

THE MODERN GANDHARA.

BY THOMAS P. HUGHES.

IT is now pretty generally admitted that Peshawur, on the north-west frontier of British India; stands on the site of the ancient Buddhist city of Gandhara. It is about fifty miles from Attock on



AFGHANS OF PESHAWUR VALLEY.

the river Indus, and about two hundred miles from the city of Kabul. The elevated part of the city, known as the Gurkhatri, covers the sites of ancient Hindu and Buddhist temples, and is now enclosed

as a carayansary. In a corner of the *sarai* is the Church of England Mission House where I had the honor of entertaining His Highness

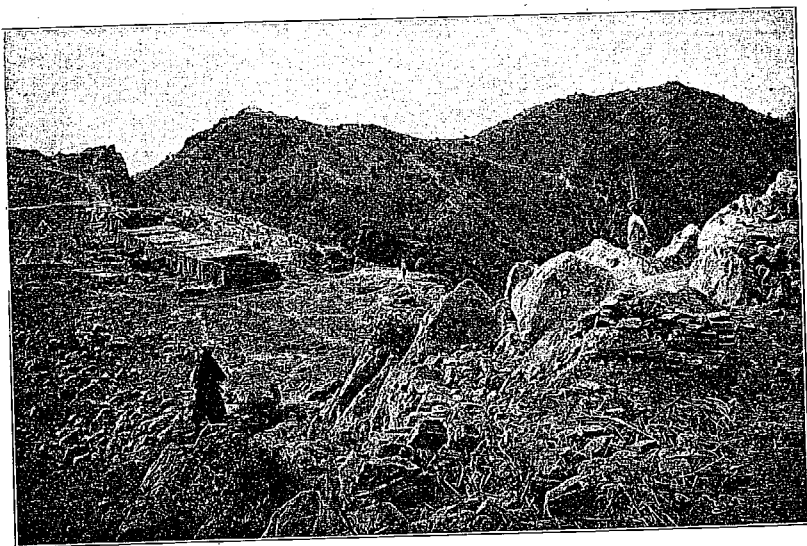


A BUDDHIST TOPE IN THE KHYBAR PASS.

Ameer Shere Ali Khan of Cabul in the spring of 1869. The ruins of a large Buddhist tope are still standing in the center of the Khybar

Pass not far from the historic fort of Ali Masjid. The ruins of Takt-i-Bhai near Murdan, the headquarters of the King's own Corps of Guides are even more extensive. There are also interesting remains at Kapurghari. Both of them are in the district of Yusufzai. Peshawur is the most intensely Afghan province of the old Dawrani kingdom, but for political reasons its distinctively Afghan character is ignored by the British government, as it became part of the empire when taken from Rangeet Singh, the ruler of the Punjab.

The natives of the valley all speak Pushto, the language of the Afghans, and Abdur Rahman, the national poet, was born within



ALI MASJID—ANCIENT FORT IN KHYBAR PASS.

two miles of the city. They claim to be of Israelitish descent, but there is no trace of Hebrew in the language except in the religious terminology which is inherent in all Muslim peoples. Their features and character are however singularly Jewish. In the pieces of Buddhist sculpture you usually find all noses broken, for the fanatical army of Mahmud of Ghuzni considered it a sacred duty to disfigure the graven images. There are no Buddhists in these regions at the present time. The preaching of the personal "Allah" commanding the armies of Islam, the atheism of the Buddhist rulers could not resist.

The city of Peshawur has a mixed population of Muslims, Sikhs

and Hindus numbering about 80,000. Outside the city is one of the largest cantonments in India. There is a very fine Gothic church erected for the troops, and in the city the native Christians worship in a mosque-like Saracenic structure dedicated to All Saints, of which the Rev. Iman Shah is the vicar. There are also large mission and government schools. Peshawur is the capital of the Trans-Indus province and is at the terminus of the railway, which crosses the river Indus at Attock.