

and violence that they still enjoy among their meeker neighbours both to the south and west. Their raids were still a subject of lively recollection among the people of Wakhan, and the present occupation of Sarikol on the Chinese side of the Oxus headwaters by a population speaking a language which differs but slightly from Shughni supports the traditional belief in conquest from Shughnan.

Raids and invasions had become a matter of the past since first Afghan rule and then Russian power asserted itself along the uppermost Oxus. But the migratory instinct and the spirit of enterprise which the scantiness of arable land and the want of adequate grazing-grounds in the narrow valleys engender still manifest themselves. Thus I found that, driven forth by the poverty of their homeland, these fine hillmen annually proceed in numbers to Farghana for temporary work as farm labourers. Plenty of others were used to seek employment as servants at Kabul or in Samarkand and elsewhere in the north. It was amusing to observe at times such travelled men accoutred in old frock-coats or odd military garments which evidently had thus found their way from the bazaars of Peshawar *via* Kabul.

From Khoruk I moved up through Shakh-dara, the southern of the two main valleys of Shughnan, to where its head approaches plateaux communicating with the Alichur Pamir. In numerous places we passed ruins of forts and *chiusas* guarding particularly difficult points in narrow gorges, all reminiscent of the chronic insecurity prevailing in old times. At some of these ruins the massive construction seemed distinctly to support traditions ascribing to them Kafir, *i.e.* pre-Muhammadan, origin. It was the same also in the somewhat wider Ghund valley into which we crossed