ing tribute to the Afghans only when compelled by an armed force. According to the London *Times*, the amir of Afghan did not occupy this disputed territory until 1883, when he received a map from the viceroy of India, with the boundary-line now claimed.

The Russians claim that the English have furnished the Afghans with maps, plans of fortifications, money to build and equip these forts, and engineers to superintend the construction, and that these acts are a breach of good faith on the part of England. The English claim that Russia has sent an armed force into the disputed territory, occupying at least two towns, and that these acts are a breach of good faith on the part of Russia.

The English policy in India has been the same as that of Russia. It was found necessary, and proved successful, to the maintenance of order; and there is every reason to believe that a similar policy will produce like results.

Gardiner G. Hubbard.

ROADS FROM INDIA TO CENTRAL ASIA.

Dost Muhammad, one of the most famous amirs of Afghanistan, is reported to have said that he could not understand why the masters of the riches of India ever should have designed "occupying such a country as Kabul, where there is nothing but rocks and stones." It was a shrewd remark; and Afghanistan owes its importance, not to the fertility of its soil or to any other natural advantages, but to the fact that the great trade and military routes of central Asia lie within its borders. Afghanistan — using the word in its broadest sense, as including all the territory under the rule of the present amir — takes the form, roughly speaking, of an immense square, with sides of about six hundred miles in length. On the west a well-defined boundary separates it from Persia. To the south the dividing-line between the territories of the amir and those of the khan of Kelat, as the ruler of Baluchistan is often called in English books, is not so well marked; but, as a large portion of it runs through an uninhabitable salt desert, this is not of much importance. On the east the Suliman and other mountain ranges form a natural frontier between Afghanistan and British India. At one time this mountain barrier was supposed to be impracticable for the movement of large masses of troops. To-day it is certain that such is not the case; for, in addition to the well-known Khyber, Kuram, and Bolan passes, more than two hundred other paths cross these mountains in every direction. In fact, the barrier is no barrier at all, and would offer but little resistance to an enterprising general. It is on the north, however, that Afghanistan is most vulnerable. True, the Amu Daria or Oxus River, from its source 13,900 feet above the sea, in Lake Sir-i-Kuld, in the highland of Great Pamir, to Khoja Saleh, separates the Afghan provinces of Badakshan and Turkestan from the Russian dominions of Ferghana and Bokhara. But a river is, at best, a poor boundary, from a military point of view; and, besides, from Khoja Saleh to the Persian frontier, on the Hari-Rud, the line, wherever run, must be purely artificial.

More unfortunate still, the Hindu Kush, with its outlying spurs — the Khor-i-Baba, Safed Kur (White Mountains), and Siah Kur (Black Mountains) — running from east to west, divides Afghanistan into two unequal parts. The territory lying north of these mountains belongs, physically speaking, to the basin of the Oxus (Aralo-Caspian basin), or, in other words, to Russian Asia. In addition, these mountains, together with their off-shoots to the south, prevent, during five months in each year, all direct communication between Kabul, the chief city of the east, and Herat, the equally important emporium of the west. The main route between these two places is through Kandahar, which thus lies at the southern apex of a nearly equilateral triangle, with sides of three hundred and three hundred and thirty-five miles. The position of these places once thoroughly grasped, there is no difficulty in understanding the base of the English operations in Afghanistan.

From Karachi (Kurrachee) on the Arabian Gulf, and near the mouth of the river Indus, a railway runs along that river by Haidarabad to Sukkur. At this point it crosses the Indus, and, passing by Multan, joins the line from Calcutta and Bombay at Lahore. The latter road runs thence by Rawal Pindi, crossing the Indus near Attock, to Peshawar at the entrance of the Khyber Pass. The last of this railway-system — 'the missing link from Multan to Lahore' — was open to traffic in 1878.

Kabul, the chief political city of Afghanistan, contains a population of between fifty and sixty thousand. It is situated on the Kabul River, not far from its confluence with the Logar, and is the converging point of the trade-routes from Afghan Turkestan, and the countries beyond the Oxus, over the difficult mountain passes, eleven and twelve thousand feet high, of the Hindu Kush; from Persia and Baluchistan by Kandahar; and from India by

the Khyber and Kuram passes. From Kabul to Peshawar (190 miles), the road leads by the Khurd Kabul or Lutaband passes to the Jagdalak Pass. It was in these narrow defiles that the English army was slaughtered by the Afghans in 1842. Thence by Gandamak and Jalalabad, on the Kabul River, the road runs to Lalpura. There it leaves the river, and follows two mountain streams over the Khyber Pass (3,000 feet), to Peshawar. This route was followed by Elphinstone and Pollock in the first Afghan war; and, now that the terminus of the Punjab railway is at Peshawar, it is the most important route from India to eastern Afghanistan, although Gen. (now Sir Frederick) Roberts, in 1879, led his army over the more southern Kuram Pass to Kabul.

Kandahar, the great trade-centre of the south, lying on the direct road from India to Herat, is likely to be of more importance in case of a war between England and Russia. It is situated in a small plain between the Arghand-áb and Tarnak rivers, and commands the road through the Tarnak valley, by Ghazni, to Kabul (318 miles). Sir John Keane took this route on his march to Kandahar in 1838; Nott marched by it in 1842, to aid Pollock in avenging the massacre of Elphinstone's expedition; and it was by this road that Sir Frederick Roberts made his famous march from Kabul to the relief of Kandahar in 1880. The railroad from India to Kandahar leaves the main line from Karachi to Lahore, at Sukkur on the Indus; thence by Shikarpur and Sibi to Rindli, at the entrance of the Bolan Pass. Here the railway stops; but a good carriage-road has been constructed, at least as far as Quetta. Unfortunately no bridges were built over the streams, they being crossed by fords; and this has made it impossible to lay a light military railway along the road. Indeed, it has been stated that a thoroughly built railway could not be opened to Quetta in less than two years. Quetta, or Shal, is situated between the head of the Bolan Pass and the Pishin valley. It commands the road, and is therefore a place of very great military importance. The Bolan Pass and Quetta are in Baluchistan; but the English acquired by treaty, in 1876, the right to hold and use the pass and town for military purposes, and Quetta is now the most advanced English outpost. The road leads thence through the Pishin valley, and over the Kojak or Gwaja passes to Kandahar. From the end of the railway at Rindli, to Kandahar, is somewhere between 200 and 260 miles. Authority has been given to complete it to the Pishin valley within a hundred miles of Kandahar. That city was occupied by the English from 1839 to 1842, and again from 1879 to 1881. The trade-route thence to Herat, nearly 370 miles away, leads by two strong positions, — Kushk-i-Nakud, the scene of Burrows's defeat in 1880, and Girishk, — and over several mountain passes. But the importance of this road, and of Kandahar itself, has been lessened by the discovery of a much longer, but nevertheless good, route from Quetta to Herat without passing Kandahar. It was by this road that Gen. Lumsden's Indian escort, over 1,300 strong, and with a train of 1,300 camels and 400 mules, marched at an average rate of eighteen miles a day to meet him on the frontier.

Herat (Heri) is situated on a fertile plain, near the river Hari-Rud (river of Heri or Herat), between the western extremities of the spurs of the Hindu Kush, above mentioned. Its importance, both commercial and strategic, is due to the fact that it dominates the best road from the Caspian by Mash-had, to the Indus by Kandahar. The position of the city itself, from a military point of view, is not good; because its defences are, as Gen. Grodekoff pointed out, commanded by a neighboring hill.

The Hari-Rud rises in the heart of Afghanistan, and flowing almost due west along the northern base of the Paropamisus Hills, within a few miles of Herat, strikes the Persian frontier seventy miles beyond that city, at Kusan. There it abruptly turns north, and, passing Zolfikar, — a name given to a ford, but more correctly, perhaps, to a neighboring pass in the hills, — reaches Pul-i-Khatun. At this point it receives its principal affluent, the Kashaf Rud, from the west. The Kashaf and Hari-Rud, after leaving Pul-i-Khatun, take the name of Tajand, and, passing Sarakhs, become desiccated in the Turkoman Steppe. The oasis thus formed lies between Merv and Persia, and for this reason has been nearly uninhabited until the recent Russian advance upon Merv.

The river Murgh-ab rises to the south of the Paropamisus Hills, and, flowing in a general northerly direction, passes the Afghan stronghold of Bala Murghab, on the road from Herat to Maimana and Afghan Turkestan; thence it flows by Meruchak (where, according to the Russians, the north-western boundary of Afghanistan crosses the river), by Panj Deh and Yulatan, to Merv, where it loses itself in the irrigation canals of that oasis.

A few miles below Panj Deh the Murgh-áb receives from the west the river Kushk, which rises to the north of the water-parting not far

from Herat. The road from Herat to Bala Murghab crosses its upper waters. At some point near the confluence of the Murgh-áb and the Kushk the Afghans constructed a small fort called Ak Tepe. The Merv oasis, from just above Yulatan, stretches along the Murgh-áb for nearly sixty miles. Its width is not far from forty miles, and it may be said to be only 240 miles from Herat. A detailed and interesting description of the oasis, together with a clear plan, is given in the second volume of O'Donovan's 'Merv Oasis.' It is only necessary to say here that Merv is the converging point of the caravan routes from Persia by Mash-had, to Khiva, at the northern end of the Turkoman Steppe, and to Bokhara and the countries beyond the Oxus.

Edward Channing.

THE RACES OF CENTRAL ASIA.

Afghanistan is inhabited by many different tribes and races, of whom the Afghans are undoubtedly the dominant race; but the extent of their dominion at any one time depends more upon the skill and energy of the Afghan chief or amir for the time being, than it does upon any prescriptive right or tradition. Indeed, there are living at the present moment, in the mountainous districts, non-Afghan tribes which have never been subdued. And the Hazara dwelling on the great central plateau are only tributary to the ruler of Kabul when that potentate is sufficiently strong at home to spare soldiers to collect the tribute or taxes. There is no settled government in the country. The amir's authority is respected only when he possesses means of compelling respect. Each tribe and clan manages its own immediate affairs through a council of the elders, and in accordance with the immemorial customs of the tribe. The amir is merely a dictator for life; and every attempt, in recent times, to introduce a settled form of government or to establish a dynasty, has been an immediate and complete failure. It is this want of cohesion among the Afghans themselves that has brought about the interference of the English in their domestic and foreign relations. The true Afghan tribes live in the valleys between Kabul and Peshawar, and Kabul and Kandahar. They are a sturdy, daring people, and are described as possessing a strong Jewish cast of countenance. This latter peculiarity has induced some learned and enthusiastic ethnologists to declare that they, like all other races whose origin is unknown, are the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel. However this may be, they at one time extended their rule to the south of Peshawar, and have been a constant thorn in the flesh of the viceroy of India from the beginning of the century to the present day.

To show the fluctuating nature of the Afghan dominion, let us briefly trace the history of the country from 1842 to the present year. In 1842 the English abandoned the attempt to force a ruler on the Afghans, and again recognized Dost Muhammad as amir of Kabul. Eight years later, that chieftain reconquered Balkh, then the most important town north of the Hindu Kush; and between 1850 and 1860 he extended his rule over the whole of Afghan Turkestan, and reduced Badakshan to the condition of a tributary province. In 1855 he took Kandahar, and thus established his authority in the south. But it was not until 1863 that he captured Herat. Then, for the first time since the days of Timur, there was one supreme ruler in the country. Two weeks later he died. His son, Shir Ali, succeeded him. But there were many rivals in the field, among them Abdurrahman Khan, the present amir; and Shir Ali cannot be said to have been the undisputed ruler of Afghanistan before 1868. His attention was then directed to persuading the English, in return for valuable concessions, to guarantee the amirship to himself and his descendants, and also to supply him with funds with which to raise and maintain an army in the face of the unpopularity his reforms were arousing in Afghanistan. In this he was only partially successful; and in 1878 he turned to the Russians. Gen. Stolietoff was received at Kabul as ambassador, and Gen. Grodekoff was escorted through Afghan Turkestan to Herat, while the English envoy was not even allowed to cross the frontier. War followed; and in a few months Shir Ali died a fugitive at Mazar-i-Sharif. His second son, Yakub Khan, was recognized by the English as amir; and, upon his signing the treaty of Gandamak in 1879, the English evacuated the country. By this treaty the foreign relations of Afghanistan were placed under the control of the English, who were to be allowed to send a 'resident' to Kabul. Shortly after his arrival, Major Cavagnari, the 'resident,' was murdered. The English again invaded the country, deposed Yakub Khan, and recognized his cousin, Abdurrahman Khan, for many years an exile in Bokhara and Samarkand, as amir. Kabul was evacuated in 1880, and Kandahar in 1881. In 1883 the new amir drove Ayub Khan, another son of Shir Ali,