

being solved, for the whole mule-supply of the Punjab is becoming available for employment in the Turkestan trade.

“Thanks to the improvement of the road and the removal of various impediments effected by His Highness the Maharaja, the route through Kashmir has also come into extensive use, thus providing two roads instead of one to Ladakh. This is a very hopeful circumstance, as it doubles the total of carriage available.”

The return of carriage available for trade purposes in Yarkand territory which I have been able to prepare, certainly shows a very small supply with reference to what our traders require, but the number of Yarkand ponies which reach Ladakh and are available for the return journey, is measured by the amount of goods imported from Turkestan. Practically there is no limit to the pony carriage on the Yarkand side, and, when required, the supply now kept up by the Kerai-Kush (professional hirers of carriage) might be increased to any extent.

The amount of carriage required for the exportation of goods from India is necessarily greater than that demanded for the trade coming this way.

In proof of this, I cannot do better than insert the remark lately made by Mr. Shaw on this subject:—

“Proceeding to a consideration of the several headings under which the trade is grouped, the *imports from Turkestan* show a trifling increase of Rupees 8,927.

“The increase noted above consists of the balance between the greater quantity of certain articles and the smaller quantity of others that were brought down from Yarkand in the two successive years. An examination of these differences is instructive as showing the tendency of the trade. The increase is in *precious metals, horses, jade, pashm, and raw silk* chiefly; while the decrease is in *charras, coarse cotton goods, carpets and felts, furs, leather, sea-weed, silk fabrics and precious stones, &c.*; as a class, it will be observed, the former are articles of high value in proportion to their weight, or else such as carry themselves, *viz.*, horses; while the latter are chiefly (though not entirely) bulky articles of less intrinsic value.

“This seems to show that the selections made in Yarkand with the view (which we know was in fact carried out) of the owners pushing rapidly down to India without being encumbered with heavy goods. This would imply a greater anxiety to obtain English or Indian goods, than to get rid of any particular articles of Turkestan production. The same anxiety has been marked in previous years, and is an encouraging feature of the trade.

“The steady increase in the articles of *gold, shawl-wool (pashm), raw silk, &c.*, since the year 1867 (when a British officer was first appointed to Ladakh) is remarkable. In that year the import of *gold* (dust and ‘tillas’) was Rupees 3,932 worth; in 1871 it was Rupees 85,899 worth; in 1872 it was Rupees 1,04,966 worth; in 1873 it rose to Rupees 1,49,498 worth, or about 45 per cent. of the imports from Yarkand.

“*Shawl-wool (pashm)* also is steadily rising. In 1871 it stood for Rupees 28,550; in 1872 Rupees 36,330; and in 1873 Rupees 42,600, or nearly 13 per cent. of those imports.

“The value of *raw silk* imported in the year 1871 was only Rupees 3,072; in 1872 it rose to Rupees 19,012; in 1873 to Rupees 25,500, including a small quantity (Rupees 132 worth) of cocoons, or nearly 8 per cent. of the imports.

“Horses have risen from a value in 1871 of Rupees 16,650; in the year 1872 to Rupees 20,400; and in 1873 to Rupees 27,580, or over 8 per cent. of the imports. They are mostly strong hill-ponies.

“The steady progress of all these items is most encouraging, as they are of a nature calculated to put the trade on a solid foundation.”

In calling attention to the necessity for giving some stimulus to the arrangements now existing for the supply of horses and mules to traders, I quote *verbatim* a short note regarding the horses and yâks now available on this side of the passes which has been given to me by Mr. Johnson, the Wazir of Ladakh.

In Kulu there are only about 40 horses to be had. In Lahoul about 200, but these are being sold off by the villagers since mules have begun to come up from the Punjab.