by Fraser as honest, just, sincere, good tempered, generally well disposed, and by no means either cruel or treacherous ; rarely quarrelling, and their quarrels rarely stained with blood ; nor are they addicted to private and murderous re­venge, like most of their neighbours. They are fond of horse-flesh, which they prefer to beef ; and by their fond­ness for the intoxicating drink called mare’s milk, they are often seduced into excess and drunkenness. They are like­wise fond of tea. They are the chief inhabitants of Ko- kaun, and other districts to the east, and are there repre­sented as a fat, fair, and high-complexioned people, ex­tremely quiet, good humoured, and hospitable ; very fond of riding, hunting, hawking, and getting drunk on *kimmiz,* or mare’s milk. The other wandering tribes who are scat­tered over this country are also described as peaceable and honest. The Oosbecks who inhabit the desert tracts of the country, live in parties of from two hundred to above one thousand families. These parties have no particular chief, but each is regulated in all its concerns by a bey or beg, who is chosen by common consent, on account of his wealth, character, or abilities. In the larger divisions, the king has a voice in the election of the bey or chief, but in the smaller divisions this is little attended to. These chiefs decide in all disputes which are not of great importance. In serious cases several of them consult together; and if they cannot agree they remit the matter to the cauzee, who is always appointed by the king, and is held in considerable awe. In all the different states, the king or chief is perfectly abso­lute, the fountain of all authority and power. The only restraint on his will is derived from the influence of re­ligion ; the oleemut and heads of religion alone possess­ing any authority or respect, to which it is necessary for the king to defer. The influence of this body, however, has been of late so much weakened, that some of them have been put to death by the reigning monarch. The priests rank above all classes, civil as well as military. The nobles belonging to the army occupy the second rank. The revenue is collected by the bey in kind ; namely, sheep, camels, oxen, and other animals, in the proportion of one in forty. He fixes a price on them, and the tribute is paid in money to a collector sent with another legal officer and ten soldiers to receive it. In order to preserve his control, the king discourages different tribes from living together in the same union ; but it is common in the desert to see a varie­ty of tribes mingled together. The tents of the Oosbecks consist of a frame-work of thin laths covered with thick black felt, and these are called kirgahs or black houses. The floors of the rich are spread with carpets and numuds ; those of the poor with a blanket or mat of camel’s hair ; and a hole in the roof, of open lattice-work, is the only chimney, over which they draw a piece of black felt when it rains. The dress of the Oozbecks in Bockhara consists of the same loose and flowing garments as in most parts of Asia. They were a shirt and drawers, of cotton in summer and of woollen in winter, and over these a silk or woollen wrapping gown, tied round the waist with a girdle ; and in winter a sheep’s skin, or a coat of thick felt, in which they wrap themselves. The head-dress is in summer a painted cap of silk, which they call a calpak, and in winter a small cap of broad cloth lined with fur; a checked or white turban is often worn round this, and forms the true national dress. Bandages of cloth rolled round the legs form a rude substitute for stockings ; or boots are worn, of brown leather, reaching up to the knee. The dress of the women is very similar to that of the men. They wear boots and silk gloves, and throw over the person a silk sheet, which conceals them from head to foot, a small orifice being left for the eyes. They are fond of ornaments, wearing necklaces of gold bcads, with nose-rings and ear-rings. In the country the women wear no veils, but *go* about openly as in Europe. The Taujicks are a peaceable class, who are understood to be opposed to the Toorks or Toorkomans, and the Oosbecks, and other wan­dering hordes, who, under various designations and subdi­visions into tribes, form a scanty population, inhabiting chiefly the banks of the Oxus, and the habitable spots scat­tered through the desert ; but they are to be found in greater or smaller numbers, according to the quantity of cultivated land, all over the more fertile and well-watered country to the south and south-east of Bockhara.

The towns of Tartary are, Khyvah, Ourgunge, Haza- rasp, Zercaun, Pitnuck; Bockhara, Balk, both large towns; Samarcand, now ruined and in a state of decay, though still containing many fine buildings ; Kokaun, Khojund, Yarkund, and others of less consequence. Of the commerce of this distant region, some account has been given under the articles Bukharia and Balk. The Russians have long carried on commerce with Khyvah and the western parts of Tartary. The possession of the port of Astracan, and more lately those of Bako, Salian, Derbund, and Lanke- ran, has given them an entire command of the navigation and commerce of the Caspian Sea ; and it is long since they began to build forts on its eastern shore. The prin­cipal of these is Okh Trappeh, not far from Astrabad, and some miles to the north of Attruck, in the territory of the Toorkoman tribes. They also occupy a port or point in or connected with the Bay of Balkan, called by the Rus­sians Krasnovodsk, and an island in the Bay of Mangushluck, still farther to the north. It is from some of these points that they have sent a military force against Khyvah, which, according to the latest accounts, had nearly perished from cold and fatigue. The greatest obstacle to the march of an army in these deserts is the want of water. The dis­tance from Krasnovodsk to Khyvah is about 500 miles, in which, for several days’ journey, no water is to be found. Fraser, in his account of the Persian empire, states his opi­nion that a Russian force might be set down on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, either at Balkan or at Mangush- luck, “ that, with common management, might not only cap­ture, but retain possession of, Khyvah, and project and pre­pare for ulterior enterprises.”@@1 Russia has, as anticipated by Fraser, undertaken this expedition, which has in the mean time failed, as already stated, but whether from want of common management, or of a sufficient force, or from the difficulties of the enterprise, has not been clearly ascertained.

Russia supplies this extensive country, Khyvah, as well as Bockhara, with the greater portion of the European articles which its inhabitants require. With both these places an intercourse is maintained by means of caravans, which proceed from Astracan by Orenburg. The route is long and dangerous, being about forty days’ journey, and in many places exposed to the attacks of the Kirgeesh and Kuzaks, w ho inhabit the steppes north and north-west of Khyvah. The chief traffic is by sea to Mangushluck, where the Russian traders bring their goods, and are met by those from Khyvah. One great branch of trade consists in slaves captured from the surrounding countries in plundering ex­peditions, and Khyvah and Bockhara are the chief marts. The Toorkomans, the Yamoots, and even the tribes around Khyvah itself, make inroads into Persia, and carry off the cattle and the inhabitants, who are sold for slaves ; and on the other side, the Kirgeesh and Kuzaks make prison­ers of the Russians on their own frontiers, or when jour­neying in caravans, and carry them for sale to the great slave-markets in the east. Bockhara carries on a regular trade with Russia, Persia, and the east ; for a more parti­cular account of which, see the article Bukharia.

Several of those cities which have been mentioned, to­wards the east of this extensive region, arc said to be rich

@@@, See Appendix B, part ii.