

four or five miles below Wámur. About five miles beyond Pigish on the right bank, is the village of Bar Roshán, on the frontier of Roshán. At one day's march beyond this, also on the right bank, is Waznud, the frontier village of Darwáz. Between Waznud and Bar Roshán the Pa-e-Khoja valley before alluded to enters the Panjah valley on the south. Five marches along the Panjah beyond Waznúd is Kila Khúmb, the chief town of the country of Darwáz. The road to it along the river is very difficult, and impassable for laden horses, the valley being very narrow, and the banks of the river very precipitous. Kila Khúmb is said to lie in a northerly direction from Wámur and can be reached in three days by a short summer road, which lies up the small stream which enters the Panjah (right bank) at Wámur. The boundary between Darwaz and Shighnán is the water-shed at the head of the Wámur ravine.*

The country of Darwáz possesses villages on both banks of the river Panjah. At Khúmb itself the fort is on the right bank, but some houses are on the left bank of the river. Below Darwáz is said to be the country of Khatlán, the chief town of which is Koláb.

Part of this information, which was supplied by the Múnshi as the result of enquiries made by him, is directly contradictory to the existing ideas of the geography of these regions, and I was at one time disinclined to place much reliance on it. In plotting on paper the Múnshí's route survey, it was found that the course of the Panjah river lies much to the north of the position assigned to it in existing maps. I was at first unable to reconcile this with what little authentic information we have, either from English or Russian sources, but further consideration, and study of the subject, has to a certain extent cleared the matter up. While at Simla, immediately after my return to India, I was examining some old documents in the Quarter Master General's Office, and lighted on a paper of considerable importance. It was a copy of a document well known to students of Central Asian Geography, *viz.*, the route from Khokand to Peshawur, by the Shahzada Sultan Mahomed, an Envoy who came from Khokand to India in 1854. The peculiarity of this individual copy is that it contains a marginal note that six of the halting places on the route, *viz.*, "Faizbad, Naruk, Tootkul, Buljuwan, Kulab, and Surchushma, are on the banks of the River Hamoon, which is called Panj by the natives." In the margin was a note, bearing the initials of no less a person than the present Lord Lawrence stating that the Hamoon was the same as the Oxus. The significance of the document consists in the fact that Lord Lawrence (who was then Chief Commissioner for the Punjab) was the person who originally took down the statements of the Khokandian Ambassador, who, during his stay at Murree, "lived for some weeks within a few yards of the Chief Commissioner's residence, and had frequent and intimate intercourse with him." It is evident that the document I had lighted on was a copy of the original statement as taken down by Lord Lawrence, whereas all other versions that I have seen, of the same route, omit the note that the six places abovementioned are on the banks of the Oxus.

The deduction that I made from this note was, that the Surkháb River probably joined the Oxus or Panjah somewhere above Faizabad and Naruk, and consequently that the latter river took a very considerable detour to the North, as is shown on my Preliminary Map. There were many arguments in support of this view, which it is now unnecessary to enter upon, as one of the Trans Frontier explorers, "the Havildar," has just returned from a visit to Koláb and Darwáz, and although there has not yet been time to plot the details of his work, sufficient is known to prove that the *note* to which I have alluded must be erroneous, and consequently the portion of my map which was mainly founded thereon is also erroneous. The true course of the Oxus will, I believe, be found to occupy a position intermediate between those shown on my map and on all preceding ones.

Return to Yarkánd viâ the Great Pámir.

Our return route to Yarkánd lay up the north branch of the Panjah River, which flows westwards from Wood's (Victoria) Lake through a portion of the Great Pámir. Leaving

* Four miles above Wámur on this stream is a mine from which a rich iron ore (kurch) is obtained. At Bar Roshán also iron is found in large quantities.