Russians slain all over the country as trophies of their success against "the cursed Urús." He then set to work to improve the defences and dispose his troops on the fortification. Whilst he was thus engaged an envoy arrived from Sadíc Beg, Kirghiz of Káshghar, announcing the destruction of the Chinese rule there and the capture of the city by himself, and asking him to send a Khoja whom he might set on the throne as king of the country.

Alím Culí, in reply to this appeal, sent Buzurg Khán Khoja, the only son of Jáhangír Khoja, to recover the throne of his ancestors, and appointed Yákúb Beg *Koshbegi* to accompany him as *Bátúr-báshí* "Leader of the braves," or General of his forces, by way of securing his own interests and maintaining the Khokand influence in the Káshghar States.

Before following the Khoja, or *Tora* as he is usually styled, and his General in their career at Káshghar, it will be profitable first to trace out, most briefly though it be, that rapid succession of conquests and victories which in the course of a few short years have extended the Russian territory and rule from Almáti Vernoe on the north-east to the very gates of Bukhárá on the south-west; because this extension of Christian rule and civilized government over the Muhammadan and barbarous States of Central Asia, favoured in its success by the wild anarchy and savage despotism rampant in those very States, whilst opening out a bright future to these too-long benighted regions, has not been without an important influence on the Islám polity of not only Central Asia, but the whole Muhammadan world; for since the days of the Khálifs, Bukhárá, the *Cubbat-ulislam*, or "Centre Prop of the Faith," has always been considered the most sacred seat of its power and doctrine, and its decadence here during the past decade is already attended by signs of its revival elsewhere; in the prime seat in fact of its origin and growth. P.

After the retreat of the Russians from their unsuccessful attack against Táshkand in the latter days of October 1864, the Khokandi under Alím Culí were emboldened to assume the offensive, and early in December invested the village of Chilik which had been recently taken by them. A small party of Cossacks was sent to its relief from Turkistán, but on arrival at Aycán or Ikan was cut off from succour and surrounded by an overwhelming force of Khokandis who fought behind shields and moveable mantlets called *carábúrá*. The devoted band fought with heroic bravery, and was nearly cut to pieces without inflicting much injury upon their assailants, and only a small remnant, fighting their way through, effected a safe return to Turkistan on the 18th December 1864. T.S. Rom.

With the first opening of spring the Russians again took the field to avenge this disaster to their arms, and on the 10th May 1865 General Chernayef took the fort of Nyázbeg, and on the 20th of the same month, in correspondence with a party in the city who had agreed to surrender the town, camped at eight *verst*, or about five miles from Táshkand; but Alím Culí with 6,000 men and 40 guns entering the city the same day the pre-arranged "*coup*" failed. Rom.

On the following morning Alím Culí with 40,000 men issued to destroy "the cursed Urús" who were only 4,000 strong. My informant, one who took an active part in the fight, described how the eager Khokandis swarmed to the promised destruction of their entrapped foe; how, surging in tumultuous crowds over the low ridges that broke the general level of the plain, they closed around the thickest ranks of the enemy; how, as they pressed harder and nearer, the Russian priests raised aloft the effigy of their saint, and bare-headed prayed for his intercession and P.