

Peshawar and the Khyber Pass

AFTER Passing through Wazirabad and Lalamusa on my journey from Amritsar, to a country changed from flat plain to irregular humps and hills of mud, I passed mud towns, and here and there accumulated stores of great mud-colored logs near the railway—river-floated from the hill forests of Kashmir. Then, as in a world of crumbling fossil cities, all the gray desiccated land was dust, writes A. Hugh Fisher in the Illustrated London News.

I reached Peshawar a little before dawn, and got out at the Cantonment and not at the city station. In the station master's room a group of great-coated men with rifles crowded round a fire. The city station had been raided only one week before, and although the cantonment was "safer than houses," there was an invigorating air of excitement. The wide, tree-bordered, and well-kept roads, and the white cherry-blossom in orchard and garden, made me think of English parkland in spring.

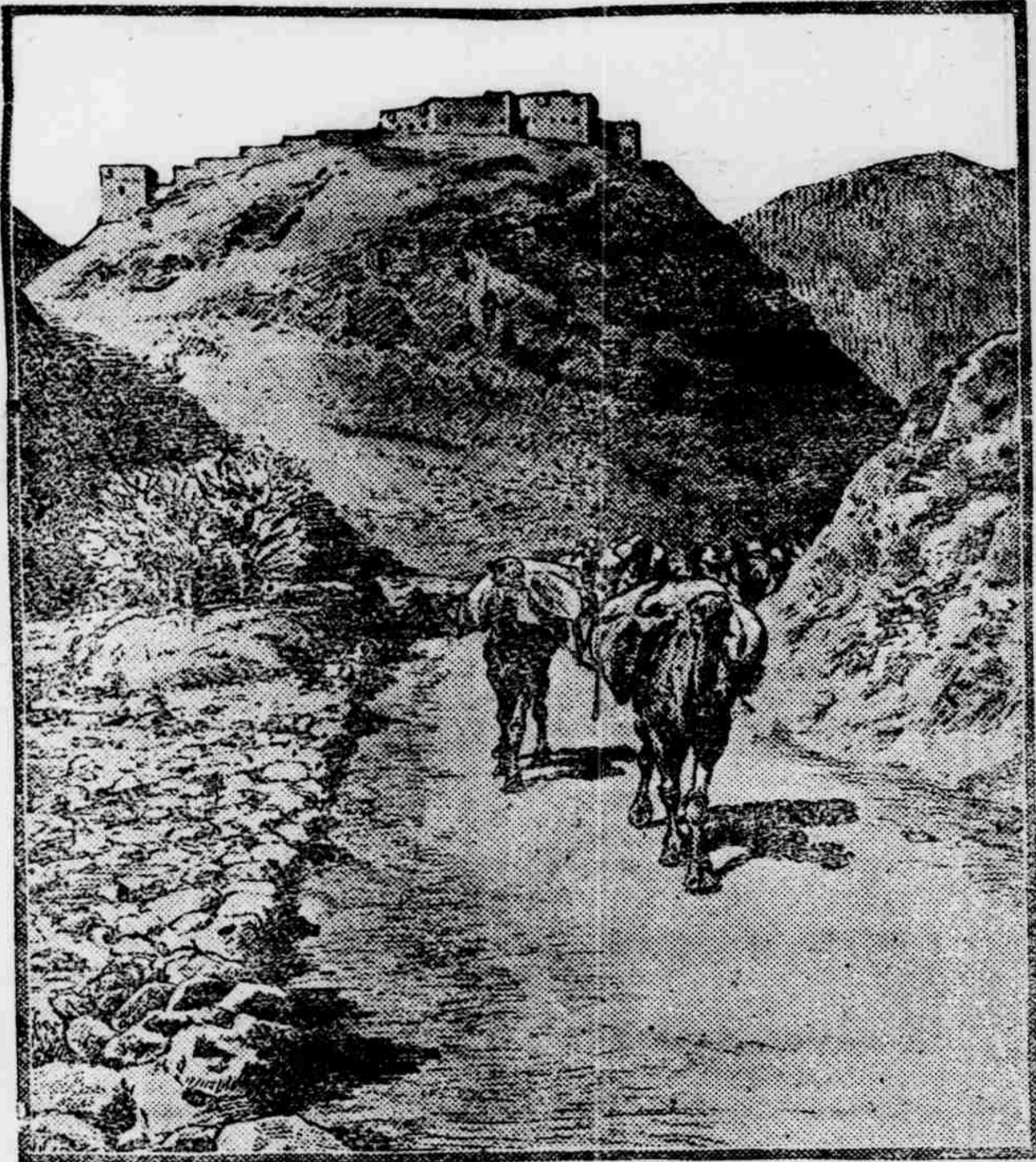
When I entered the city through the Edwardes gate, the Kissa Kahan—the Peshawar Lombard street—took me to the Kotwali, a large, whitewashed police station, with its own wide gateway leading off at right angles into the silk market and the older parts of the city. The wide, open space between the Kotwali and a raised octagonal rest-place (a memorial to Col. E. G. Hastings, C. B.) was a dazzling and crowded scene. On long lines up and down one side, myriad skeins of silk, brought from Bokhara and China hung out to dry in the sun; and opposite to these was a row of money-changers' stalls, each with its large pile of rupees and other coins (really a mud-cone covered only on the outside with silver). Then at the back, behind the silks on one side and the money-stalls on

A more modern type of native doctor was one trained at the medical school at Lahore whom I met at a Peshawar dispensary. Here he saw an average of 200 patients a day, eye and throat being the most frequent causes of trouble. Antiquated notions of medical treatment, however, still find favor with many of these northern people, and a young Afridi boy was pointed out to me at the government high school who had just returned "cured" of lung disease by being wrapped in a freshly flayed sheepskin for some hours!

City Very Ancient.
Peshawar is a very ancient city, but has no monuments of antiquity within its precincts. At a little distance, however, at the mount called Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, are the remains of the great Buddhist memorial which was built in the reign of King Kanishka, when Peshawar, then called Purushapura, was the capital of his kingdom. The remains of Kanishka's building were discovered in 1909 by Dr. Brainerd Spooner of the Indian archaeological survey, and in an inner shrine of the building (which must have had a diameter of 286 feet) was found a metal casket containing a crystal reliquary in which were three small fragments of the actual bones of Buddha.

The Khyber, at the time of my visit, had not yet been reopened after a military expedition, and when I obtained permission to enter the pass, the large Sarai at Jamroud was filled with Kabulis with camel caravans waiting to go through with the supplies of salt, tea and hardware for which they had exchanged the silk, fruits and carpets they had taken to Peshawar.

The wind blew strongly along the sweeping curve of the entrance to the pass, and the hard, well-made road wound in and in to the nar-



FORT IN KHYBER PASS

the other, were the lines of bazar-shops, with many strange wares from Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Like Stranded Dreadnoughts.

Turning to the right at the Hastings memorial, the street leads presently to the famous Gor Khatri, now used for municipal offices, but for many years occupied by the romantic Italian Gen. Paolo Crescenzo Martino Avitabile, governor of Peshawar under Ranjit Singh. From the top of this building I could see all over the flat-roofed city and the surrounding country. In the distance on one side rose Mount Tartara, and on the other a dip in the nearer hills marked the position of the fort of Jamroud, which Mr. Spender has so aptly described as looking like a stranded dreadnought guarding the entrance to the Khyber pass.

After that I found myself in the street of the "Hakims" (native doctors), and stopped with my companions to talk to one of the Hakims sitting on the raised floor in his shop, with its rows of strange bottles and drug-jars. To a question as to the fees he charged for advice and medicine the Hakim answered: "A rupee if I go to the patient's house; but if the sick man come himself to the shop, only the medicine do I charge him for; and the cost of that would be five rupees." "That would surely be a great deal if the sick man were a poor man," I said, thinking the quotation had probably been arranged for any possible needs of my own. "If the illness is serious," said my companion, "he will be able to pay—otherwise he will not."

row ravine which runs between high, precipitous sides. At length I reached the Fort All Masjid, in the middle of the pass. It is of tawny yellow stone, crowning a steeply sloping squat cone where the pass is at its narrowest. A breakdown on the road, through my ponies shying at a sick camel, kept me in the pass till next morning, and I slept in a hospitable military camp which was pitched beside the road just below a village of cave-dwelling Kuchi Khels. The wind—the Khyber wind—strained at every cord, tearing and ripping everything that could be torn or ripped and howled and screamed loudly above the coughing of the camels. In the morning the battlemented fort appeared in bright light against a drift of cloud. Beyond it, towards Landi Kotal, the silhouette of mountain was black purple, with two growing patches of yellow where the sun got through. The loose shale glistened and the low bushes looked silver-gray along the little stream that spates in June, when the snows melt.

Although Alexander the Great entered the Peshawar plain through the Michni pass, the Khyber has ever been the key to the adjacent regions.

Dry Powder Machine.
A machine has been perfected which pours any dry powder into a paper bag, folds the bag, makes a paper box and places bag and a folded circular within it, pastes on a label and seals the box at a rate of 1,500 boxes an hour.

The Farmer And his Account Book.

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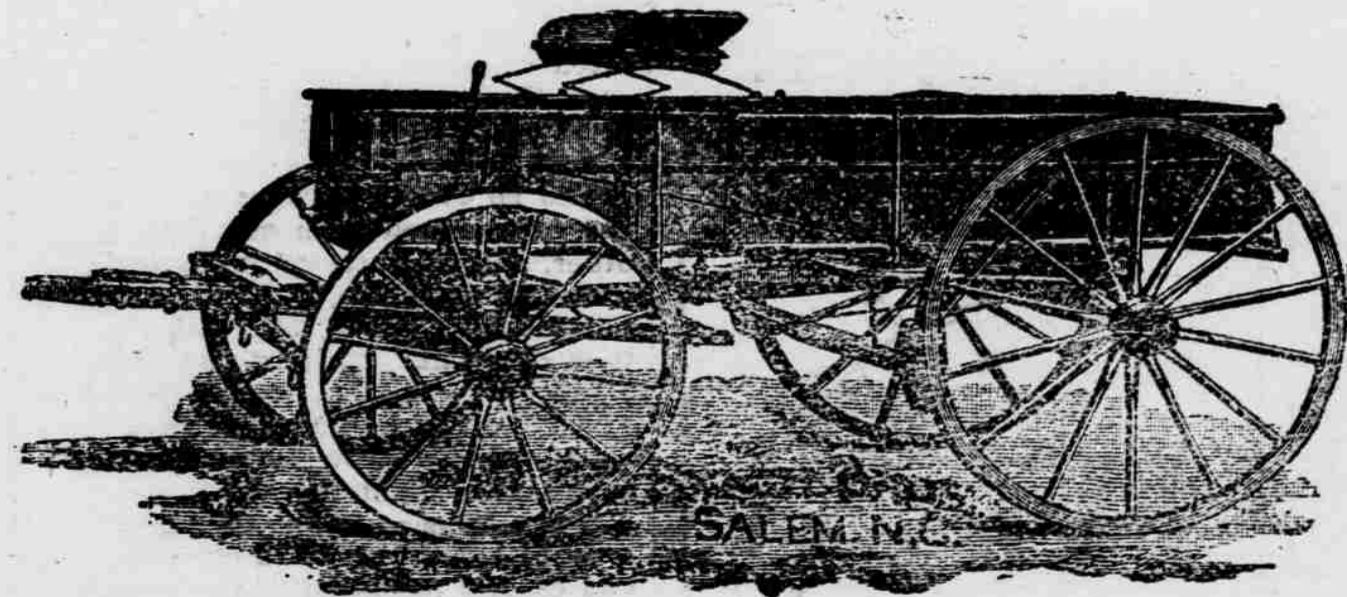
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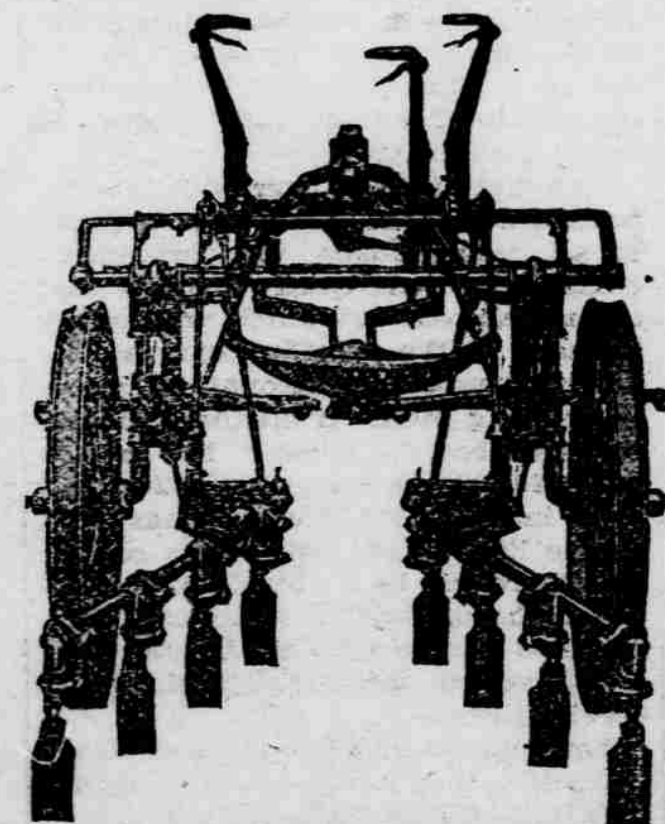
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