Into Forbidden Afghanistan

“The flying bullet down to Pass
That whistles clear; All flesh is grass.'

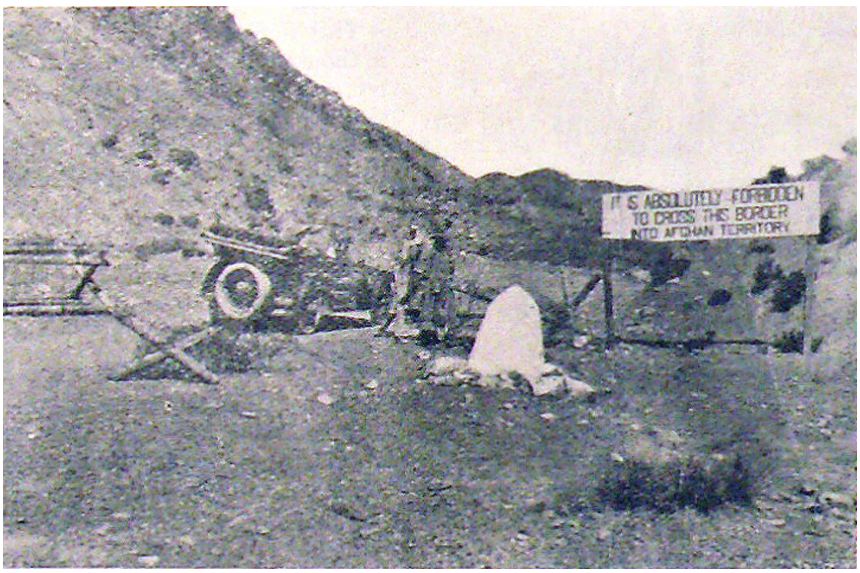
A srimmage in a Border Station—
A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee jezail."
Kippling, ... Arithmetic on the Frontier."

THE swaggering Afghan has good reason to swagger. Though placed squarely between two powerful nations—the Bear to the north and the Lion to the South — the independence of his mountainous little country remains intact.

All the more remarkab1e this, when one considers that Afghanistan is the gateway to India of the fecund mi1lions and the incalculable wealth. Throughout history Afghan roads have echoed to the march of northern hosts who looked with lustful eyes on India's riches. Mede, Greek, Mongol, Tartar—these and others have plundered India with arms that reached through the Afghan door.

Few of the invaders seem to have paid much attention en route to the Afghans. The latter were but a thorn-prick in the sides of the powerful armies that swept resistlessly through to the lush lands to the south. Yet the freedom-loving mountaineers—hid in ravine and cave—waged .incessant guerilla warfare. And after the wave of each fresh Indian invasion ebbed, the Afghans seized control of their territory once more. This sovereignty they hold undisputed, to-day.

Afghanistan dislikes the foreigner, be he Russian, Englishman. German. or what not, centuries of unpleasant experience with invaders have bred this feeling in the Afghan blood. The wilder tribes are prone to give token of their enmity in the form of whining rifle bullets that oftener than not reach their marks. Wherefore official British India, taking cognisance of the Afghans' preference for their own company to the exclusion of any other, has inserted the words "It is absolutely forbidden" in the conspicuous warning against entering Afghan territory at the end of the Khyber Pass. An armed sentry emphasises the text of the notice.



Where most traveller turn back. The border between India and Afghanistan

When Lowell Thomas, the American traveller and explorer tried to get permission to visit Afghanistan with his colleague Harry A. Chase in order to film the country and its people, he ran into the stiffest kind of opposition. For two years he sought, through British, Indian and American channels. to have his plan approved. The formal invitation from the Amir of Afghanistan was eventually received in roundabout fashion through the American Charge d'Affaires at the Court of Persia.

The tale of Tomas' trip into Forbidden Afghanistan constitutes a vivid picture of a country wholly eastern in character, lawless in many ways, fascinatingly untouched by civilisation—one of the few links that still bind our matter-of-fact era to the storied past.

From the beginning it had been decided to make the trip by motor car. As soon as the invitation from the Amir arrived. "Thomas secured a six cylinder Buick at Calcutta. The car was shipped in a special railway carriage across India to Peshawar where the Afghan expedition was to start.

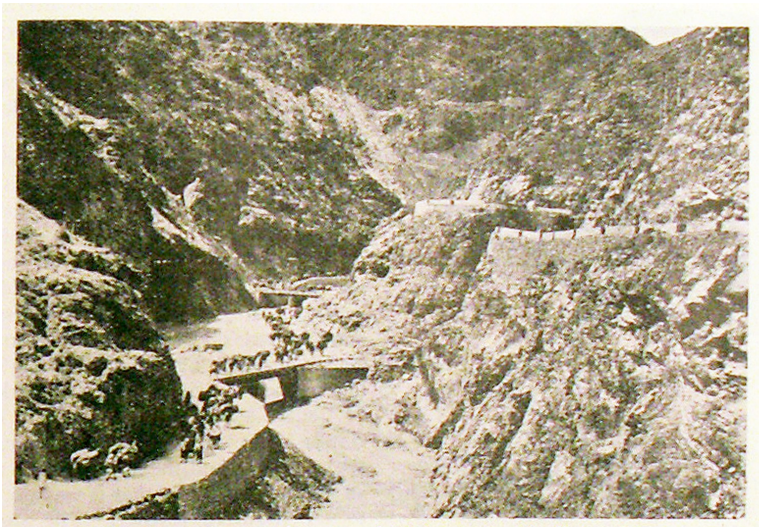
The map of India shows a tongue of red which extends far northward. In this tongue lies Peshawar. It is the capital of India's North-West Frontier Province, and a thoroughly picturesque Central Asian city. The headquarters for Pathan and other hill tribesmen. its streets and bazaars present a motley picture of Oriental life. Swaggering

males buy gold-threaded boots to adorn their unwashed feet. Merchants haggle interminably over their wares. Veiled women drift past like wraiths. Sounds, sights, smells—all are of the East.

The day Lowell Thomas and his companions arrived in Peshawar the sky turned copper-coloured, and there was a rumble of thunder like the cough of French Seventy-fives before an attack. These phenomena proved to be the fore-runners of a severe storm which the expedition encountered twenty-four hours later on the Afghan desert.

For the trip into Afghanistan the Buick car had been fitted with special racks for photographic equipment, and with enough petrol and oil to last through the entire journey of five hundred miles. The driver of the car was David King, an American jute-broker, of Calcutta. Thomas had invited King to go along because he foresaw his value as an armed companion in case of trouble with lawless brigands along the border.

From Peshawar the car was driven over the plain to Fort Jamrud, which lies at the Indian end of the Khyber Pass. Fort Jamrud—shaped like a Dreadnaught—is recognised by perspiring Tommy Atkins as a military blast-furnace. Dozens of men crumple up here with heat stroke during the summer months. The day Thomas and the others stopped at Fort Jamrud to have their permits inspected the thermometer stood at 122 degrees in the shade.



The South-Eastern Gateway of Afghanistan—the Kyber Pass.

'Britain holds the Khylier Pass throughout its length—must hold it to protect India. For the Khyber Pass is the funnel through which India's ravishers have poured since history began. It is one of the oldest highroads in the world. Over it swept the invading Aryans from Central Asia. Over it came swarms of Huns and Tartars. And over the Khyber today might steal other raiders were it not for the strong British force that is stationed there.

On their way through the Pass, Thomas and his party encountered, in Ali Masjid Gorge, the advance guard of a Central Asian caravan that turned out to be fifteen miles long. It. included more than five thousand camels—mostly one-humped dromedaries, but some of the shaggy two - humped variety which came from far-off Mongolia and the Gobi Desert.

These huge caravans bring to India the silks and oriental car-pets of Bokhara and Samarkand; laden with spices and Indian merchandise. Since prehistoric times they have wound their crawling way through the Khyber Pass, the shouts of the camel-drivers echoing from the sullen walls of the gorge. They have been raided, scattered, looted—yet the trade goes steadily on. For commerce has a habit of outliving its despoilers.

The Afridis of the Khyber Pass—natives with accurate rifle-aim and sensitive trigger-fingers—are a bloodthirsty lot. They are continually involved in internal feuds, yet it is only the British military detachment stationed at the Khyber that keeps them from joining forces and pouncing as one man upon caravans, or even raiding through to India itself. The traveller in the Pass is never precisely certain that a rifle-bullet is not going to graze his hat-brim. When the Afghan frontier itself is crossed. and the long arm of British authority removed, this danger becomes all the more menacing. A European was once murdered a hundred yards over the line. Afghans Wazirs, Afridis---all are fanatical adherents to the creed of Mohammed. They believe that the destruction of unbelievers is a positive virtue, and one that will he suitably rewarded in an houri-adorned hereafter.

At the Afghan end of the Khyber, twenty seven miles from Fort Jamrud is Lundi Kotal, the headquarters of the British military detachment for the Khyber. This encampment is only a few hundred yards from the Afghan border. Up to now Thomas and his companions had found their military permits sufficient to get them through; but at the border itself it was necessary to display

the formidable document which had come direct from the Amir.

The actual crossing of the line gave a genuine thrill to the travellers, since it meant the consummation of two years' diplomatic wire-pulling to get the coveted invitation from the Afghan ruler. A few yards over the border a swarthy native representing the Amir's army and festooned with bandoliers of ammunition, reported to Thomas. He insisted on climbing into the car. This made a total of five passengers averaging 150 pounds each, in addition to the 1,000 pounds of dead weight, and so brought the Buick's load up to nearly a ton.

Ahead lay a sun-baked plain. shimmering in the heat of a Central Asian summer morning—Afghanistan the forbidden!

From the border to Dekka —a city eleven

The Afghan Tribesmen's reception of strangers.

miles from the frontier the road was fairly good. This part of the Afghan desert is barren of vegetation, with black lava out-croppings. The only living beings seen were humans, who came running down to the road to watch the car pass by.

For more than five thousand years caravans have travelled this ancient highway. And these caravans have left more than five million sharp iron tacks on the road. They drop out of the boots of the camel-drivers and the shoes of the mules and bullocks. The heads of these tacks are enormous, and they invariably lie point up covered by the dust of ages. So tyre punctures averaged one all hour throughout the journey. In the furnace-like heat— the thermometer reading over 150 degrees in the sun —the feelings of the party when escaping air began to hiss from a tyre can well be imagined.

Thomas and his companions were acquainted, however, with the Indian climate, and had taken full precautions against sunstroke. In addition to extra thick pig-sticker sun helmets they all wore sun protectors, spine pads, smoked glasses and heavy clothing to *keep out* the heat. To the Afghans beside the road they undoubtedly looked like visitors from another planet.

After Dekka the Buick ran into a fearful stretch of road. Piles of boulders alternated with sand dunes and deep pits. The car was wrenched, twisted and shaken until it seemed it must break in two. The heavty load that was carried caused the Buick to crouch, apparently, before it leaped from one pit or boulder to another.

For three hours this terrific racking and pounding lasted; then the Buick plunged into hub-deep sand, The more the car laboured to get out the deeper its weight forced the wheels to sink. Finally the travellers unloaded everything on board. This done, the Buick, with a roar, pushed aside the sand and swung ahead. When clear of the sand-pit the load was put back on the car and the journey resumed.

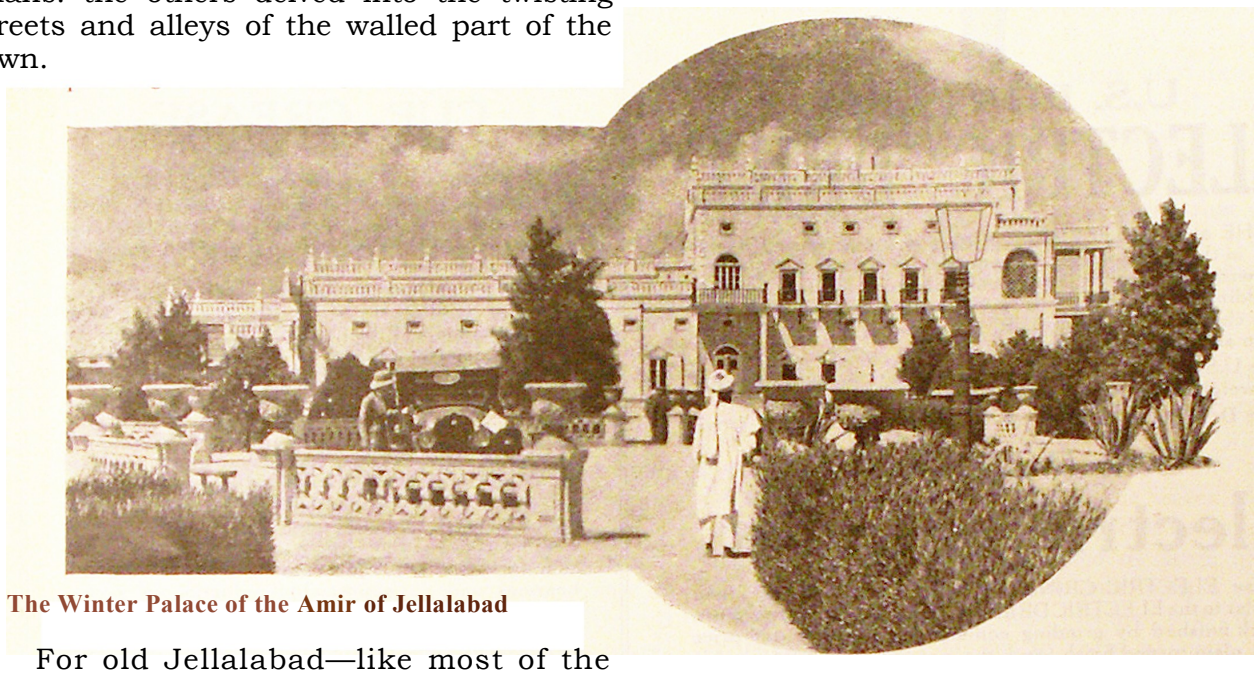
One scourge of Afghanistan is the simoon, or desert storm. Midway between Dekka and the city of Jellalabad the travellers saw copper-coloured clouds rolling toward them. Soon the sand-dust began to rise, and the air grew like a London fog—so dense and opaque that it was out of the question to try to drive further. The storm lasted only twenty minutes, but that was long enough for the sand to penetrate three lavers of canvas into the camera cases. The flying particles stung the travellers' hands and faces like needles. A camel caravan that was passing at the time was also obliged to stop. The camels all kneeled. the drivers huddling beside them the while.

The caravan route to Kabul —the Afghan capital-which Thomas and his companions followed, leads over four saw-tooth mountain ranges and through numerous washouts. An especially tricky example of the last named was encountered just before the Buick reached Jellalabad. Here the water was well above the axles, and the bottom made up of rolling stones. In the Mountain sections stiff grades were common, and the switch-back turns extremely dangerous. Thousands of years of caravan traffic have brought no noticeable betterment to this immemorial highway. The East regards public improvements with a phlegmatic eye.

Into Forbidden Afghanistan

Jellalabad is a city located a third of the distance along the road from Dekka to Kabul, on the western edge of the Afghan desert. The Amir and his court sometimes come there in winter when Kabul and the other mountain regions are snowbound. The royal palace in Jellalabad is a building of graceful architecture and delicate ornamentation, set in the midst of well-kept grounds. At this palace the travellers spent their first night in Afghanistan.

During the hours just before sundown, while some of the party lounged under the date-palms in the palace grounds listening to the song of nightingales and to the murmur of gossiping Afghans. the others delved into the twisting streets and alleys of the walled part of the town.



The Winter Palace of the Amir of Jellalabad

For old Jellalabad—like most of the cities in the remoter parts of Central Asia—is surrounded by a high wall ranging from ten to twenty feet in thick-ness. The gates are all double or treble-walled, so that if besiegers storm the outer portal they will have still others to batter down. Rows of slits near the top serve as loop-holes for the defenders. Only modern artillery can raze such sturdy fortifications.

Within this walled section—which lies only a few hundred yards from the Amir's winter palace—live from twenty to thirty thousand of the most hostile people in Afghanistan. The travellers had been warned not to enter walled Jellalabad, being told that if they ventured outside the gardens of the Amir's palace they ran grave risk of being shot. Luckily those who disregarded the warning and penetrated the walled city returned with whole skins. In return for the chances they took they got an unmatched view of oriental life without the modernizing touch of the occident—of water-carriers, fakirs, hook-nosed money-lenders, coffee-sipping merchants—all precisely as it had been for untold generations past.

And they took motion pictures of the scene—the first films ever exposed in Afghanstan.

The road from Jellalabad onward is marked at two-mile intervals by small mud forts—perfectly round, with loop-holes in which the travellers instinctively looked for the gleaming muzzles of Afghan rifles.

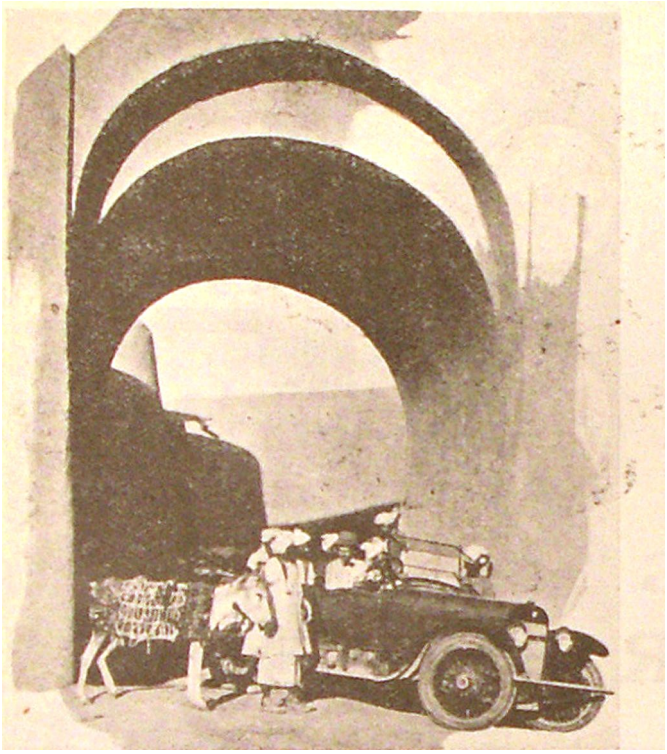
In a gorge near one of these miniature fortresses a British arm' was almost annihilated during the second Afghan war. An agreement had been reached for the British to evacuate Kabul, the capital, in peace. The Afghan tribesmen changed their minds at the last moment, and a bloody massacre ensued. Soldiers died like flies, surrounded on all sides by concealed assailants.

Afghan history is full of such incidents. The human birds of prey who live in the fastnesses of the Afghan mountains heed no laws except those born of their own savage impulses.

They are turbulent, quarrelsome, vindictive, cruel and vain. Forever boasting of their pure ancestry. their prowess and independence, they regard both taxation

and any semblance of law and order as tyranny. To the Amir they are useful in war-time. but in periods of peace a constant source of trouble.

It is interesting to know that Alexander the Great was the only individual who ever actually conquered these wild mountain tribesmen. Realizing the necessity of keeping his lines of communication safe while



Through the Triple Wall of Jellalabad

invading India, he spent several months in a ruthless campaign among the Afghan—then the Bactrian — mountains. So merciless were his methods, and so thorough their carrying out, that the tribes stayed quiescent all the time the brilliant Macedonian leader was fighting in India. Today, even, his name is not forgotten among them.

As the travellers drove along the dusty Afghan highroad, the Buick occasionally had to give right of way to one of the Amir's work-elephants. Most of these took their first sight of a modern motor car calmly enough, but now and then one would shy like a frightened horse, and go charging across the fields. The charge was always accompanied by much frantic shouting and running about on the part of Afghans nearby, since there are many situations more ideal than being stationed directly in front of a three-ton mass of bone and muscle gone on the rampage.

Between the cities of Jellalabad and Kabul lies Nimlah, a mountain village. Here the travellers spent a night in the Amir's rest-house. The house was surrounded by a high wall and a beautiful park with gardens and fountains and avenues of symmetrical cypress trees. The trees were said to have been planted by the Emperor Jehangir, one of the Great Moguls who once ruled all India.

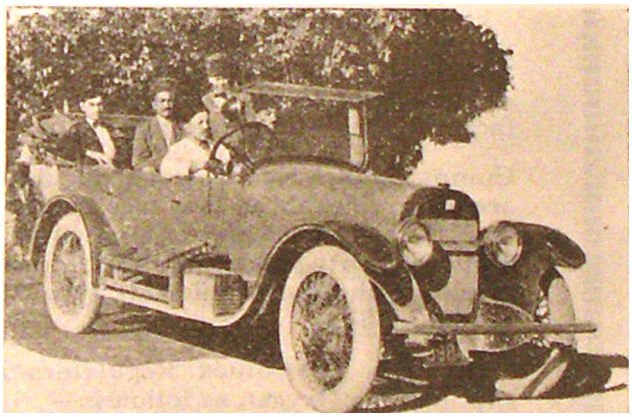
The reception received by Lowell Thomas and party at Nimlah reminded them how far they were removed from western customs. A midnight dinner fit for an oriental monarch was prepared and served them. Eight swarthy Central Asians, with baggy trousers, huge turbans and slippers with up-turned toes, appeared in single file. Each bore a silver salver covered with Afghan viands seasoned with spice and garlic. The last course included slabs of succulent watermelon, and bunches of luscious grapes.

The beds of the travellers were spread on the lawn of the Amir's rest-house, and in a circle around them were camped three squads of soldiers. The soldiers were there to guard against the visit of any chance prowler with a knife.

The Amir's hospitality thus far had been all that could be desired. It would continue throughout the visit, as Thomas and his companions were to find out when reaching Kabul on the morrow.

From Nimlah on, the journey continued without incident. Toward Kabul the road grew better, with smooth, hard surfacing and easy curves.

The Afghan capital lies a mile above sea level, in the midst of a fertile valley. Though the greater part of Afghanistan is mountain and desert, there are sections like the Kabul valley which are unusually rich. Some of the



Members of the Lowell Thomas Party in Astrakhan Head-dress

finest orchards in the world are near Kabul, and their fruits are exported to India by camel caravan.

Kabul's origin is lost in the mists of antiquity. Its rulers have included such mighty men as Baber, the first of the Great Moguls. To-day it has a population of from fifty to sixty thousand. There are no tram-cars, department stores, banks, hotels or cinema theatres in Kabul. When a citizen wants recreation he simply sits in the park with his favourite nightingale and smokes his hubble-bubble pipe.

Entering outskirts, the travellers drove slowly along a tree-shaded boulevard until they were stopped by a red-coated policeman who attached himself to the car and directed them to proceed to the Central Square. Here they were greeted by the Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs, who at once placed the Amir's guest-house at their disposal. The guest-house turned out to be a charming building surrounded by rose gardens and delightful oriental fountains. A staff of twenty-seven servants were on duty to supply the wants of Thomas and his companions.

Their first dinner consisted of highly spiced saffron Pilau, unleavened bread baked in the ashes of the fire, and Central Asian fruits—nectarines, pomegranates and plums. The meal was not prepared at the guest-house. but brought a distance of more than a mile on enormous silver dishes carried on the heads of servants. The food had been cooked at the palace of the Afghan Foreign Minister. The reason for this may have been that the Amir wanted to do away with any chance of his guests being poisoned, a thing by no means unknown at Afghan courts.

The travellers retired at ten o'clock, to be awakened at five the next morning by the intense cold, which came as a painful revelation after the heat of the desert. Breakfast over, they established diplomatic relations with the Afghan government by paying their respects at the Foreign Office.

They were informed that their formal presentation to the Amir would not take place for several days and in the meantime they were free to explore the city and its bazaars. They were requested, however, to discard their Indian solar topees in favour of Astrakhan headgear, so that they would look less like Europeans and more like guests from Turkey, Russia or Bokhara.

They were compelled, moreover, to accept the services of a secret service agent of the Amir, who thereafter never allowed a member of the party to leave his sight.

The agent slept with his clothes on and his revolvers close at hand. He spoke no English and maintained a Sphinx-like reserve. His official designation was Court Chamberlain, but Thomas and his companions referred to him as their private spy, and dubbed him

The City of Kabul

Boots and Spurs.

The members of the party found Boots and Spurs a valuable addition because he struck awe into the hearts of recalcitrant Afghans who refused to pose for the camera. While journeying about the city, if townsmen failed to get out of his way he became a transformed man. His usual silent reserve vanished. His eyes flashed fire, and he kicked people right and left. His flow of invective under such circumstances was nothing short of amazing.

Occasionally some facetious-minded members of the party would try to give Boots and Spurs the slip by jumping into the Buick and driving off, but the Afghan secret service man never failed to cut across lots and catch the offender.

Into Forbidden Afghanistan

Through the heart of the Afghan capital runs the historic Kabul River. Here the main bazaar begins, occupying the streets on both sides of the stream.

All the main bazaar thoroughfares are covered over with a crazy patchwork of gunny-bags, to keep out the sun. Unfortunately these impromptu awnings shut out the air as well. Hence the bazaar streets of Kabul are gloomy, unventilated corridors, reeking with odors of every imaginable kind.

There are several miles of them, and they are usually packed with wild tribesmen from every corner of Central Asia. Savage as these oriental *condottieri* are, they have a proud bearing and a self-respecting independence that the visitors found refreshing after the spinelessness of Indian city-dwellers.

A representative of untold generations of Afghan Fakirs

Most of them wear bulging turbans of white or blue cloth. Their knee-length coats are bound at the waist by a long sash, into which is often tucked a formidable array of daggers and revolvers. Their trousers are baggy, and fall in folds to the ankles. Their feet are shod in the heavy leather sandals of Central Asia, with high, curving toes.

Through the bazaar-throng of tribesmen, merchants and citizens of Kabul, wind heavily-laden camels, their supercilious eyes gazing down disdainfully upon the scene of bright silks, filth, swarming people, and yelling vendors of pink ices.

Occasionally an Afghan woman, veiled from the crown of her head to the tips of her toes, slips silently through the throng. The women in this country of fanatical Mohammedanism live pathetically secluded lives. Even their arms and ankles must be covered on the street, and this rule applies to *all* women—not only to those of the creed of Mohammed.

They are regarded as inferior beings, and from the age of ten on are never seen outside the walls of the harem, or in public, without their heavy veils.

Kabul is one of Central Asia's most cosmopolitan cities. Such diverse people visit it as men from Persia and Khorassan, pagans from Kafirstan whose strange religion includes bits of Greek mythology as well as Zoroastrianism and Buddhism, Turkomen from Bokhara and Samarkand, and Mongol descendants of the Great Horde of Genghis Khan. There are visitors with such odd names as Uzbegs, Ghilzai, Chakar-Aimaks, Hazaras and Tajiks.

Nowhere stronger than in Kabul and other Central Asian cities will one find popular belief in the truth of the old aphorism—"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." In the heart of Kabul lies a wide, tree-lined street which is the Champs Elysees of the Afghan capital. Here, during the cool hours of the late summer afternoon, the elite of Kabul stroll—both gentlemen and the ladies of their harems. Each man is attended by servants carrying his hubble-bubble pipe, sweetmeats and fruits.

The poorer classes take their leisure—and plenty of it—at the tea and coffee-stalls in the bazaars. Here, sipping super-sweetened liquids, they gossip for hours on end, and tell stories that hark back, many of them, to the piping days of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid.

A favourite form of diversion in the bazaars is the smoking-party. at which is inhaled a vicious Central Asian substitute for honest tobacco called *charis.* One tribesman draws at a pipe loaded with smouldering *churis* until he is overtaken by a violent spasm of coughing. Whereupon he generously passes it on to his

neighbour. The latter having reached the same condition he in turn passes the pipe on; and so it goes merrily around until all in the circle are in the throes of galloping consumption.

Owing to the break-up of the Ottoman Empire. Amir Amanullah, of Afghanistan, is today the world's most powerful Mohammedan ruler.

The visitors received their first brief audience with the Amir five days after their arrival in Kabul. At this interview—held at the royal palace—an appointment was made for a second and longer interview later on in the day, when photographs were taken.

The Amir is a man of vigor, decision. and much personal charm. He has a keen sense of humor. and is both tactful and modest. He refused to he photographed alone except when seated on his charger. Even then, as soon as he had dismounted he insisted that his brother Hazat Ullah be photographed on the same horse.

Pictures were taken of the Amir in three different costumes, and with his children, his brothers, and his cabinet and intimate associates.

At the conclusion of the picture-taking the Amir amusedly told the photographer that never before in his life had he taken so many orders from any one person.

The Amir is an indefatigable worker, and stays at his desk from early morning until late at night. An absolute monarch, all recommendations of his advisory cabinet have to be approved by him in person.

He is a thoroughgoing sportsman, and a man of great personal courage. Several times attempts have been made to assassinate him; and in each instance he has conducted himself with coolness and bravery.

On state occasions he presides with dignity. Thomas and his companions had an opportunity to witness him in this capacity during a public audience attended by twelve hundred persons, at which the minister from Soviet Russia delivered an address in French on behalf of himself and his diplomatic colleagues.

The Amir was seated in a gilded chair on a dais. Behind him were enormous red plush curtains embroidered in gold. The Amir replied to the Bolshevik minister's address in Persian, which is the court language of Afghanistan—Pushtu being the ordinary speech. At the conclusion of his address, which he delivered seated, the Amir arose and shouted a ringing national cry that was taken up by the audience.

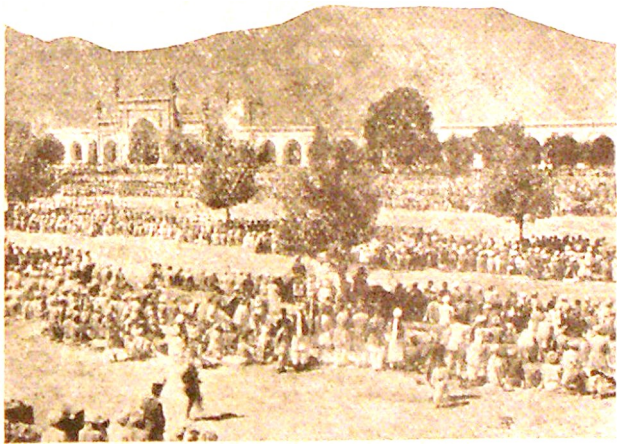
An odd feature of this ceremonial was that when the assembly broke up, each person reached under his chair and picked up a huge cloth bag of sweet-meats. which he put under his arm and took home as a souvenir.

The diplomatic corps at Kabul is large. including representatives from many European and most Asian countries . One of its outstanding members is Colonel Humphreys, the British minister.

Colonel Humphreys is a quiet, unassuming man with a straight-forward manner and a merry twinkle in his eye that have won him a place in the hearts of many Afghans who hitherto have hated everything British.

In the past British agents in Kabul have had a thankless task. Relations between Afghanistan and Great Britain have always been strained, and for that reason the position is one that requires both diplomacy and courage.

It is a significant fact that at the end of their first six weeks in Kabul, Colonel Humphreys and his staff held a private banquet to congratulate themselves on having been there a month and a half without being murdered—



During the Id festival of the Moslem Afghans Thousands face towards Mecca in prayer

the longest time any British mission had ever been in Afghanistan without at least one of its number incurring that fate.

One of the most interesting events of the visitors' stay in Kabul was the review of the Afghan army held expressly for their benefit, and of which they took motion pictures.

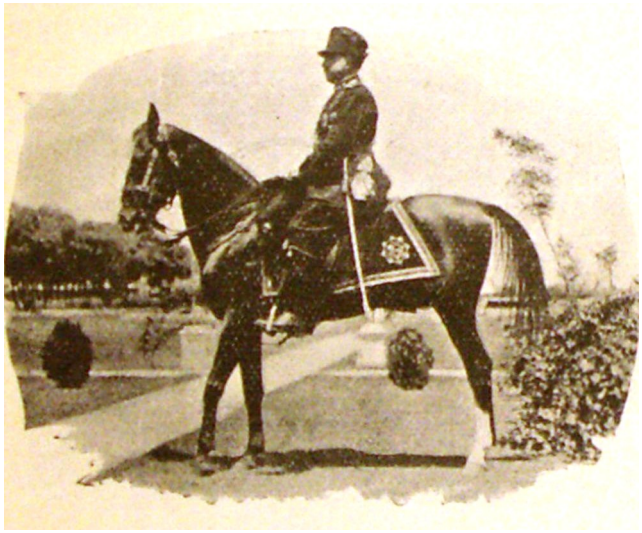
The review lasted three hours, and included many spectacular manoeuvres unknown to western warfare. A large portion of the Afghan army is cavalry, trained along lines similar to the Don Cossacks of South Russia. They are experts at riding, standing up in their stirrups, and skilled in other feats of horsemanship.

The Afghan military forces comprise some 80,000 troops. They are well armed and disciplined, and constitute a strong defence against invasion.

In her position as a buffer state, Afghanistan needs a first-class fighting unit. The father of the present Amir, Habibullah, once said when referring to Afghanistan's location between Asiatic Russia and India: "If such a shield is thin as parchment a child can tear it. But if thick and strong, it will resist all attempts."

Amir Amanullah does not share his father's lean-ing toward the British, and so has no desire to make Afghanistan the guardian of India's northern gateway. His object in building up the present efficient Afghan army is simply to protect his country against any and all invaders. Amanullah is determined that his bit of Central Asia shall be painted neither the crimson of Imperial Britain nor the red of Soviet Russia.

The visit of Thomas and his companions in Afghanistan occurred during Ramadan,



The Amir of Afghanistan

which is the Moslem season corresponding to the Christian lent. Ramadan is observed more strictly in Afghanistan than in any other country. Its termination is called the Id Festival. On that day Amir Amanullah goes to the Great Mosque to lead his people in prayer.

The visitors—wearing Afghan headdress—were admitted to the courtyard of the Mosque at the express wish of the Amir, in order to photograph the Id Festival ceremony. The scene was a picturesque and impressive one. Thousands of people knelt in prayer, facing Mecca. Over the turbaned heads of the throng shone the burning summer sun; in the distance frowned the barren crests of the Afghan mountains.

It was a scene that fixed itself in the visitors' memories, typifying as it did the fanatical faith of this remote Central Asian kingdom; a faith that has bred a country of warriors glad to die fighting non-Moslems, believing that such death is a sure token of life eternal in the hereafter promised by the Prophet.

The Id Festival was the last event of importance that the visitors witnessed in Kabul. On the after-noon of the day following, the Buick was re-loaded with photographic equipment and baggage, and the return trip began.

Nightfall found the travellers fifty odd miles from Kabul, on a dangerous mountain road. They pushed on with headlights and spotlight until they reached Dinjiling, where they spent the night at the Amir's rest-house.

Starting the next morning at six-thirty. the car reached Jellalabad in the early afternoon. It was decided to spend the night at Jellalabad, since the worst stretch of road was ahead. Consideration also had to be given the fact that only three hours remained before the Khyber Pass would be closed for the night.

The following morning the travellers got away at five o'clock. Despite the fearful pounding received during the trip the Buick was running like a watch and the Khyber Pass was reached about noon. Familiar British army uniforms appeared. . .

Through the Khyber to Peshawar, where the travellers arrived at half-past one. . . Railway trains—European faces—English words spoken and seen—occidental churches. . • • Seventeen hours' actual running time had been consumed in the journey from Kabul to Peshawar. The same trip by camel caravan takes seventeen days.

Forbidden Afghanistan was but a memory—a recollection of odorous bazaars, cramped city streets, fierce tribesmen from the hills, walled harems; above all, of a devotional myriad facing Mecca under the bowl of a blue Afghan sky, ringed about by the jagged crests of sunburnt, treeless mountains.

"The trip. I believe, was one of the most remarkable feats of endurance ever accomplished by any motor car. The Buick's performance on our Afghan journey was one hundred per cent. perfect."

—L0WELL. THOMAS'.