reaching the first summit only, although he thought that he had attained its top. It was next explored by Colonel Tchaikofsky, in 1870, as well as by Baron Kaulbars, but neither could get further, and even that point, which Kaulbars estimates at 11,000 feet above the sea, was attained with very great difficulty. In 1871, however, Captain Shepelef went the whole length of the south Muzart Glacier to the neighbourhood of the Kashgarian picket on the southern side of the Tian Shan. Much of the road lies over the moraines of glaciers, and even over the glaciers themselves, which are so full of fissures that temporary bridges have to be made for the passage of caravans. In one place at the mouth of a defile, the slope was so great and the fissures were so numerous, that the glacier presented to Baron Kaulbars the aspect of a cataract of ice. A Russian post is stationed at the north entrance of the defile, and a Kashgarian picket on the southern side of the Tian Shan near the pass itself.

Colonel Tchaikofsky told me that at the northern end of this pass there is a large stone erected, on which a human face is roughly drawn, and in addition to which is a long inscription in characters which he supposed to be Thibetan. In the defile itself he found a Chinese block-house, in perfect order. In this neighbourhood there is excellent hunting for the *marali*, or mountain deer, especially in the spring when they have shed their horns. These deer are then shot by the Kirghiz for the purpose of getting the gelatinous masses which have not yet developed into new horns, and which the Chinese buy at enormous prices, for this substance is considered an aphrodisiac and forms part of the marriage portion of every well-to-do Mongolian and Chinese bride. The exact manner of using it is not known. When fresh the horns are soft and gelatinous, so that if properly cooked they might be palatable and even efficacious; but after they have rotted and been pulverised it is difficult to imagine anything more repulsive.

The neighbourhood of the Issyk Kul, and in general the valleys of the Tian Shan, as well as the Alai mountains and the Pamir to the south of Khokand, are inhabited by the true Kirghiz, called by the Chinese and the Kalmuks *Burut*, and by the Russians *Kara-Kirghiz* (Black Kirghiz) or *Dikokamenny* Wild Mountain) *Kirghiz*, to distinguish them from the Kazaks,

who have erroneously and accidentally obtained among the Russians the appellation of Kirghiz.[1] There are some reasons for supposing this race to have been originally of the same extraction as the Finns, and many persons consider them a mixed race of Turks and Mongols;[2] but at all events they must at a very early period have become Turkicised, for even the Chinese historians of the seventh century, to whom they were known under the name of the *Khagas*, show by the words they cite that they then spoke a Turkic language. They are there described as being fair-skinned and light-haired, and although now most of them are dark and black-haired, yet individuals of the original type are not unfrequently met with among them. As the Khagas, they seem to have possessed a higher civilisation than most of the Asiatic tribes, to have inhabited a wide extent of country, and to have been in intimate relations with the Chinese, the Arabs, and Eastern Turkistan.[3]

In the 10th century the might of the Khagas began to decline, the Uigurs and other nations threw off their supremacy, and they for a while disappeared from history, only to return to it again in the second half of the thirteenth century under their present name of Kirghiz, in Chinese *Ki-li-ki-tsi*. The movements among the nomad tribes between the tenth and thirteenth centuries seem to have cut the Kirghiz in two, so that while the greater portion of them lived in their present habitats in the Tian Shan and the Pamir, another division of them remained on the upper waters of the Yenissei, where, even as late as the eighteenth century, they gave much trouble to the Russian colonists. During the eighteenth century they disappeared, partly cut off by the attacks of the Kalmuks and of other hostile tribes, and partly absorbed by them, while only

[1] See also vol i. p. 30. *Kara-Kirghiz* is an appellation which is thought to be borrowed from the Kirghiz-Kaisaks, given, as they say, to denote their low origin, and supposed want of nobility, but, according to Mr. Radloff, because for a long time they refused to embrace Mahommedanism, unbelievers being called by Mussulmans *Kara-Kaffir*, 'black infidels.' Kirghiz is the only name they themselves use.

[2] Klaproth and Abel Rémusat class them among the people of Germanic race.

[3] An exceedingly interesting account of the Khagas from Chinese sources is to be found in the 'Collection of Information about the Peoples anciently inhabiting Central Asia' by the Monk Hyacinth; vol. i. pp. 442-451. St. Petersburg, 1851.

a small remnant was able to join the rest of their race—too small to leave any impression of this exodus on their traditions or legends.

At the end of the last century these Kara-Kirghiz were subject to the Chinese, who on several occasions gave them protection against the attacks of the petty Beks of the provinces of Khokand and Tashkent. Subsequently they came under the dominion of Khokand, but in the troubles at the death of Madali Khan, in 1842, they made themselves practically independent. Owing to the disputes and wars between the different tribes, especially those of Bogu and Sary-bagysh, those inhabiting the Issyk Kul region asked one after another to be taken under Russian protection. A few of them, however, owe allegiance to the ruler of Kashgar. Those living in the Alai and the Pamir in part recognise a nominal allegiance to the Khan of Khokand. They are divided into two great divisions; *On*, right, and *Sol*, left. To the first belong the tribes of Bogu, Sary-bagysh, Sult (Solty), Sayak, Tchon-bagysh, Tcherik, and Bassyz, who live throughout the Tian Shan on the river systems of the Tekes, the Issyk Kul, the Naryn and the Tchu. The left division includes the tribes of Saru, Munduz, Kontche (Kutchu), and Ktai, and is distributed through the Alai and the Pamir. As only two tribes are thoroughly known, but vague estimates can be formed of their numbers; but it is thought that the Kara-Kirghiz within the Russian dominions number about 200,000, and that there are, perhaps, 150,000 more in Eastern Turkistan and Khokand.

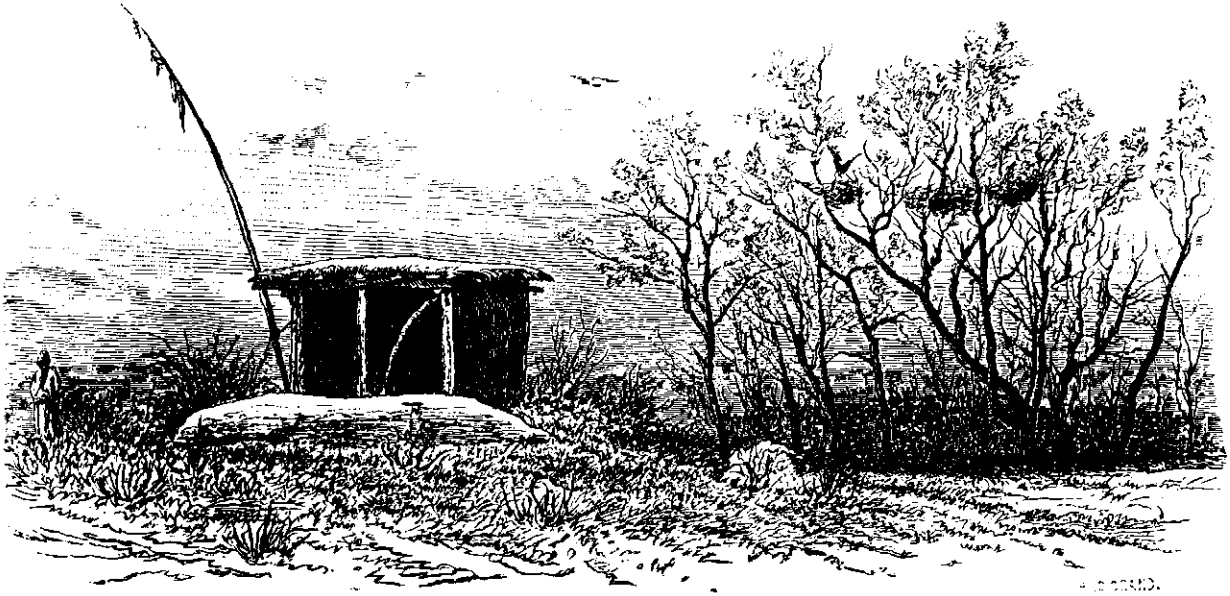
The manners, the customs, and even the dress of the Kara-Kirghiz are, in most respects, similar to those of the Kirghiz Kaisaks, and in general there must be a similarity among all nomadic tribes under similar conditions in northern Asia. In religion they, like the Kirghiz Kaisaks, are nominally Mohammedans, although few of them have ever heard of the existence of Mohammed, and still fewer know any of the prayers or practice any of the observances of that creed. They retain traces of their old Shamanism. According to Bardashef[1] the rite of fire-worship is celebrated on Thursday nights; 'grease is thrown over the flames, around which nine lamps are placed. Prayers are also read, if there be any one present able to read

[1] Quoted by Veniukof.

them, during which the worshippers remain prostrate.' Their Shamans wear long hair, and caps and sleeves of swan's down. They are even fonder of music and poetry than are the Kirghiz Kaisaks, and one of their favourite recreations is to listen to singers of epic ballads, one of whom is to be found in every encampment, and with every expedition. They possess an epic poem, the Manas, part of which has been written down by Valikhanof and by Radloff. It is, Valikhanof says, an encyclopædical collection of all the Kirghiz mythological tales and traditions grouped round one person, the giant Manas, being a sort of Iliad of the Steppe.

There is a legend deriving the name of the Kirghiz, which they themselves pronounce *K"rg"z*, from forty maidens, *kyrk kyz*; and the story goes that the daughter of a certain Khan, on returning one day from a long excursion with her forty handmaidens, found her tents pillaged, and but one thing left alive in them—a red dog, whom the Kirghiz consider the father of their race, while the name itself is borne in remembrance of their mothers. Some tribes are silent about the red dog, and say that the forty maidens were impregnated by the foam of Lake Issyk Kul, but the legend in one or the other of these forms exists with many variations, not only among the Kara-Kirghiz themselves, but also among the surrounding tribes, and even as far back as the time of the Mongols a Chinese writer repeats the story.[1] The claim of descent from animals is not uncommon among the Asiatic tribes, and is widely spread among those of America, and such legends have frequently been looked upon as significant of a very ancient origin for the people who possess them. There exist also traditions of a similar nature with regard to the origin of the various tribes, who all try to connect themselves with the hero Togai. The tribes of Sult, Sary-bagysh and Bogu claim to be descended from Togai by his lawful wives, while the Sayaks were merely the offspring of one of his concubines, for which reason these last are looked upon with contempt by the other tribes, and were formerly frequently reduced to slavery. As to the Bogus, it is related that near the present site of Fort Naryn there is a

[1] With this legend it is interesting to compare the story given by King Hethum of the people living beyond Khatai, for which see APPENDIX III., at the end of Vol. I.



A WAYSIDE TOMB.

mountain called Ala-Myshak—the spotted cat—through which runs a tunnel. One day while out hunting the mountain deer, a Kirghiz of the tribe of Sary-bagysh came by accident to this place, and seeing a light coming from the other end of the tunnel, ventured into it. When about halfway through he met an animal with horns, which he took for a deer and killed, but on dragging it to the entrance he saw that it was a man with horns like those of the deer (*bogu*). Soon a woman with similar horns ran up, fell weeping on the body, and said that it was her brother. Not knowing what to do, and repenting his involuntary murder, the Sarybagysh proposed to expiate his crime by marrying the woman, and from them came the tribe of Bogu.

Among the Kara-Kirghiz the *Manaps*, or tribal and family chiefs, claim a sort of aristocracy as being descended from Togai. Beneath them are only the common people, *bukhara*, and the slaves, *kul*, although in those tribes under Russian rule slavery has now been abolished. Notwithstanding that by the Russian regulations the *Manaps* have no legal power, they still have an enormous influence among the tribes and the greatest respect is paid to them, as in general, in any place where the patriarchal system exists, respect is paid to age. Among the Kara-Kirghiz the son never becomes entirely emancipated from his father, although when he reaches the age of twenty he usually has a tent set apart for him, and cattle and sheep are given to him for his subsistence. He does not reach full age until he is thirty, and his accession to the dignity of manhood is marked by a feast, at which he must undergo the ceremony of having his moustaches shaved. He is then declared to be a man, and to be able to take part in the councils; but even this he cannot do if his father be present, for as long as his father may live he is supposed to be acting only as his deputy. Besides the *Manaps* there are always honoured Kirghiz—not necessarily of the aristocracy, called *Biis*, who are something in the nature of judges, and to whom disputes are referred for decision. Under the Russian administration the *Biis* have been made into actual judges, and are elective from each district; indeed, one is now located in every *aul*, or village.[1]

[1] For further information about the Kara-Kirghiz, see Radloff's 'Observations sur les Kirghiz,' in the 'Journal Asiatique,' 1863, No. 9; Wilh. Schott; 'Uber die

On my return to Tokmak I found there a large encampment of Kara-Kirghiz, and soon learned that an extraordinary session of the Biis of the two large districts of Tokmak and Issyk Kul was taking place. Each single Bii has jurisdiction over those cases only which do not exceed one hundred rubles, five horses, or fifty sheep; cases involving amounts up to ten times that sum are given over to a council of Biis; while the extraordinary sessions of the Biis of two districts are held to consider cases arising between the Kirghiz of those different administrative divisions.

The Biis, who were all big, stout, well-to-do looking men, were seated on the ground in a circle in a large *kibitka*. In the centre was a small table, at which sat the Prefect of the district, while the interpreter with his bundles of papers, had a chair near by. The proceedings were marked by regularity and good order. Plaintiff and defendant told their stories, which were supported, if necessary, by witnesses. The interpreter related the gist of the case to the Prefect, and made a short note of it in his book, and after a consultation of the Biis of each district, first separately and then together, the decision was entered in the book and they affixed their seals.

When the Russians established the courts of the Biis, they abstained from appointing the Biis, which would have been in perfect accordance with native customs, but introduced the system of election, which was foreign to all Kirghiz traditions. There is now disagreement among the Russian officials as to the value of the present system. Some maintain, with very great appearance of truth, that the elections are a mere farce, as they are entirely in the hands of the tribal leaders and of the aristocratic families who compel the choice of their sons and adherents, so that the Russian system is only tending in an indirect way to strengthen the influence of the *Manaps*. Others, while admitting the truth of this, think the system in itself a good one, but propose that the influence of the *Manaps* should be counteracted by a similar pressure from the district prefects. In this case why would it not be simpler, and give on the whole greater satisfaction, if the Russian authorities directly named the Biis? As it is, if a Kirghiz can obtain a

ächten Kirgisen;' in the Abhandlungen der Königl. Akademie der Wissenchaften zu Berlin, 1864; and Michells' 'The Russians in Central Asia.'

little influence with the Prefect, or with his interpreter, he can always manage in some way to have the decision of the Biis set aside, or reversed by the authorities. One upright Russian magistrate, if he were willing to forego the formalities, red tape and paper-smudging so dear to his race, could accomplish more for justice and for order among the Kirghiz, both of mountain and of steppe, than all the pseudo-autonomy and the fictitious elective system that has of late been introduced. In the present state of things, in matters of grave importance, or for anything which concerns the Russians or the Government, the Kirghiz, as well as all the other natives, are entirely in the hands of the interpreters.

In general these interpreters are a sorry set, which is strange considering the number of Asiatics in the Russian service, and the excellent appliances which exist in Russia for learning the Oriental languages. With the exception of a few officers who have received a fair education, and who are sometimes honest and capable, they are Tartars who have wandered to this part of Asia for the purpose of making their fortunes, or Kirghiz who have been picked up on the steppe, or who have been serving as *jigits*. They usually know no Persian, have but an imperfect acquaintance with the Uzbek dialect, and understand Russian still less. Sometimes they are mere Cossacks, unable to read or write, who have learned the languages simply by picking them up in their daily intercourse with the natives. It is no wonder that such interpreters make glaring, and even amusing mistakes. I remember a case which produced no little sensation in Samarkand. A Sart came to the judge to complain that Nur Mohammed, one of his neighbours, while setting fire to the house of *Kalian Musha*, had through carelessness burnt down four acres of ripe wheat belonging to him. The judge, who thought he should have two cases to try, immediately ordered the arrest of Nur Mohammed. On a subsequent examination he enquired why *Kalian Musha* did not appear to give evidence, and was told that *Kalian Musha* had been burnt up with all his family at the time the house was set on fire. At this unheard-of atrocity the judge got much excited, and it was some time before the united efforts of several interpreters were able to convince him that the whole difficulty was one of mistranslation—that *Kalian Musha* was

the name given to a sort of large rat which ate grain, and that the fire was caused by an attempt to burn this animal's nest.

On one occasion General Kaufmann received a letter from the Amir, and was greatly annoyed on opening it to find that, according to his interpreter, it was addressed to the Emperor Alexander. Fortunately there was an officer present who knew Persian better, and on examining the letter it was found that the phrase which caused the trouble was one of mere compliment, calling the General a second Alexander the Great. At the public reception in Tashkent of the son of Khudayar Khan, General Kaufmann said, 'By coming here to visit me, you show that you are the obedient son of your father and a faithful servant of your country.' The interpreter, to the wonderment and amusement of the natives, rendered this 'By coming here to see me you show that you are really the son of your father.'

In a letter from Khudayar Khan to General Kolpakofsky, which treated of the rebellion in 1873, there was this phrase: 'The Kirghiz of their own accord (*onbash*) caused the surrounding (*tchit*) places to rebel,' which was translated by the official interpreter thus: 'The Kirghiz went out from the city Nash to the city Tchit.'

But such curiosities of translation might be indefinitely multiplied. The worst feature of the present system of interpreters is that these can take advantage of their position to deceive both Russians and natives, and the latter especially suffer greatly. The orders of the Russians are falsely translated to them, and sums of money are extorted from them under the pretence of setting things straight.

As the Kastek Pass is no longer used for vehicles, from Tokmak I turned back on my road as far as Pishpek, and then went north to the station of Konstantinofskaya, where there is an excellent bridge over that shallow, muddy, and utterly useless river—the Tchu. A few weeks after I passed, Mr. Kopylof, the clerk of Mr. Kuznetzof, a well known merchant and contractor for the post stations, attempted to descend the Tchu, in the hope of being able to discover the practicability of sending cargoes of grain and forage as far as Lake Saumal-Kul, whence there would only be one hundred miles transport to Fort Perovsky, for the better provisioning