

arms its peculiar lustre. And it is from more than one point of view interesting to find that other serious difficulties, which from the physical character and position of the country must always beset military operations in the Gilgit region, are reflected in a contemporary notice of the Chinese records.

Among the important diplomatic documents embodied in the great encyclopaedia *Ts'ê fu yüan kuei*, and now rendered accessible by M. Chavannes' researches, there is found the record of a representation which Shih-li-mang-ch'ieh-lo, the ruler (*jabgu*) of T'u-ho-lo or Tokhāristān on the Oxus, addressed in 749 A.D. to the Imperial Court. Its contents throw light on the situation prevailing in the Gilgit Valley immediately after Kao Hsien-chih's expedition¹⁰. The prince, whose territory comprised the present Badakhshān, with some tracts on the northern bank of the Oxus¹¹, complains of a neighbouring hill-state called Chieh-shuai¹², which, relying on the protection of its high mountains, had allied itself with the Tibetans. Its chief 'knows that the territory of P'o-lü is limited, its population dense; that the area available for cultivation is small, and consequently when garrison troops are placed there, the supplies fail. It then becomes necessary to purchase salt and rice in Kashmīr (*Ku-shih-mi*) and it is thus that the difficulty is met. The traders' caravans must, on going and coming back, all pass by the kingdom of Chieh-shuai; its king has therefore accepted the presents offered by the Tibetans, who claimed to establish a stronghold in his territory with a view to getting possession of the important route that leads into P'o-lü. Since Kao Hsien-chih opened up P'o-lü, there are 3,000 more troops there, and P'o-lü has been crushed by it. The King of Chieh-shuai, in alliance with the Tibetans, has taken advantage of the exhausted condition of P'o-lü and decided to invade it.'

Chinese
garrison in
Little P'o-lü.

In order to meet this danger, the ruler of Tokhāristān then proposes a bold plan of operations, which, if supported by the Imperial authorities, would allow him to conquer 'the Great P'o-lü' and the countries east of it. This would bring him in a straight line to Khotan, Kara-shahr and beyond, where the Tibetans could then no longer maintain themselves. Besides the dispatch of Chinese troops into Little P'o-lü, he solicits that the King of Kashmīr, as a loyal ally of China, be encouraged by an Imperial edict and special honours to lend to the enterprise the aid of his great resources in troops and supplies. The Emperor is said to have responded to this appeal of the T'u-ho-lo prince, and an edict preserved by the same source records the investiture in 750 A. D. of Su-chia as king of Chieh-shuai in place of his rebel brother P'o-t'ê-mo¹³.

Expedition
against
Chieh-shuai
(750 A.D.).

A briefer notice of these events, extracted by M. Chavannes from another work, the *Tzū chih t'ung chien*, also mentions the defeat, in 750 A. D., of Chieh-shih by Kao Hsien-chih, the capture of its chief P'o-t'ê-mo, and the installation of Su-chia in his place¹⁴.

Chinese intervention succeeded on this occasion in relieving Gilgit and Tokhāristān from the threatening invasion of the Tibetans. But it is certain that the complete defeat of Kao Hsien-chih by the Arabs in the year following (751 A. D.) and the consequent rapid decline of the Imperial power in the 'Western Countries' must have forced the Chinese to abandon

¹⁰ See *Turcs occid.*, pp. 214 sq.; comp. also p. 296 on the historical import of this document.

¹¹ *T'u-ho-lo*, a great and important territory, then largely inhabited by the descendants of the Hephthalites or White Huns, has long been identified with the Tokhāristān of early Muhammadan writers; compare, e.g., Sir H. Yule, *J.R.A.S.*, N.S., vi. pp. 94 sqq.; also my note on *Rājat*. iv. 166. The valuable data concerning T'u-ho-lo, contained in the Annals and other Chinese records of the Tang period, have been fully discussed by M. Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, pp. 155 sqq.

¹² The name thus transcribed, 竭帥, appears in a slightly different form as Chieh-shih 羯師 in the Tang shu; see *Turcs occid.*, pp. 158 sq., and below, p. 13.

¹³ See Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, pp. 215 sq.; also the passage of the Tang Annals, *ibid.* p. 158, mentioning the defeat of the Chieh-shih people who were endeavouring to bring about an attack on Tokhāristān by the Tibetans.

¹⁴ See *Turcs occid.*, p. 214, note 2.