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FROM

THE INDUS TO THE TIGRIS

A NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY THROUGH THE COUNTRIES OF BALOCHISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, KHORASSAN AND IRAN, IN 1872

TOGETHER WITH

A SYNOPTICAL GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY OF THE BRAHOE LANGUAGE

AND A RECORD OF

THE METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS AND ALTITUDES ON THE MARCH FROM THE INDUS TO THE TIGRIS

BY

HENRY WALTER BELLEW, C.S.I.

SURGEON BENGAL STAFF CORPS

Author of a "Journal of a Mission to Afghanistan in 1857-58," and a "Grammar and Dictionary of the Pukkhto Language."

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PREFACE.

THE steady progress of Russian conquest in Turkistan during the past half-century, and, during late years, the rapid advance of her frontiers in the direction of India, have raised the States of Central Asia to a position of importance in the eyes of European politicians higher than they ever before occupied.

The accounts published from time to time by venturesome travellers in those regions have informed us of the barbarism and bigotry of their peoples—of the anarchy and weakness of their Governments—and of the growing decay and approaching dissolution of the polity that holds them together by the bonds of a common religion and common interest. And now the military operations against Khiva at present in course of prosecution by Russia, whilst opening up that country to the influences of European civilisation, promise to unfold to that power a field of enterprise that must, I believe, culminate in her paramount ascendancy over all the region draining to the valley of the Oxus. This is a prospect full of the weightiest moment to ourselves in India, and one that furnishes matter for the gravest consideration of our statesmen. Much has been already written on this subject from different points of view, and much remains to be written; and doubtless the public journals will keep alive the discussion of the question. But let us be

careful lest, while straining at the gnat of Yarkand, we swallow the camel of Herat.

Since the region intervening between the Asiatic possessions of Russia and England now claims the attention of the several Governments concerned, and is by the current of progressing events brought prominently before the notice of the politicians of Europe generally, any recent information regarding these countries cannot fail to prove of interest to the general reader. With this conviction, therefore, I venture to set before the public an account of the incidents and experiences of a journey made across this region during last year—from the Indus to the Tigris.

In explanation of all shortcomings as to matter and defects as to style, I have to remind the reader that the narrative has been written at odd hours, between the duties of an onerous charge in the principal frontier station of India, without leisure for generalisation, or opportunity for reference to authorities.

Further, I am constrained by the force of circumstances to commit my manuscript to the care of the publisher, without the advantage of correcting the proof-sheets in their passage through the press.

H. W. B.

PESHAWAR, 18*th April* 1873.

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FROM THE INDUS TO THE TIGRIS.

INTRODUCTION.

TOWARDS the close of 1871, Major-General F. R. Pollock (now Sir Richard Pollock, K.C.S.I.) was deputed by the Government of India on a political mission to Sistan, and I was selected to accompany him. I left Peshawar on the 12th December, and joined him at Lahore, where our arrangements for the journey were made. In Sistan we joined Sir Frederick Goldsmid's mission, and proceeded together to the Persian capital. Thence I returned to India with the camp and establishment taken with us.

It is not the purpose of this work to enter into any detail of the objects of the mission, nor in any way to refer to the political events connected with it—preceding or succeeding; and I have been careful in the following pages to avoid allusion to or discussion of the politics of the countries we visited, inasmuch as they are now the subjects of consideration to the several Governments affected by them, and are, besides, questions foreign to the nature of this publication.

But as it is seldom than Europeans have an opportunity of visiting much of the country embraced within the limits of the journey of this mission, I have thought that a popular account of our experiences would not be

unacceptable to the British public; particularly since the region covered by our travels, apart from its own special claims upon our interest, is, I believe, destined ere very long to attract the most serious attention of European politicians and statesmen.

And this because the civilisation of the West is advancing with such steady progress towards the East, that it must sooner or later penetrate to the countries that have hitherto successfully excluded its influence. On the Asiatic continent, at least, its advance is from opposite quarters, at different rates of speed, and of very different characters. The highly organised and intricate system of European civilisation introduced into India, and now being consolidated within the limits of the British Empire there, though not without its advantages, has hardly produced a shadow of effect on the bordering countries lying beyond the region of its control. It stops short at, and with as clear a line of definition as, the natural boundaries of the peninsula. Cross the mountain barrier limiting the plains of India, and you pass at once from civilisation to barbarism, from order to anarchy, from security to danger, from justice to oppression. So much from the side of India.

From the opposite quarter advances the growing civilisation of Russia—a civilisation which, notwithstanding its elements of European science and art, is still but little raised in its general character above that of the countries it is so rapidly overspreading, and yet, by consequence, less opposed to the tastes and the requirements of their newly-conquered peoples. The steamer, the telegraph, and the railway add consolidation to the new rule in the annexed countries. Order and security are established within the newly-conquered area by a sharp and decisive though despotic military rule; whilst

commercial enterprise is encouraged with the countries lying beyond, and fostered by Government patronage. So much from the side of Russia.

The region lying between the Russian conquests in Central Asia and the British Empire in India is now the barrier that separates these two forms of civilisation. It cannot always remain so. It must sooner or later succumb to the one form or the other; and for this reason it is that the region claims from us a more than ordinary interest, and, I may say, sympathy too, by way of reparation for the wrong we inflicted in the Afghan war—a wrong the fruits of which are yet abundant, as anybody who has served on our north-west frontier can testify.

The narrative contained in the following pages will, it is hoped, convey a correct picture of the general nature of the country included between the Indus and the Tigris, illustrate the chief points in the character of its peoples, and exemplify the state of the society in which they live. With respect to the last, I may here say, in anticipation, that tyranny and insecurity, oppression and violence, reign everywhere all over the country. It was our lot, on entering this region, to meet a caravan that had been attacked and plundered by tribes in revolt against their chief. It was my lot, on leaving the region, to meet another caravan that had been attacked and plundered by tribes in rebellion against their sovereign. And it was yet again my lot, before clear of the region in which we had successfully run the gauntlet through Brahoe and Baloch, Turkman and Hamadand, to be brought to bay by Arab robbers, from whom we escaped I know not how.

As the narrative is confined to a description only of the country actually traversed, it may be useful here to

set before the reader a general view of the whole region lying between the valleys of the Indus and the Tigris, by way of introduction to the subject-matter of this book; and this because the region itself is as interesting on account of its peculiar physical characteristics as it is attractive on account of its varied historical associations.

The land of the Medes and Persians, Magians and Zoroastrians, on the one side, and of the Scythians and Aryans, Buddhists and Brahmists, on the other—the kingdom of Cyrus and of Darius—the country of Alexander's fame—the theatre of Arab conquest and Islamite growth—the scene of Tartar bloodshed and devastation, and the home ever since of anarchy and desolation—the hotbed of Mohammedan bigotry—the arena of Shia and Sunni hostility—and, towards the east, the bone of contention between Persian and Mughal—later still, the battlefield between Afghan and Persian—the prize of Nadir—the spoil of his successors—and now the possession of Kajar and Durrani, of Persian and Afghan, each jealous of other, and each claiming as frontier what the other possesses.

Such are some of the varied historical associations, past and present, of the region I shall now endeavour to describe in its physical character only—a region which, with the exception of its western portion, has long been a closed country to the European, and a jealously-guarded barrier against the civilisation of the age. The term of its isolation, however, is doomed; the time of its freedom draws nigh. For the force of Western civilisation is irresistible. Through it the enlightenment of the age must soon shed its lustre upon these benighted regions.

The Crimean war poured its light upon Turkey, and under its influence the "sick man of Europe" has become convalescent. His neighbour is now the "sick

man of Asia." He looks wistfully at the remedy of civilisation. Let us hope he may be persuaded to try it. But if Persia is the sick man of Asia, what shall we say of Afghanistan, shut up in his own barbarism, imbued to the core with fanatic bigotry, and steeped in the pride of nationality? Verily, he is very sick—sick unto death. And he knows it, yet he refuses, obstinately and suspiciously, the only remedy that can save his decaying constitution from dissolution. Is he to be left to his fate? or will the physician appear in good time and patch up his broken frame? These are questions for serious reflection, because the patient is our neighbour, and his fate cannot be a matter of indifference to us.

The region whose past history and present condition I have thus briefly alluded to is comprised within the fiftieth and seventieth degrees of east longitude, and the twenty-fifth and thirty-fifth degrees of north latitude. Its length is about twelve hundred miles, and its breadth about six hundred.

Its most characteristic features are its general elevation, and the fact that no river from its interior reaches the sea. It forms, in fact, a great elevated block, interposed between the basin of the Caspian and the low-lying valley of Turkistan on the north, and the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea on the south, and is bounded east and west by the valleys of the Indus and the Tigris respectively.

The area thus limited geographically, in contradistinction to its political boundaries, presents some remarkable physical peculiarities, which may be considered characteristic of the whole region. Its mountain system, its river system, its deserts, and its plains, all offer special features for notice.

Its mountains, girding it on all sides, shut it off from

surrounding countries. By their internal disposition they divide the region into two distinct parts, and form a natural boundary separating three distinct races —the Persian, the Afghan, and the Uzbak.

Its rivers, owing to this internal disposition of the mountains, are directed in three different directions. Those of Persia mostly converge to the south-east of its territory; those of Afghanistan converge to the south-west of its territory; and those to the north of the mountain chain that separates these two systems, flow northward to the swamps, tracts lying between the lower course of the Oxus and the Caspian.

Its deserts, too, by the same internal disposition of the mountains, are divided into three distinct sets—those of Persia and Afghanistan, lying one on either side of the mountain range separating these two countries, and that of Turkistan, lying to the north of the same range, in the angle formed by the mountains that converge from east and west to produce it.

Its plains present greater variety in extent and direction and elevation, but are all alike in general character—equally arid, equally void of trees, and equally covered with pasture plants. All are more or less the resort of nomads with their flocks and herds, and some are peopled by fixed communities settled in villages.

I will now describe each of these points in the physical geography of this region separately, but time and space only permit of my doing so very briefly and in general terms.

As before indicated, the region between the valleys of the Indus and the Tigris is an elevated country, propped up on all sides by great mountain ranges.

On the east, it is separated from the valley of the Indus by the Suleman range, which continues southwards to the

sea-coast in the Hala mountains that separate Balochistan from Sind. To the northward it connects, through the Sufed Koh of Kabul, with the Kohi Baba of Hindu Kush. This range contains within its ridges many fertile valleys and small plains, all of which drain eastwards to the Indus. To its west lies the high tableland of Ghazni, and Kandahar and Balochistan.

On the west, it is separated from the valley of the Tigris by the range of the Zagros mountains, which northwards, through the hills of Kurdistan, unite with the Armenian mountains. To the southward it extends by the mountains of Laristan and Khuzistan to those forming the southern boundary of this region. The declivity of the Zagros ranges toward the west. The mountains in this direction drop at once to the plains below, and, viewed from them, look like a huge buttress wall propping up the tableland of Persia.*

On the south, it is supported against the coast of the Arabian Sea by the Mushti range of Balochistan, on the one hand, and upon the littoral of the Persian Gulf by the chain of mountains connecting the Balochistan range with that of Zagros, on the other. To the east these mountains support the interior tableland of Afghanistan, against the low rugged hills of the sea-coast, by the hills and valleys of Makran; and to the west, by the hills of Laristan and Fars, they unite with the Zagros range, and support the elevated interior of Persia against the low-lying shore of the Persian Gulf. This range is pierced by many passes up to the interior, and encloses numerous fertile and well-watered valleys.

Towards the north, it is separated from the valley of

* Their drainage to the westward and southward flows to the Tigris and the Shat-ul-Arab, or river of the Arabs, formed by the junction of the two rivers of Mesopotamia.

the Oxus and low plains of Turkistan by the Hindu Kush range on the side of Afghanistan, and from the basin of the Caspian by the Alburz range on the side of Persia.

This northern boundary presents some special features. The two great ranges approaching from the east and west bend southwards to meet in the vicinity of Herat, whence they project across the whole country, dividing the region into the two kingdoms of Persia and Afghanistan, and separating each from the intermediate region to the north—the country of the Turkmans and the Hazara, with other cognate Uzbak tribes. Thus the Hindu Kush, west of Kabul, sends off two principal ranges separated by the Hari Rúd, or river of Herat. The southern of these ranges is called Syah Koh, and breaks up into the mountains of Ghor, which, extending south of Herat, join the Khorassan mountains emanating from the Alburz range, and form the watershed between the hydrographic systems of Afghanistan and Turkistan. That is to say, all the streams to the north of the Syah Koh range flow to the valley of the Oxus, or to the low swampy tracts of Marv and Tajand, between the lower course of that river and the Caspian, whilst all the streams to its south flow to the Sistan basin, the receptacle for all the drainage of Afghanistan west of Ghazni.

And so from the opposite direction. The Alburz range west of Mashhad sends off a succession of lofty offshoots, snow-topped in midsummer, that traverse the northern highlands of Khorassan in a direction from north-west to south-east, and enclose between them a number of elevated plateaux, such as those of Nishabor, Sabzwár, Turshíz, and Tabbas, that all drain westwards into Persia. The principal of these offshoots is the Binaloh range of mountains. It separates the plain of Mashhad from that of Nishabor, and towards the south-

east connects with the high mountains of Záwah and Bákharz, north of Herat. This range forms a watershed between the drainage converging on to the great salt desert of Persia on the one side, and that flowing to the swamps of Tajand and Marv on the other.

Between Záwah and Tabbas the chain of mountains is interrupted by a narrow arm of the salt desert called Kavír, which at Yunasi projects eastward on to the plain of Khaf and Ghorian. But it is continued onwards by spurs from Bákharz which connect with the mountains of Gházn on the one side, and with those of Ghor on the other, a little south of Herat. Here the Gházn valley drains into Afghanistan, and onwards south the two ranges proceed in parallel lines, a strip of desert waste intervening, till they mingle in the Sarhadd mountains, through which they connect with the great southern mountain border of this region—the border previously described as extending from the Suleman range across Balochistan and the southern provinces of Persia to the Zagros range on the west.

Of these two parallel ranges, that formed by the projections from the Ghor mountains extends in detached ridges running mostly north and south. They enclose amongst them the valleys of Sabzwár or Isapzár, and Anartarrah, and drain to the Sistan basin by the Harutrúd or Adraskand, as it is also called. The range passes to the west of the Sistan basin, of which it forms the boundary in that direction, under the name of Koh Bandan, and ultimately joins the Sarhadd mountains.

The other range, joined by the spurs from Bákharz, is an extensive and elevated mountain tract, enclosing numerous plateaux and valleys, that all drain to the Khusp river, which flows on to the salt desert. The general direction of the range is from north to south, with

spurs projecting east and west. It connects through the hills of Nih and Bandan with the Sarhadd mountains.

The mountain barrier thus formed by the emanations from Alburz is the natural geographical boundary between Persia and Afghanistan, north and south across the length of their conterminous frontiers. It forms a wide mountain region called Irani Khorassan, or Persian Khorassan, and abounds in populous and fertile valleys, full of fruit-gardens and running streams. Its climate is variable, and its winters severe; but on the whole it is a very salubrious region, and is everywhere easily traversed by practicable passes among the hills.

Its inhabitants are a very mixed community. In the southern districts they are mostly Ilyats, from different stocks, with some Persians settled in the principal towns, and all under the rule of local chiefs of Arab descent. In the central districts,—Tun, Tabbas, and northern parts of Gházn,—there are many Baloch and Tartar families mixed up with the general population. To the north of these, in Záwah and Bákharz, the people are mostly Karai Tartars and Hazarah Uzbaks; and in the northern districts, Nishabor, Sabzwár, Burdjnurd, Khabishán, &c., they are entirely Kurds.

From the above description it will be seen that the Hindu Kush and Alburz ranges combine to form the Khorassan mountains that separate Persia from Afghanistan; that Herat, and the country north of their point of junction, is geographically separated from both, and connected by its hydrographic system with the valley of the Oxus; that in the vicinity of Herat the continuity of the Khorassan hills is interrupted, south of Bákharz, by an arm of the salt desert of Persia; and also that, with Herat as a centre, the three divergent mountain ranges—viz., those of Alburz, Ghor, and Gházn—separate three distinct peoples

—the Persians, the Afghans, and the Turkmans, with Uzbaks and other cognate tribes.

I draw attention to this last point, because the natural configuration of the country explains the facility with which, from time immemorial, the predatory tribes of the lower Oxus valley have been enabled to harass the Persian frontier unchecked with their annual marauding inroads and slave-hunting expeditions, and because also history has marked out this locality as the point of ingress towards the east for all northern invaders; for Herat towards the north, and with it Mashhad, is open to both Khiva and Bukhara.

The mountain barriers that I have mentioned as geographically bounding the region lying between the Indus and the Tigris, have by their interior disposition determined its hydrographic system in a remarkable manner, on either side of the great Khorassan range separating Afghanistan from Persia.

The Suleman range, as already mentioned, is a wide mountain tract, enclosing within its hills many valleys and hills which all drain eastwards to the Indus. Its declivity is towards the east, whilst to the west it slopes gently on to the elevated plateaux of Afghanistan.

To the north, this range connects with the Sufed Koh east of Ghazni, and at this point commences that great watershed that separates the drainage of the Indus from that of the Helmand. It runs in a southerly direction, inclining to west as far as the Bolan and the tableland of Calát, whence it strikes westward towards the Mushti range, separating the great desert of Balochistan from Makran.

To the north of this watershed, Sufed Koh connects through the highlands of Ghazni with the Kohi Baba of Hindu Kush. From this range starts the Syah Koh of

Hazarah, which stretches west to Herat, and forms the watershed between the valley of the Oxus on the north, and the Sistan basin on the south. From Herat it extends southward by Sabzwár and Bandán to Sarhadd, where it joins the western spurs of the Mushti range, and thus completes the circle of the hydrographic system of Afghanistan.

With the exception of the drainage of the Ghazni river, which collects in the Abistada marsh, and the drainage of the Cálát tablelands, which flow to the desert north of the Mushti range, all the rivers within the area indicated flow towards the Sistan basin, at the south-western extremity of the Kandahar plain, though they do not all reach it. All the rivers and rivulets from the eastward and southward flow to the stream of the Helmand, whilst those of Sabzwár and Ghor flow in separate streams, all to meet in the Sistan basin. So it is in the Afghanistan half of the region; and a similar system, though on a much less extensive scale, is found to hold in the Persian half. Thus all the streams between the Alwand range of Hamadan on the west, and the Alburz on the north-east, converge to the south-east corner of the Persian tableland, where they expand themselves on the surface of the great salt desert north of Kirman. At least, such is the case if any reliance is to be placed on the statements of my Persian informants, whose testimony I am willing to believe from my own observations as to the general course of the streams and the lie of the land; for I have not seen this shown on any map. The river Khusp of Birjand, the Yunasi river, the Kal Shor of Nishabor and Sabzwár, the Kál Abresham and others on to Tehran, all flow direct on to the salt desert, and the streams crossed on the road from Tehran to Hamadan all flowed in the same direction.

The great salt desert of Persia, called the Daryáe Kabir,

or "the vast sea," extends all along the western side of the Khorassan hills, from Nishabor in the north to Kirman in the south, and sinks to its lowest level in the latter direction, opposite to the Sistan basin, on the other side of the intervening mountain range. So that the water systems of the two countries converge towards each other, and at some remote period probably formed lakes or swamps on either side of the mountain range dividing them, where it joins the great southern border of the region.

The water system of the country, to the north of this dividing range, belongs to the hydrographic system of Turkistan, and is beyond the limits of the region I am describing. Its rivers all flow towards the lowest part of the desert tract lying between the lower course of the Oxus and the Caspian, and there end in the swamps of Tajand and Marv. The principal of these streams are the Murghâb, the Hari Rúd, and the river of Mashhad. With the exception of the Helmand and Farráh Rúd in Afghanistan, none of these streams always reach their destination. They only do so in periods of excessive flood; usually their waters are dissipated by evaporation, absorption by the porous soil, and by diversions for purposes of irrigation, long before they can reach their terminal receptacles.

The deserts of this region between the Indus and Tigris are in a measure connected with its water system. They present vast tracts of elevated sandy wastes, perfectly void of water and vegetation except on their skirts. Each division of the region has a desert of its own. That of Persia has been before mentioned as stretching north and south across the eastern portion of that country. The desert of Afghanistan extends east and west across the western half of its southern border, from the highlands of Calát to the mountains of Sarhadd, south of

Sistan. It is called the Regi Sistan or Regi Balochistan —the sands of Sistan or Balochistan—and extends from the Mushti range of mountains on the south up to the plain of Kandahar on the north, where it ends in a high coast of desert cliffs. This elevated border is called *chol*, or "dry land," and forms a belt ten or fifteen miles wide, on which is found a rich winter pasture for the cattle of the nomads who here make their winter quarters.

There is also a desert tract to the north between the Caspian and Oxus; but it differs from the deserts of Persia and Afghanistan in an important particular. Its surface is a firm gravel, broken into undulations, and covered with a more or less rich pasture of aromatic herbs, and water is found in some of the hollows on its surface.

The plains of this region are all elevated plateaux of greater or less extent, and more frequently the latter. They are all covered with excellent pastures of rich aromatic herbs and hardy plants, and are the natural home of the asafœtida and wormwood, and, in the more elevated tracts, of the rhubarb. Most of them are watered by brisk little hill-streams, or by those artificial subterranean conduits called *kárez*, and are more or less populous; villages, fruit-gardens, and cultivation following the course of the streams, and nomad camps covering the pastures during the summer months.

In Balochistan, these plateaux rise in steps one above the other between the hills up to the tableland of Calát. North of this they fall in steps to the Kandahar plain, which itself sinks towards the south-west to the Sistan basin. In Persia they rise in a similar gradation from the shores of the Persian Gulf and basin of the Tigris up to the tablelands of the interior, where they sink again gradually to the lowest part of the salt desert in the south-east portion of the country.

Such, in general terms, are the main features of the region between the Indus and the Tigris. Its climate, as may be imagined, is as varied as the surface of the country. It partakes of the temperate character of an Alpine climate in the northern mountain tracts, whilst in the lower desert tracts it equals in heat the torrid plains of India during the summer months. But in winter it is everywhere cold; in the mountain regions rigorously so, whilst on the wide plains and deserts it is equally severe by reason of the strong north winds that sweep the country for months.

On the whole, the climate, with its many variations, may be considered salubrious and favourable to life. Its inhabitants certainly are physically amongst the finest of the human race, notwithstanding the inferior fare and barbarous mode of life that are the lot of a large proportion of them, in Afghanistan particularly. In this country the signs of departed prosperity and plenty are everywhere met with. From Ghazni westward, all along the valleys of the Tarnak and the Helmand, down to the basin of Sistan, the whole country is covered with the ruins of former cities, obliterated canals, and deserted cultivation—all assigned to the devastation of the Tartars under Changhiz and Tymur in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The country has never recovered the havoc created by these curses of the human race. Since the destruction of the Arab rule overthrown by them, the country has known no stable government, and has been a stranger to peace, order, and prosperity alike. But it has within itself all the material elements of prosperity. What it wants are a firm government and a just rule. With these once more established over it, there is no reason why the country should not again recover its former state

of prosperity and plenty. Its mountains contain a store of unexplored treasure, and its plains an only half-developed wealth.

Of its inhabitants I need add little here, as to describe them fully would fill a volume. Suffice it to say, that those of Persia and Afghanistan alike contain representatives of various Tartar races thrown into this region by the successive waves of invasion from the north, as well as representatives of earlier known peoples pushed on into it from the south-west, mixed up with the ancient inhabitants of the land. Thus in Persia, with the ancient inhabitants, who are mostly settled in the large towns and cities, are found various tribes of Mughals, Turks, and Kurds, together with Arabs, Armenians, and Jews. A fourth of the population, which may be estimated at six millions, consists of wandering tribes, generically known as *ilyát*, a term which signifies "the tribes," and corresponds with the *úlús* of the Afghans. In the *ilyát* are comprised all sorts of tribes, Arab and Ajam, that is to say, of Arab origin and of Persian or foreign origin, or, in other words, tribes who have come into the country at different times from the west and from the north.

In Afghanistan, with its province of Balochistan, both included in the country of Khorassan, are the original Tajiks of Persian origin, the Afghans or Pukhtúns (the dominant race), and the Hazarah of Tartar invasions, together with Kazzilbash Mughals, and Uzbaks and Turks of various tribes, Hindkis and Kashmiris, and others of Indian origin, all in the northern tracts. In the southern are Brahoe and Baloch, of different origin and diverse speech; the Dihwar or Tajik, of Persian race and tongue, and a mixture of different tribes, such as Jats of Sind, Hindus of Shikarpur, and a few mongrel tribes of nobody knows where.

In our passage through the Brahoe country I collected the material for a concise grammar and vocabulary of that language. It will be found in the Appendix. I had hoped to have been able to add similar grammars and vocabularies of the Baloch and Sistan dialects; but the adverse circumstances of our sojourn in these countries prevented my acquiring a sufficient knowledge of their languages, and I find that the data collected are much too scanty to permit of my making the attempt, though, from what I did gather, I believe both are closely allied to the Persian.

CHAPTER I.

We left Multan by the morning train on the 26th December 1871, and after a ride of near an hour, alighted at Sher Shah Ghât on the river bank. Here we took leave of our kind host, Colonel Stuart Graham, Commissioner of the Division, and embarked on board the river steamer *Outram*. By noon we had loosed our moorings, and the *Outram*, wedged in between two unwieldy flats lashed to her one on either side, was fairly started down-stream of the river Chenáb.

We had hardly proceeded two hours when we were brought to a stand-still by "something" wrong with the engine. Whatever this mysterious "something" may have been, it necessitated our mooring alongside the river bank for the rest of the day. A stout plank thrown across from one of the flats served to communicate with the shore, which is here a dead level of loose sand, evidently a recent deposit by floods. The banks here are very low, so too is the stream between them at this season, as we soon discovered, to the no small trial of our patience. They—the banks—are of loose sand, flush with the general surface of the plain as far as the eye can reach on either side. They are perpetually sucking up moisture from the stream washing them, and then, becoming overweighted, subside into the river, to be restored again in the succeeding year's floods.

By seven o'clock next morning we had cast off from

our moorings, and were drifting down mid-stream, fairly started for a good day's run. But we had hardly proceeded half-an-hour when a smart bump announced our stoppage by a sandbank. A little delay presently revealed the unpleasant fact that the *Outram* with her flats was jammed in a shallow channel with only two and a half feet of water. Anchors were thrown out, first on one side, then on the other; the engine was backed astern, and then turned ahead. The *Outram* was hauled first this way and then that; she was worked now backwards and again driven forwards; and so on in alternation for upwards of seven hours. Finally, about three o'clock, our unwieldy *tria juncta in uno* was wriggled out of the strait into free water four feet deep.

But we were not yet clear of our difficulties. A few hundred yards farther on we were again stranded on a sandbank; and not being able to get off it at sunset, anchored for the night in mid-stream, having during the day increased our distance from Multan by four miles more than it was on the previous evening. We did not get fairly off this bank till noon of the following day. And so we went on, with like obstructions daily, entailing more or less delay, till we reached Bakrí at sunset of the 30th. Here next morning we transhipped to the river steamer *De Grey*, the cargo being transferred during the night, and making a good start, arrived at Cháchá, a little below the junction of the Chenáb with the Indus, on the morning of the second day of the new year. Here our only fellow-traveller, the Rev. T. V. French, of the Church Missionary Society, left us for Baháwalpúr.

The *De Grey* fared only a little better than the *Outram*. We experienced many delays from shoal water and narrow channels, and at sunset of the second day ran on to a sandbank. The shock of the concussion

caused one of the flats to break away from its attachments and crush against the stern of the steamer. The whole night was employed in securing the flat and working the steamer off the bank. By eight o'clock next morning we got off into free water, and making a good day's run, at sunset moored for the night at Rodhar, a little hamlet of reed huts close on the river bank, and about forty-eight miles above Sakkar.

During the day, we saw immense numbers of water-fowl of all sorts. Ducks in great variety, coolan, wild geese, herons, cranes, and paddy-birds were the most prominent in point of size and numbers. Porpoises hunted up and down the stream, alligators on the sandbanks lazily basked in the sunshine, and wild pigs cautiously issued from the thick coverts on either side for a wallow in the shallows and puddles bordering the river's stream.

In one of these shallows, formed by an overflow of the river, we witnessed a curious sight—an interesting fact for the naturalist. A large fish floundering about in the shallow water had attracted the attention of a buzzard flying overhead. The bird made one or two stoops at the fish, when a jackal, looking on from the edge of the jangal, came forward to contest its possession. He boldly went some twenty paces into the water, and after a sharp struggle seized the fish and brought it to land. Here he laid it on the sand to take breath and look around, and the buzzard, seizing the opportunity, again made a stoop at the fish, but was driven off by the jackal, who made a jump into the air at him. This was repeated two or three times, after which the jackal, taking up his prize, with head aloft proudly trotted back to his covert. The fish appeared to be at least twenty inches long.

We left Rodhar early next morning, and proceeded without obstruction. We passed a number of small hamlets

close on the river bank on either side. They were composed of reed cabins supported on slender poles eight or ten feet high. Each cabin was a neat pent-roofed box, about ten feet long by six wide, and as many high at the sides. They belonged to Sindhi Jats, who live by fishing, cutting wood for fuel, and by tending cattle.

The country here is wooded close to the water's edge by a thick jangal of Euphrates poplar, tamarisk, and mimosa, and here and there are great belts of tall reeds, eighteen to twenty feet high. The approach to Sakkar is very fine and unique of its kind. It presents a charming contrast to the dead level of the scenery on either side the river above it as far as Multan. The island fortress of Bakkar in mid-stream, with the many-storied houses and lofty palm groves of Rorhí, on one side, and the high rocks and sunburnt town of Sakkar on the other, are the characteristic features of this peculiar spot. We steamed through the channel between Rorhí and Bakkar, and then, making for the opposite shore, moored under the town of Sakkar at about one o'clock. It thus took us nearly eleven whole days to perform the journey by river from Multan to Sakkar. In the hot season, when the river is in full flood, the same journey is usually accomplished in one third of the time.

Cattle for our baggage and camp equipage having been collected here by previous arrangement, we left our servants to follow with them, and at half-past three set out for Shikárpúr in a buggy kindly placed at our service by Captain Hampton, Superintendent of the Panjab Steam Flotilla. At Mangráni, the half-way stage, we mounted camels sent out for us, and in four hours from Sakkar, arrived at Shikárpúr. The road is excellent throughout, and laid most of the way with long reed grass to keep down the dust. The country is flat,

crossed by many irrigation canals, and covered with jangal patches of tamarisk and mimosa. In the last five miles from Lakkí to Shikárpúr, cultivation is general, and large trees become more abundant.

In the morning our obliging host, Colonel Dunsterville, Collector of Shikárpúr, took us for a drive to see the place. In the public gardens called Shákí Bágh is a small menagerie and the Merewether pavilion. The latter, built after the design of those useless decorated structures one sees at English watering-places and pleasure gardens, is a striking object, absurdly at variance with all its surroundings. But it is characteristic of our prejudices and tastes in matters architectural. We unaccountably neglect the encouragement of the oriental architecture, with its elegant designs, elaborate detail, and durable material, for the nondescript compositions, incongruous mixture of colours, and inferior material of the public buildings and monuments we have spread all over the country. We seem to forget that what is suitable to the climate, conformable to the scenery, and acceptable to the tastes of the people of Europe, may be the reverse in each instance when introduced into this country without modification or adaptation to its circumstances. The town of Shikárpúr is clean for an oriental city, and wears an air of quiet and prosperity. The environs are well stocked with large trees, such as the *nîm* (melia azadirachta), *sirras* (acaciaelata), *sissú* (Dalbergia sissoo), palm, &c., and the roads are everywhere covered with a layer of reeds to keep down the dust. The people are clad in bright-coloured garments, and appear a very thriving commercial community. The bazaar is covered with a pent-roof, and has a cool look, which alone must be a boon in this hot climate. There is a very useful charitable dispensary here, and a jail for five hundred

prisoners. I observed that the convicts were clad in fur jackets (*postín*), a luxury very few of them ever possessed in their free state.

We left Shikárpúr at two o'clock, and drove to Sultán di Gót, where we found camels awaiting our arrival. The one intended for my riding took fright at the buggy, tore away from his nose-ring, and, luckily for me, escaped into the jangal. This I say advisedly; for had the frisky creature been recaptured, I could not have declined to ride him, and the consequences might have been anything but agreeable. I was unaccustomed to this mode of travelling, and knew little about the handling of a camel. Had he bolted with me on his back, there is no knowing where he would have stopped, and the jolting—well! it it is lucky I escaped the chance of its consequences.

After a short delay, a pony having been procured from the village, we set off, and at half-way passing the staging bungalow of Humáyún, arrived at Jacobabad at seven o'clock. The road is excellent, and is bordered by an avenue of large trees nearly the whole way, and is crossed by several irrigation canals. Jacobabad is the headquarters of the Sindh Irregular Force, and is a flourishing frontier station, luxuriant in the vigour of youth. It was laid out, planted, and watered, not a score of years ago, by the talented officer whose name it commemorates, on a bare and desert tract, near the little hamlet of Khangarh, on the very verge of the desert. It affords a striking example of what the energy and judgment of a determined will can effect.

Our servants with the camp equipage did not arrive at Jacobabad till daylight of the next day. We halted here a day to complete the final arrangements for our journey across the border, and to decide on the route we were to take.

The affairs of Balochistan had for some time been in an unsettled state, owing to differences that had arisen between the ruling chief and some of his most powerful feudal barons. Matters had grown worse, and, at the time of our arrival here, several of the tribal chiefs were in open rebellion, and had taken the field against the Khan of Calát, over whose troops, it appears, they had gained the advantage in more than one encounter. Owing to these disturbances, the direct and ordinary route through Balochistan by the Bolan Pass was closed. There were two alternative routes, namely, that by Tal Chhotyáli, to the north of the Bolan, and that by the Míloh Pass to its south. The first is described as an easy road, and has the advantage of leading direct into the Peshín valley; moreover, it is a route hitherto untraversed by Europeans. But these advantages and desiderata were annulled and counterbalanced, as far as we were concerned, by the perilous nature of the route in the vicinity of Mount Chapper, occupied by the lawless and savage tribe of Kákar, notorious robbers, who are restrained by the fear of neither God nor devil, and much less of man. The Míloh Pass route, although nearly a hundred and ninety miles longer than that by the Bolan, was consequently, thanks to the sound judgment of Sir William Merewether (for which we subsequently found good reason to be grateful), decided on as the road for us to proceed by.

Our camp having gone ahead at daylight, under escort of two native commissioned officers and forty troopers of the Sindh Irregular Horse, we set out from the hospitable mansion of Sir William Merewether, Commissioner of Sindh, at nine o'clock in the morning of the 8th January 1872, and clearing the station, presently entered on a vast desert plain. At about three miles we

crossed the line of the British frontier, and at two miles more reached Mumal, the first habitation in the territory of the Khan of Calát or Kelat. It is a collection of eighteen or twenty mean hovels, the occupants of which were the personification of poverty and wretchedness. Here we bade adieu to Captain R. G. Sandeman, Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ghazi, who, with a party of Mazári horsemen, accompanied us thus far, and mounting our camels, set out at a swinging trot across the desert towards Barshori, thirty miles distant, turning our backs upon civilisation, and hurrying into the regions of discord and barbarism. We were accompanied by Pír Ján, son of Muhammad Khan, the Khán of Calát's agent at Jacobabad, and eight of his horsemen.

The desert is a wide smooth surface of hard dry clay, as level as a billiard-table, and bare as a board. Not a single pebble, nor even a blade of grass, was anywhere to be seen. The caravan track lying before us was the only distinguishable feature on the dull surface of bare clay. After travelling thus for about two and a half hours, we sighted two lofty mounds set together in the midst of the desert, with shrubby bushes fringing pools of water at their bases, all remarkably clear and distinct. "That," said Pír Ján, "is the *Lúmpáni áb*, or 'the lustre of the minstrel's water,' so named from the tradition of a travelling *Lúm*, or 'minstrel,' who, seeing such abundant signs of water, emptied the cruse under whose weight he was toiling, and perished in the desert from thirst." As we approached nearer, the illusion disappeared, and the semblance dissolved to the reality—two heaps of clay on the sides of a dry well-shaft, a few scattered saltworts, and a patch of soda efflorescence. This was the most perfect *sihráb* (magic water) or mirage I had ever seen. We rested here awhile, to allow the baggage to get on to

our camp ground; but after half-an-hour, finding the mid-day sun too hot, we remounted our camels and resumed our track across the desert, and overtook the baggage a little way short of Barshori, where we arrived at sunset.

Here we found a large káfila scattered over a considerable surface of land about the village. As we passed by towards some clear ground on the further side of the village, we were surrounded by a noisy crowd of Afghans, who, with the utmost volubility and excitement, poured out a confused jumble of complaints and laments, and begged an immediate inquiry and redress for their grievances. Everybody speaking at once, the confusion of sounds prevented our understanding what was said; so we dismounted from our camels, and General Pollock directing the crowd to disperse, retained a few as spokesmen for the rest. We presently learned that the káfila had been attacked in the Bolán above Dádar by Mulla Muhammad, Ráisáni, chief of Sahárawán, who, with others, is in open revolt against the authority of the Khán of Calát, and that they had fought their way through, with the loss of six men killed, fourteen wounded, and a hundred and fifty camels with their loads captured by the enemy. Whilst listening to these accounts, eight wounded men were brought forward. I examined and did what I could for them at the time. They were all severely wounded, six by gunshot and two by sword-cut. I was turning away, when a blustering fellow, loudly cursing the barbarity of the robbers, set an old woman in my path, and removing her veil, exclaimed, "Look here! they have not even spared our women; they have cut off this poor woman's nose with a sword." The miserable creature's face was shockingly eaten away by disease. I raised my eyes from it to the speakers',

and was about to speak, when I was forestalled by the bystanders, who merrily said, "Take her away; that dodge won't do, he knows all about it." The effrontery of the whole proceeding was Afghan throughout.

The káfila, we were told, consisted of twelve hundred camels and eighteen hundred followers from Kandahar. The merchandise comprised a varied stock, such as wool, dried fruits, raisins, choghas, barrak, pashmina, specie, and jewels. The value of the whole was estimated at nine laks of rupees, of which about two laks had been plundered in the Bolan. Directing our informants to make their representations to the authorities of Jacobabad, we passed on to our own camp.

We were seated on our cots, watching the erection of our tents, when our attention was diverted to four men cautiously approaching us from the direction of the káfila. Their leader was a venerable greybeard, and by his side walked a delicate youth. As they neared us I observed, "Surely, I know those people;" when the elder, hastily glancing around to satisfy himself that he was unobserved by the káfila people, hurried forward, fell at my feet, then quickly rising, took my hands in his own, kissed them, and pressed them to his forehead, uttering all the while a rapid succession of prayers and congratulations on his good fortune in meeting me.

"Saggid Mahmúd of Sariáb, what has brought you here from Ghazni?" inquired I, after the customary interchange of salutations, so cordially initiated by himself. "Hush!" said he, in a low voice, turning to my ear. "We are going on a pilgrimage to Karbalá by Bombay, Basrah, and Baghdad, but are obliged to call it Makha for fear of the bigoted heretics composing our káfila. Yes," continued he, in a louder tone, "we are going the *haj* to Makha. You see, poor Cásim is no better,

though he has carried out all your directions, and finished all the bottles of that excellent medicine you were so gracious as to give him. It was really a most potent medicine, and acted quite like a charm. Cásim was nearly cured by it, and was fast recovering the use of his arm, when our messenger returned from Peshawar with your gracious epistle promising to send that magic chain for him, if I sent him back for it a month later. I did send him, but he never returned, and poor Cásim rapidly losing ground, soon became as bad as ever he was before he took your medicine. God's will be done. We are all His servants. You did your best for us, and God prosper you."

I must here digress a little to inform the reader of the circumstances of my former acquaintance with our pilgrim friend. Just two years ago, in the commencement of 1870, Saggid Mahmúd, bearing a recommendatory letter from the Amir of Kabul, came to me at Peshawar for professional advice regarding his son. I found the lad was afflicted with tubercular leprosy and a paralysed arm, and learned on inquiry that his sister and some cousins also were afflicted with leprosy. Like most natives of these parts my patients believed, or professed to believe, that I had only to feel the pulse, administer some physic, and prescribe a regimen, to ensure a speedy recovery. And great was their disappointment on my telling the old man that, as far as I was concerned, his son's disease was incurable. They had travelled upwards of three hundred miles for a cure, and it was hard they should return without some sort of attempt towards the attainment of so desirable an issue. So I took the case in hand, and treated the lad for some months with little or no benefit. At length, the hot weather approaching, they returned to their home at Ghazni, with a large supply of medicine.

In the following year Saggid Mahmúd wrote to me for a fresh supply of medicine and the galvanic battery I had employed on his son at Peshawar. The medicine I sent him by his messenger, and promised to get him a galvanic chain if he would send for it a month or so later. His messenger never came, and the chain remained with me.

On my leaving Peshawar for the journey before us, I packed the galvanic chain (it was one of Pulvermacher's) in one of my boxes, on the chance of an opportunity offering to forward it to Ghazni. I now informed our visitors of this, and opening the box, produced the case containing the chain, and handed it over to Saggid Mahmúd, congratulating him on the good fortune that had enabled me to present it personally. He was completely taken aback at finding I had really got the chain for his son, and taking it in both hands, exclaimed, "This is wonderful! Who would have believed it? You are all true and just people, and deserve to be great. It is for such sincerity that God prospers you." With many expressions of gratitude and prayers for our safe progress, our visitors took their leave. Six months later we met this old man again at Sháhrúd, as will be hereafter related.

Barshori is an open village of about eighty houses on the edge of a dry water-course. Its inhabitants are Mánjhú Jats, and appear to be comfortably off. There is a good deal of corn cultivation around, judging from the wide extent of corn-stalks. Water, however, is limited in quantity, and very inferior in quality. It is derived from a number of small shafts, upwards of a hundred, sunk in the bed of the drainage channel above mentioned, and is very turbid and brackish. The road to the Bolan Pass *via* Bágh and Dádar goes off northwards from this, and that to the Miloh Pass by Gandáva goes off to the west.

We left Barshori at nine o'clock next morning and

proceeded westward over a wide level plain intersected by a number of dry superficial water-courses. The general surface is a bare, hard clay similar to the desert traversed yesterday, but here and there we found traces of cultivation, and at distant intervals came upon scattered patches of thin jangal. At about half-way we passed Kikri, a collection of twenty or thirty huts of Mánjhú Jats some little way to the right of the road; and at five miles farther on passed through Bashkú, a flourishing village of about two hundred houses, surrounded by jujube, mimosa, and tamarisk trees. It stands on the edge of a deep and wide water-course, in the dry bed of which we noticed a long series of wells. At a mile and a half further on we came to Sinjarani, and camped; the distance from Barshori, thirteen miles. Sinjarani is an open village, similar in size and situation to Bashkú. Both are inhabited by Sinjarani Jats, and in both we found the house-tops and courts piled with stacks of *júár* (Sorgham vulgare), the tall leafy stalks of which furnish an excellent fodder for cattle. The water here is very turbid, but not brackish. The wells, of which there are about two hundred in the water-course, are mere narrow shafts sunk in the clay soil. Water is tapped at about ten cubits, and oozes up in a thick muddy state in small quantities of a few gallons only to each well.

We started from Sinjarani at seven A.M. on the 10th January, and at eight miles came to the village of Odhána, one hundred houses. At about a mile to the south of it is the Kubíha hamlet, of fifty houses. Both were attacked and plundered less than a month ago by the Brahoes, at the instigation of Mulea Muhammad, Ráisání, and Allah Dina, Kurd, who, with Núruddin, Mingal of Wadd, are in revolt against the Khan of Calát. They are now deserted except by two or three miserable old

men, who came forward to tell us their pitiful tale. We dismounted at Odhána and went over its empty and desolate homesteads. The work of plunder had been most effectively done. The houses were empty, heaps of ruin, and nothing but bare walls remained standing. The doors and roof timbers had been carried away, and the corn-bins emptied. Some of these last were left standing in the courts. They resemble those seen in the Peshawar valley, and consist of tall wicker frames plastered within and without with a coating of clay and straw. The top is closed with a movable cover of the same material, and they are raised above the ground on short pedestals. They are impervious to rain and the ravages of rats, and are well adapted to the storing of grain. At the lower edge of the bin is an aperture fitted with a plug of rags. Through this the daily quantum of grain is withdrawn, as it is required for the mill. We found all empty. The whole village had been completely sacked, many of the people had been carried off, and the rest dispersed after being stripped of everything. The Brahoes did not even spare the women their mantles, nor the men their trousers, nor did they allow a single head of cattle to escape them.

At about three miles further on we came to another village of the same name. It too had been plundered, and was now deserted. Beyond this our path crossed a bare desert surface on which were the traces of a flood of waters. The plain itself cut the horizon, and resembled a great sea glimmering in the vapours of the mirage. As we were crossing this desolate tract our attention was drawn to a crowd of gigantic figures moving against the southern horizon. Our companion Pír Ján stopped his camel and begged us to rein up. He looked very grave, said the appearance was suspicious, marauding

Brahoes were known to be about, and that was just the direction in which the rebel Mingals might be looked for. He parleyed a while with his horsemen, then scrutinised the figures, then he parleyed again, and again scrutinised them, and so on for eight or ten minutes, himself and his men all the while capping their muskets, slinging their swords, and tightly securing their turbans in readiness for attack. Meanwhile the figures kept changing their positions and forms in the vapoury glare of the mirage. They were in turn pronounced to be horsemen, then camels at graze, then footmen, and finally cattle at graze. In this uncertainty Pír Ján directed one of his horsemen to gallop forward and solve the mystery. He did not, however, seem to see the advisability of the proposal, and whilst professing ready acquiescence, merely pranced his horse about within close reach of our party. By this time the figures emerged from the mirage, and we counted eight horsemen and two camels, making straight towards us. Pír Ján now sent foward three of his horsemen at a gallop towards them, and they in turn sent a like number to confront them. Our three then reined up, and so did the others, at about five hundred yards apart. Then a single cavalier from each side advanced, they approached together, stood a few moments, and then both galloped off to the party who had so alarmed us, and who were at a stand-still like ourselves. Presently the other two of our horsemen galloped off to them. "It 's all well," exclaimed Pír Ján, with a relieved expression of countenance; "they are not enemies." A little later our horsemen rejoined us, with the intimation that the authors of our diversion were not Mingals, only Magassis, a friendly tribe of Baloch, on their way to Bágh. So we went on, and the Magassis crossed our track some hundred yards behind us.

Beyond this desert tract the country is traversed by several irrigation canals, and presents signs of very considerable cultivation right up to Gandáva. At this season the whole country is dry, but during the summer rains it is inundated by the Nari river, which rises in the hills about Dadur, and spreads its floods broadcast all over the desert tract extending from Gandáva to Jacobabad. Most of this water is allowed to run waste, and from want of care much is lost by evaporation. Under a settled government there is little doubt that most of this desert tract could be brought under cultivation, for the soil appears very good, and the facilities for irrigation during the summer months are at hand. But both are sadly neglected all over the Kachi *pat*, the designation by which the great desert tracts of Kach are known.

Gandáva, the capital of Kach, is a decayed-looking town, and its fortifications are fast crumbling into ruin. It is the winter residence of the Khan of Calát, whose mansion is situated in the citadel, which overlooks the town from the north. The town has an extremely sunburnt and desolate appearance. The summer months here are described as excessively hot, and unbearable to all but natives of the country. During this season a poisonous hot wind, called *juloh*, prevails over the plain of Kach, and destroys travellers exposed to its blast. It proves fatal in a few hours, by drying up all the moisture of the body, and the skin of those killed by it appears scorched and fissured, and putrefaction at once takes place.

We rested here during the heat of the day in the Khan's garden on the south of the town, to allow our baggage to pass on. The garden is a neglected wilderness of all sorts of trees crowded together, but to us proved a grateful retreat for the shade it afforded. In its centre are a couple of fine pipal trees (*Ficus religiosa*), and around

them we recognised the mango, jujube, sweet lime, vine, date-palm, apricot, cordia myxa, banhinia variegata, sizygium jambolanum, and acacia siris.

Proceeding from Gandáva, we left Fatupúr, conspicuous by its lofty domed tombs, to the left, and passing through a thick jangal of capparis, salvadora, and acacia, amongst which were scattered small patches of bright green mustard, came to the Garrú ravine, a wide drainage channel with a sandy bed, covered with a thick belt of tamarisk trees. Beyond this, at eight miles from Gandáva and thirty from Sinjarani, we came to Kotra, and camped at sunset.

This is a collection of four villages close to each other, the residence of the members of the Iltáfzai family, whose head is the ruling Khan of Calát. They are surrounded by stately trees and productive gardens, watered by a brisk stream from a spring at Pír Chhatta. Some of the houses here appear very neat and comfortable residences. Altogether the place wears an air of prosperity, and is out-and-out the most picturesque and flourishing place we have seen since we left Jacobabad. Kotra is the *entrepôt* of the trade between Balochistan (Calát and Makran) and Shikárpúr.

We arrived at Kotra just as the sun had set, and our baggage was yet far behind. After selecting a site for our camp, and waiting some time for its arrival, misgivings crept over us as to our evening meal, for it was already eight o'clock, and no signs of our baggage being near at hand were visible, and unpleasant suspicions of having to go supperless to bed forced themselves on our mind. All length I hinted to our companion Pír Ján—who, by the way, proved a very inefficient and indolent cicerone—that, in the event of our servants not coming up in time, he might be able to get us something to eat from the village before it became too late. He took the hint, and,

after some delay, in the interim of which our camp arrived, at nearly nine o'clock, his messenger returned from the village with a bowl of mutton, stewed in its own broth, and some bannocks, which he said had been sent from Mír Khyr Muhammad's house, with that Iltáfzai chief's compliments, and excuses for not being able to see us this evening, a pleasure which he hoped to enjoy in the morning. We forthwith set to work with our fingers on the mutton, and ladled up the broth with successive spoons formed of shreds of bannock, which went the same way as their contents, until the fast "setting" grease of the cooling mess suddenly persuaded us that we had sufficiently taken off the keen edge of our appetites, and we gladly turned from the coarse bowl and soiled rag on which it stood. Though grateful for the entertainment, I must say I was disappointed in this experience of Baloch hospitality. Any Afghan peasant would have done the honours not only with better grace and substance, but spontaneously.

Whilst our tents were being pitched in the dim light of approaching night, a couple of rampant *yábús*, or baggage ponies, not satisfied with a march of thirty miles, broke away from the rest, and made an unwarrantable assault on our two Baloch mares—beautiful gazelle-eyed, gentle creatures—as they quietly stood, with saddles and bridles unremoved, waiting their turn to be picketed. There was immediately a grand row; the mares kicking and squealing desperately, and the *yábús* rearing and roaring as the horses of this country only can. A dozen men rushed to the rescue from all directions, with shouts, threats, and imprecations. In two minutes all four bolted out of camp, and tore wildly out of sight into the jangal.

We got some men from the village to go in search of

them during the night, and our departure was delayed till noon of the next day, pending their recapture. The animals were brought back none the worse for their mad career over such rough country as that between Kotra and the adjacent hills, but their gear was a good deal damaged, and one saddle was lost. From Kotra we marched to Pír Chhatta, nine miles. The path winds through a jangal of wild caper, mimosa, and salvadora to the Míloh ravine, on the bank of which we found a collection of twelve or fourteen booths of the Kambaráni and Syáni Brahoe, who are occupied as camel-drivers between Calát and Shikárpúr. Their dwellings were mere sheds of tamarisk branches covering a loose framework supported on slender poles, and altogether appeared a very inefficient and temporary sort of shelter. I noticed that the women, though equally exposed to the weather, were much fairer and comelier than the men. Their dress was as rough and simple as their dwellings. A long loose shift of coarse cotton, with loose sleeves, was the only dress of some of the women; one or two of them wore besides a small sheet or mantle thrown loosely over the head and shoulders. The men wore capacious cotton trousers, gathered in at the ankle, and over these a short shirt with wide sleeves; round the head were wound a few folds of a twisted turban. Grazing about their settlement were a number of pretty little goats, the smallest I ever saw, hardly twenty inches high.

After following the dry pebbly bed of the ravine for a little way in a southerly direction, we turned out of it to the right at a conspicuous dome over the grave of Mír Iltaf, the uncle of the present Mír of Kotra. By it flows a brisk stream, which, on its way to Kotra, turns three or four water-mills, the sites of which are marked by clumps of date-palm, jujube, and pipal trees. From

this point we turned towards the hill range, along which we had been travelling in a parallel course from Gandáva. They wear a wild, dreary, and inhospitable look, and the country at their skirt is rugged, and mostly bare of vegetation. At about four miles from the tomb, crossing two or three ridges of conglomerate rock, and the little stream winding between and round them *en route,* we came to the palm grove of Pír Chhatta, and camped on an open turfy spot amongst the trees, and near the spring-head of the stream above mentioned. The soil here is a powdery clay, white with efflorescent salines, and even the turf is stiff with white encrustations of soda salts. At the spring-head is a hermit's cell, and close by, suspended on the boughs of a tree, is a peal of about thirty small bells, which the *faqîr* rattles every now and then to wake up the mountain echoes.

The spring on issuing from the rock forms a small pool. We found it absolutely crammed with fish from six to ten inches long. They looked, I thought, like spotted trout, except that the scales were like those of the salmon. These fish are held sacred, and most dire consequences are said to overtake the sacrilegist who should so far forget himself as to violate the sanctity of the pool of Pír Chhatta by feasting on its protected fish. We threw a few handfuls of grain into the pool to propitiate the saint, or his mean representative in the unwashed and unclad person of the hermit, who seemed no ways pleased at our unceremonious intrusion on his special domain. The surface of the pool was instantly a solid mass of fish, struggling for the grain, which disappeared in a marvellously short space of time. Whilst we thus amused ourselves, the hermit, probably fearful of our annexing a few of the fish for dinner, recounted some wonderful instances he knew of the agonised deaths pro-

duced by so rash an act. But he was eclipsed by an attendant orderly, who gravely assured us that a comrade of his —a trooper of the Sindh Irregular Horse—had on one occasion, when passing this way, taken one of these fish, cut it up, cooked, and eaten it. "And what happened?" angrily asked the hermit. "By the power of God," he answered, "the wicked wretch was seized immediately after with the most excruciating pains in his internals. He rolled on the ground in agony, and repeated *tabas* and *astaghfirullahs* (repentances and God forgive me's) without number, calling on all the saints and prophets to intercede for him." "And then he died!" chimed in the hermit, with a triumphant air. "No," said the other; "God is great, and, such is His mercy, he got up and went amongst the bushes, groaning and moaning with agony. Presently he returned quite another being, perfectly well and happy, with the fish alive in his hand, and upbraiding him for his want of faith and veneration, and directing its restoration to its own element." "God's ways are inscrutable," said the hermit; adding, with ineffable pride, "our pure prophet heard his prayers, our blessed saint of this sacred spot interceded for him; God, the Almighty, accepted his repentance." Our narrator admitted on interrogation that he was not an eye-witness of what he had just related, but he knew several men who were. After this example—and it is one by no means uncommon amongst Muhammadans in these countries—of audacity and credulity, we strolled back to our tents speculating upon the mental organisation of a people who could, without an attempt at question, accept such absurdities. The blind credulity of the Muhammadan in all that concerns his prophet and saints, their sayings and their doings, their precepts and examples, affords an interesting field for inquiry to the psychologist. Such

investigation would, I believe, establish it as a fact that the obstinate yet passive resistance of Muhammedans to the free advance of Western civilisation amongst them is owing almost entirely to the spirit of bigotry created by their religion and cherished by their literature, for the one is a mere reflection of the other.

There is no habitation at Pír Chhatta, nor are any supplies procurable here. Our cicerone, Pír Ján, with his usual want of forethought, had himself made no arrangements for our supplies here, nor had he told us of the necessity of making any such arrangements, nor, when he found how matters stood, did he seem inclined in any way to stir himself to remedy them. So the General summoned him to his presence, and took him sharply to task for his carelessness. This had the effect of rousing him from the dull lethargy into which the perpetual repetition of his beads had thrown him, and he at last stirred himself to see what could be done to feed our cattle and camp-followers. There was not alternative but to send back some of our cattle with one of his men to purchase grain, fodder, &c., at Kotra. The evening was well advanced before they returned. The night air here was chill and damp, and a west wind setting in at sunset, reduced the mercury to 59° Fah., which was thirty degrees less than it stood at during the afternoon in the shade, and forty degrees less than the temperature of the air at two P.M.

CHAPTER II.

We marched from Pír Chhatta at half-past seven next morning. After crossing a few marly banks, snow-white with saline encrustation, we entered a long narrow defile, bounded on the right by high hills of bare rugged rock, and on the left by a low shelf of conglomerate; a few stunted bushes of salvadora, jujube, and mimosa were scattered here and there amongst the rocks, and the surface, everywhere rough and stony, was one mass of marine fossils. At four miles we emerged from this defile into the Míloh Pass, which opens on to the plains a little to the south of where we camped at Pír Chhatta. Where we entered it, the hills diverge, and enclose a wide boulder-strewn basin, through which winds the Míloh rivulet in three or four shallow streams, that re-unite at the outlet of the pass.

The Míloh Pass, by us called the "Mooleah Pass," is so named, I was told by our attendants, on account of the blue colour of the hills. They may look so at a distance, but are anything but blue on close inspection. At all events, the natives call them so, and hence the name; their pronunciation of the Hindustani *nilá*, "blue," being *míloh*.

Beyond this basin—every pebble and every rock in which is full of madrepores, ammonites, belemnites, oysters, and other marine fossils—we entered a very narrow and winding gorge between perpendicular walls of bare rock, two or three hundred feet high. Flowing down its pebbly

passage is a strong and brisk stream, which is crossed nine times in the transit. From this circumstance the passage is called *Nah-langa Tangí*, or "the strait with nine crossings." The water we found very cold, and about sixteen inches deep. On either side, up to a height of nearly six feet, the rocks are streaked with the water-lines of the hot-weather floods. These floods are described as coming down very suddenly after rains upon the hills in the interior: their violence and velocity are irresistible; and the raging torrent carries with it huge boulders, uprooted trees, and cattle caught in its flood.

So sudden are these floods, and often when there are no signs of rain at hand, that natives never camp in the bed of the stream, but always on the shelving banks that are found in different parts of the pass. The Nah-langa Tangí is about three and a half miles long, and conducts into a great basin in the hills. The scenery here is the wildest that can be imagined. The surface is strewed with huge rocks, and traversed by shelving banks of conglomerate and shingle; here and there are thick belts of tamarisk trees, amidst which the Míloh rivulet winds its tortuous course; around rise rugged hills of bare rock, the strata of which are snapped and twisted and contorted in a most violent and irregular manner. At the outlet of the gorge the strata are perpendicular; beyond it, they present every kind of contortion; and in some spots were noticed to form three parts of a circle. In some of the hills, the strata were horizontal, and dipped to the westward at an angle of about forty degrees; in others, but in a hill due west of our camp at Kúhov, the inclination was toward the eastward.

From this basin our path led along some shelving banks of shingle to a small flat called Kúhov. We camped here on some stubble-fields of Indian-corn and

sesame, having marched twelve miles. There is no village here, but there are several small strips of corn-fields on the ledges bordering the bed of the rivulet. In a secluded nook amongst the hills close to our camp we found a temporary settlement of Zangijo Brahoe, dependants of the Mír of Kotra. There were about twenty-four booths, ranged in two parallel rows. They were formed of palm-leaf mats, spread upon a light framework supported on sticks, and had a very flimsy appearance, and certainly provided the minimum amount of shelter. They are here called *kirrí*, and the only merit they possess is their portability. Their occupants were extremely poor and dirty, but they appeared healthy and happy, and are certainly hardy. During the cold weather they move about amongst the lower valleys and glens with their cattle and flocks, and in the spring move up for the summer months to the higher tablelands about Calát.

On the line of march we passed a káfila of eighty camels, laden with dates from Panjgúr to Kotra, under charge of a party of Bizanjo Brahoe, most of whom were armed with sword and matchlock. The camels were of a small breed, but very handsome and clean-limbed; some of them were nearly of a white colour. We found no supplies were procurable at Kúhov, not even forage for our cattle. Our conductor, Pír Jan, however, had been roused to a proper sense of his duties by the reprimand he got yesterday, and our requirements were consequently anticipated and provided for beforehand.

Our next stage was sixteen miles to Hatáchi. The path, leading at first south and then south-west, winds along the pebbly bed of the pass, and crosses its stream several times *en route*. The rise is very gradual, and the hills approach and diverge alternately, forming a

succession of basins connected together by narrow straits. About half-way we came to a long strip of sprouting corn in the midst of a great belt of tamarisk jangal, which occupies the greater portion of the pass. This patch of cultivation is called Páni Wánt, "the division of the waters;" and scattered about amidst the fields are a few huts of the Músiyáni Brahoe, dependants of the chief of Zehri.

Beyond Páni Wánt we passed through a narrow gap between lofty walls of perpendicular rock, in laminated horizontal strata, much fissured and weather-worn, and entered the wide basin of Jáh—that is to say, wide compared with the rest of the pass. Here too there is a good deal of corn cultivation, and along the foot of the hills in sheltered nooks were some small encampments of the Chanál Brahoe.

Amongst the fields are observed solitary little mud huts of neat, and, for these parts, substantial build. They belong to the Hindu grain-dealers of Kotra, who come up here each harvest to select the grain in liquidation of advances made to the cultivators during the cold season. Formerly this land was laid out in rice crops, but this has been put a stop to by the Kotra Mírs, as it interfered with the irrigation of their lands on the plain.

We passed a káfila here of fifty camels laden with dates from Panjgúr to Kotra, under charge of Bizanjo Brahoe. With this káfila, as with the one passed yesterday, were three or four fine young negro lads. The Brahoe were all armed, and clad in thick camlet coats; they wore the national cap, and altogether looked a very independent and hardy set of fellows. Beyond Jáh we passed through a tamarisk jangal, and rose on to a wide shelving bank that stretched up to the foot of the hills on our right. Here we camped at Hatáchi, the largest habita-

tion we have seen since leaving Kotra. It consists of some twenty-five or thirty mud huts scattered over the surface. The inhabitants are very poor and ill-favoured, and the men especially very dark and ugly. Some of the young women I saw were comely; and I was surprised to see several with undoubted African blood in their veins, to judge from their cast of countenance and frizzly hair.

Our camp was pitched on some small flats covered with the stubble of *júár* crops, and hard by was a collection of six or seven *kirrí* or booths belonging to the Khánzai Brahoe. They have adopted this proud title because the Khan of Calát is married to a daughter of their tribal chief. The benefits of the alliance do not seem to extend beyond the empty honour of the title, for a poorer and more miserable set of people we have not yet seen in his territories. The villagers, too, who brought our supplies into camp were in no better plight. Several hideous old women, who carried loads of wood and straw for our camp, were only half clad, and apparently less fed. Poor creatures! theirs is truly a hard lot; they are the mean drudges of the community, are despised by the men, and evilly entreated by the younger and more fortunate members of their own sex. Whilst these wretched people were toiling under their loads, a number of young men, who, judging from outward appearance and circumstances, were little if at all exalted above them in social status, seated themselves about the skirts of our camp and idly viewed the spectacle.

The situation of Hatáchi, in the midst of these rugged and barren hills, may be described as a pretty spot. As we saw it, the place is almost deserted; but in the spring months it is alive with the camps of the migratory Brahoe, moving with their families and flocks up to the

higher plateaux of the Calát tableland. There is a shrine or *ziárat* here, dedicated to the memory of Bahá-ulhacc, the saint of Multán. It is only noteworthy on account of the conspicuous clump of palm and other trees in the dark shades of which it is concealed.

Our next stage was sixteen miles to Narr. For about seven miles the road winds through a wide belt of tamarisk jangal, to the south of which, in a bend of the hills, is the Farzán-ná Bent, or "the cultivation of Farzán." A few scattered huts of the Hindu grain-dealers of Kotra were seen here and there, but there is no permanent habitation here.

Beyond this we passed through a narrow gorge into the Pír Lákha basin, which we entered near the domed tomb of that name. It was built about a century ago, in the time of the first Nasír Khan, Baloch, and is already in a state of decay. Around it are a number of humble graves, the depositary of the remains of departed Brahoe of this part of the country. They are tended by some *faqírs*, whose families are housed in very neat and comfortable quarters hard by—to wit, two commodious huts, surrounded by corn-fields, and shaded by some lofty date-palm and jujube trees.

Pír Lákha is about half-way between Hatáchi and Narr, and is approached through a narrow passage between perpendicular walls of rock, that rise in sheer precipices to a height of 150 to 200 feet. I was turning my head first to the right and then to the left, noting that the strata on the one side were horizontal, and on the other vertical, when one of the escort, riding behind me, and from whom, during the march, I had been making inquiries as to the people and country we were passing through, unexpectedly exclaimed, "And there 's the dragon!" "Where?" said I, eagerly, not at the mo-

ment quite sure but that some frightful monster was peering at us over a ledge of rock. "There," said he, pointing to the blank wall of rock on our left, which formed the southern boundary of the passage; "don't you see it running up the rock?" "No," I answered, staring full force in the direction indicated; "I see no dragon. What is it like? Is it moving or stationary?" Here my friend, as I could see by the laugh in his eyes, was moved with inward mirth at the not unnatural misunderstanding on my part in taking his words in their literal acceptation. He controlled the expression of his merriment, however, and, with a serious countenance, explained, "I don't mean a live dragon, sir; God preserve us from him!" Somewhat disappointed, "Then you should have been more precise," I irresistibly interposed. "But, sir," said he, in justification, "it is called the 'dragon of Pír Lákha,' although it's only his trail; and there it is, clear as noonday, on the face of the rock."

And so the dragon resolved itself into the reptile's trail only, and the trail in turn proved to be merely a vein of white quartz running obliquely across the face of the rock. An inquiry into the history of the dragon naturally followed this *denouement;* and here is my Brahoe informant's account, much in his own style of narration:—

In olden times, a great red dragon used to haunt this defile. He was the terror of the wicked as well as of the just, for he devoured them alike, such as came in his way, without distinction; and when he could not seize men, he laid in wait and entrapped their sheep, and goats, and cattle. Owing to his insatiable appetite, and his continued depredations, the country was depopulated; and so widespread was the terror of this monster, that wayfarers ceased to travel by this road. At length the holy man whose shrine lies yonder undertook to rid the

country of this bloodthirsty tyrant's oppression. Pír Lákha planted his *takya* or cell on the spot now occupied by his mausoleum; and so great was the sanctity of his character, and so powerful the protecting influence of God Almighty, that the dragon voluntarily came to pay homage to the saint, and, in place of offering violence, besought his favour with the utmost submission and tender of service.

The Pír made the dragon repeat the *kalama* or Prophet's creed, and converted him to the true faith, to *Islám*; and giving him his liberty, commanded him not to oppress God's creatures, and that the Almighty in His mercy would provide for him. And so it was the dragon disappeared, and the country became free, and the saint's memory perpetuated in the shrine that bears his name. Pír Lákha is the most popular saint of the Brahoe in this part of the country, and his sanctuary is held in the highest reverence by all the tribes around, who constantly resort to it to offer up their prayers and supplications, and to beseech the saint's blessing, particularly since the catastrophe connected with the dragon's trail, which, we have just seen, gave such confirming proof of his merits and supernatural powers. It was in this wise: In the early days, when people began to forget the debt of their gratitude to the saint for the great boon conferred by him on them, were careless in the performance of their vows, and neglected to support the servitors of his shrine, they were aroused to a proper sense of their obligations by the reappearance of the dreaded dragon in his former haunts, and with his accustomed violence. The first to feel the weight of his oppression was the *tumandár*, or "chief of a camp," of migratory Brahoe who used to winter in the vicinity.

It was in this manner: His favourite wife, who was

young, handsome, and well connected, was blessed with no offspring. This was a sore trial to her, and for several years she offered up her petitions at the saint's shrine as the camp passed it on their way to and return from the summer grazing grounds. At length, making a special pilgrimage to the shrine, she prayed earnestly for the saint's intercession that it might please God to give her a son, and vowed to give the priest in charge a cow on her prayer being granted. The saint through the priest informed her that her prayer was heard, and, please God, the desire of her heart should be gratified. She went away happy in mind, and in due time was rejoiced by the birth of a son. But, her desire gratified, she forgot her vow, and even failed to offer up her prayers and thank-offerings at the shrine on passing it to the summer pastures, and the like carelessness did she show on the return therefrom in autumn. Next spring, as the camp marched through the gorge on its accustomed journey, the dragon, watching his opportunity, dashed into the midst, seized the boy from its mother's arms, and disappeared with it over the hills, leaving that white track of its body as a memorial on the rock.

Such in substance was the Brahoe's story. It explains, at all events, the comfortable circumstances of the *faqírs* attached to the service of the mausoleum of Pír Lákha. In such a country, the lot of these people—the priesthood—is really enviable. They are respected and trusted by all classes, they enjoy free grants of land for their support, and receive besides tithes and other offerings; they are not affected by tribal feuds, nor are they obliged to interfere in the politics of the people; and altogether they are the most comfortable and well-to-do of the community. Yet they possess no special merits: generally they are but little better educated than the mass of

the common people, and are indebted for their good fortune more to hereditary right than anything else.

Beyond Pír Lákha the defile turns sharp to the north, and then bends round to the west and south, where it expands into the little basin of Hassúa. Here we found some small patches of corn cultivation, and a few huts of the Jam Zehrí Brahoe. Here too we met a káfila of sixty camels laden with wool and madder from Calát to Shikárpúr, under charge of Zehrí Brahoe, amongst whom were a couple of African slaves. We also met a small party of Samalári Brahoe driving a few asses and bullocks to Kotra for a supply of grain for their families somewhere in the hills close by. They appeared very poor people, like the rest of the Brahoe we have seen on our journey. What little corn this country produces is bought up at harvest-time by Hindu merchants, and taken down to Kotra, where it is again retailed by them to the peasantry. By this arrangement the tribes are pretty much in the hands of the Hindus, and they in turn of the chiefs.

Beyond Hassúa we passed through a small gap and entered the basin or valley of Narr, and turning off to the left away from the Míloh stream, camped on some open ground at the foot of the hills to the south. There is no village here, though there is a good deal of cultivation in scattered patches. Here and there, too, in the nooks of the hills, we found some small camps of Jam Zehrí Brahoe. They seemed very poor people, possessed of few goats and fewer cattle. Water, fuel, and camel forage are abundant here, but forage for man and horse are unprocurable.

In this march we found no fossils, as in the lower part of the pass; but the hills, though wider apart, are just as bare and inhospitable. The succession of basins or

valleys enclosed by them, however, are more thickly wooded with tamarisk.

At Narr, the Míloh Pass may be said to end in a wide basin, from which narrow valleys lead off to the north and to the west. They bring down the drainage from the hills between Khozdár and Calát. The main valley runs northward to Zehrí and Nichára, and down it flows the main stream of the Míloh rivulet.

As we entered the Narr basin from Pír Lákha, a solitary tree standing in the midst of a small patch of young corn on the right of the road was pointed out to us as the scene of the assassination of Sherdil Khan in May 1864. He had usurped the government from the present chief, Khudádád Khan of Calát, and was enabled to hold out against him for some time owing to the defection of Sher Khan, the commandant of Khudádád's regiment of mercenaries, who with his men joined the pretender. After a while Sher Khan, with the proverbial fickleness of these people, became dissatisfied with his new master, and sought to get restored to the favour of the chief he had deserted. As the best means to this end, as well as by way of repairing the injury he had done the rightful chief, he caused the rebel to be shot by one of his men as they were marching to oppose some of the troops sent against them. Sherdil, on being hit, lost control over his horse, and the startled animal, dashing off across country, threw his rider at the tree mentioned, where he presently died in the arms of a fellow-rebel, Sardár Táj Muhammad Khan. Sher Khan with his mercenaries then returned to his allegiance, and joined Khudádád Khan in his retreat at Kach.

Our next stage was thirteen miles to Gorú. We crossed the Narr basin in a southerly direction over a rough pebbly surface, and at about four miles left it by a

narrow winding gorge that opens on to a rough and wild tract between the hills. In the gorge are a few pools of water in the bed of a pebbly channel that conveys the drainage of these hills to the Míloh rivulet; it comes down from the southward along the foot of the hills bounding the valley in that direction; our route diverged from it and followed the skirt of the hills bounding it to the north. At about half-way on this march we passed a *gaur-band*, or "Gabardam," built across the outlet of a small gully in the side of the hills to our right. It is a very solid and substantial wall of dressed stones, rising from one to two feet above the surface of the ground, and conspicuous from its dark colour contrasting with the lighter hues of the rocks around. Our companions could tell us nothing of its history more than that, like many similar structures in different parts of the country, it belonged to the period when the country was inhabited by pagans. The hills here are very precipitous and wild; their slopes are dotted all over with little black specs, said to be bushes of the juniper, here called *háipurs;* the lower ridges are covered with a coarse grass that grows in tufts, and is called *hûwe;* it is said to be a very nourishing fodder for cattle.

Our camp at Gorú was pitched on a slaty ridge close to three or four small wells sunk in the gravelly soil. The water is reached at about twelve feet from the surface, and is very good. During the day immense flocks of goats and sheep came to be watered here; they appeared to me to be of a very diminutive breed. They were tended only by a few boys, from which circumstance we concluded there must be some Brahoe camps in the vicinity, though we saw no habitation or sign of cultivation in the whole march from Narr, excepting only a few

booths of the wandering Lúrí. These people are a kind of gipsy, and are found in all parts of the country in scattered parties of a few families each. They are a distinct race from the Brahoe and Baloch, and are occupied as musicians, potters, rope makers, mat weavers, pedlars, &c. They own no land, never cultivate the soil, and are looked on as outcasts.

The night air of Gorú proved sharp and chill, and towards daylight a hard frost set in. From this we marched eighteen miles to Khozdár, the route mostly westward. At a short distance from our camping-ground we came upon the cultivation of Gorú, and farther on passed the hamlet of the same name, at the foot of the hills to the left of the road. The huts are now empty, their tenants being camped in the nooks of the surrounding hills with their cattle and flocks, for the facility of pasture and water, neither the one nor the other being at this season procurable at Gorú. There is a very extensive cemetery here, whence the place derives its name (*gor* = grave). The graves are neatly raised tombs built of loose stones, the resting-places of defunct Zehrí Brahoe, who occupy all the hill country round about. At four miles on from Gorú, the road passes over some rough ground, and drops on to the Khozdár valley, the most open piece of country we have seen since leaving the plain of Kach. It bears a very dreary and wintry aspect, and along its northern borders shows no signs of habitation or cultivation or water. In the opposite direction, however, are seen a collection of villages called Zedi, with their gardens and fields, along the course of the little streams draining the southern part of the valley.

At two or three miles from Khozdár, we were met by Major Harrison, Political Agent at the Court of Calát. He came out with a party of forty troopers of

the Sindh Horse, and conducted us to his camp, pitched close to the fort of Khozdár, where he gave us a most hospitable welcome; whilst the General's arrival was announced and re-echoed amongst the surrounding hills by a salute of eleven guns fired from a couple of old cannon drawn up outside the fort. The canonneers, of whom there were nearly twenty engaged in the operation, were a wild and dirty-looking set of fellows, with long matted hair, and every sort of dress and undress except uniform.

The little fort is a new structure of mud, only recently completed. It holds a garrison of sixty Brahoe militia, and half a company of regular infantry, and is armed with the two guns above mentioned. It is well situated for the purpose it is meant to serve, viz., to protect the caravan routes centring in this valley through Nal from Kej and Pánjgúr on the west, through Wadd from Bela and Sonmiáni on the south, through the Míloh Pass from Kotra, Gandáva, and Shikárpúr on the east, and through Bághwána from Súráb and Calát on the north.

On the plain near the fort are the ruins of two contiguous villages, between which winds a small stream on its way to some corn-fields beyond them. The place has a very dreary look, and the climate at this season is decidedly bleak. The southern portion of the valley is well cultivated and peopled, and during the summer, so we are told, is one sheet of corn-fields. This valley, in fact, with those of Nal, Bághwána, Súráb, and Calát, are the principal corn-growing districts in this country. The elevation of Khozdár is about 3850 feet above the sea, and about 3700 feet above Gandáva on the plain of Kach. The later figure represents the rise in the land between the two places, a distance of ninety-three miles

by our route through the Míloh Pass, and gives an ascent of nearly forty feet in the mile.

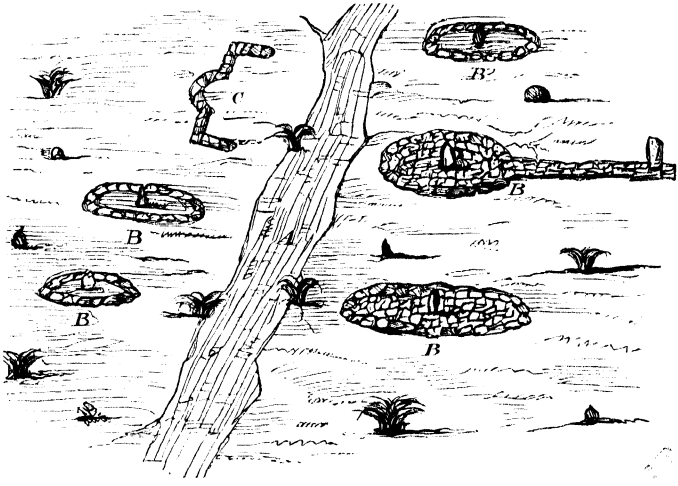
The Míloh Pass is easy for cattle, is well watered, and has an abundant supply of fuel in the tamarisk jangal throughout its course. Forage for cattle is scarce in winter, but there is a sufficiency of this in summer for caravans and the cattle and flocks of the Brahoe, who find ample space for camping on the shelving banks of the stream, in the succession of basins occupying the course of the pass. Beyond the pass, at Narr, the tamarisk jangal and water supply both cease.

In all our route from Pír Chhatta to Khozdár we observed a series of roadside memorials, emblematic of the national customs of the Brahoe. They are of two kinds, commemorative of very opposite events, and are met with in a very distant ratio of frequency in consequence. The one is called *cháp*, and commemorates the weddings amongst the migratory Brahoe. The other is called *cheda*, and serves as a memorial of those who die without issue amongst the clans.

The *cháp* is a perfect circle, described on the ground by a series of stones set together flat in its surface; the centre is marked by a single stone of from one to two feet in length, set upright on end. The diameters of these circles range from ten to thirty feet, and hundreds of them cover every flat piece of ground on the line of road followed by the Brahoe in their annual migrations from the high to the low lands. Some of the *cháps* we observed were of a different structure from the figure just described. Instead of a single upright stone in the centre, and a circumference marked by stones laid flat, the whole surface of the figure was closely set with stones laid flat on the ground, forming a circular pavement, from the centre of which projected the single

stone set upright. From the circumference of the circle projected a long arm in a straight line running to the north in those we saw. This projection is about thirty feet long, and terminates in a large stone set upright as in the centre ; its width is about two feet, and it is formed, like the circle, of stones set close together and flat on the surface of the ground.

These figures, we were told, are made on the actual sites on which have been danced the reels accompanying the festivities that form an important element in the



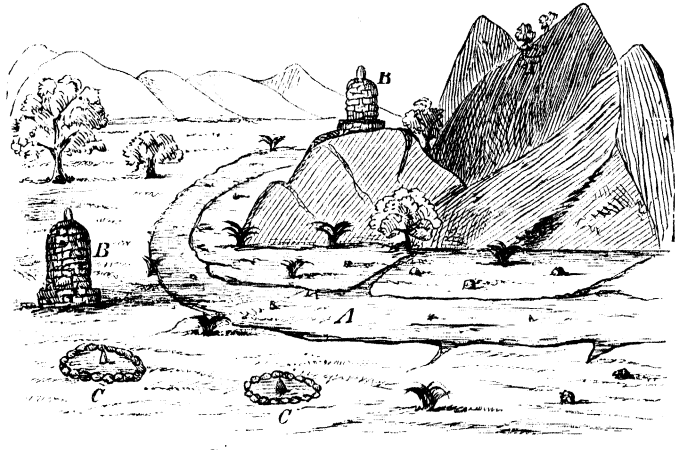
SKETCH PLAN OF THE CHÁP CIRCLES.

A. The highroad across a plain.
B. *Cháp* circles of different kinds, as described in the text.
C. A *mosjid* or mosque, marked off on the ground by stones just as are the *cháp* circles.

ceremonies attending a Brahoe wedding. The centre stone marks the place of the musician, and the circumference that of the circle of dancers, who pirouette individually and revolve collectively in measured steps, keeping time with the music, to which the while they clap their hands. This clapping of hands is here called *cháp*, and hence the name of the figures. Sometimes the

sword-dance is substituted for the other, and only differs from it in brandishing naked swords in place of clapping hands. The dance resembles the *ataur* of the Afghans. The sketch on p. 55 shows the form of the *cháp*.

The *cheda* is a pillar (called *tsalai* in Pushto) of from eight to twelve or more feet high, with a diameter of from three to four or more feet. It is neatly built of loose stones closely set in a cylindrical form. The top is convex or dome-shaped, and from its centre projects a single upright stone. The basement is a small square platform of stones, slightly raised above the surface of



SKETCH PLAN OF THE CHEDA.

A. Highroad round a hill ridge.
B. *Cheda* pillars on plain and on rock.
C. *Cháp* circles.

the ground. These structures are generally raised on some projecting rock overlooking the road, or on some slight eminence on the plain. At one or two spots we saw four or five close together, but generally they are only met at distant intervals, and singly. In general appearance they resemble miniature *topes* of the kind seen in some parts of Yúsufzai and the Peshawar valley. They are erected to the memory of clansmen who have

died without issue; and it is the custom for the surviving relatives to celebrate the anniversary of such mournful events by donatives to the family priest and a feast to the clan. Where practicable, the customary offerings and ceremonies are performed round the monument itself; and for this purpose their observance is generally deferred to the time when the camps in their annual migrations halt in their vicinity. The sketch on p. 56 shows the form of the *cheda*.

In all our route from Kotra, we saw very few of the people of the country. Including Hatáchi and Gorú with the few camps we passed, the population we found in this tract of country did not exceed two hundred families, if indeed it reached that number. Our companions, however, assured us that the hills were swarming with them, that every nook had its camp, and every valley its patch of cultivation. It may be so, but we saw no signs of any such populousness. In fact, the nature of the country does not admit of any large number being able to support themselves upon it, for the hills yield but the scantiest pasture, whilst the valleys offer a very small surface capable of cultivation. This conclusion is supported by the appearance and circumstances of the people and cattle we did see. They may be described in two words—poor and hungry.

The Brahoe are an interesting people, of whose history little is known. They are true nomads, and wander about the country in their respective limits, with their families and flocks, changing from the high lands to the low according to the seasons and pastures. In this respect they resemble some of the Afghan tribes. Some of them, however, are fixed in villages as cultivators of the soil. They are divided into an infinity of clans, or *khel*, such as Mingal, Bízanjo, Zangíjo, Kambaráni, Zehrí, Ráisáni,

Kurdgálí, Rikkí, Samulárí, Hárúní, Nichárí, Rodání, Gurganání, and many others. Their camps are called *tuman*, and the head man of each *tumandár*.

They differ from the Afghan, Baloch, and Jat of Sindh, by whom they are surrounded, in general physique and physiognomy as well as in language. Their manners and customs, too, are said to differ in many respects from those of the people around them, though, in the matters of robbery and murder, a family resemblance pervades them all.

The Brahoe is of middle height, or below it, and of swarthy complexion; the face is broad, with high cheek-bones, and adorned with beard and mustaches of neither long nor thick growth; the head is covered with a shock of long matted hair, generally jet black; the eyes are black and keen. The body is compactly framed and clean-limbed. Altogether, the race is active, hardy, and enduring. The Brahoe language differs entirely from that of the Afghan, the Baloch, and the Jat, though it contains many Persian and Indian words. The numerals are the same as the Persian, except the first three, which are *asit*, *irat*, *musit*, respectively; but the pronouns are entirely different, and bear no resemblance to those of the other languages; the forms of conjugation and declension, too, are distinct and peculiar. On the march I collected a vocabulary of about eight hundred words, and a few sentences, to show the structure of the language. These, with a skeleton grammar prepared at the same time, will be found in the Appendix. The Brahoes are altogether illiterate. I could hear of no book written in their language, nor could I get a single specimen of their writing.

An amusing incident occurred whilst collecting words for the vocabulary, and it may serve as a suggestive

illustration of the state of society amongst the Brahoes. I asked my Brahoe camel-driver, through the medium of Persian, of which he understood a little, what was his word for arsenic. He appeared somewhat disconcerted, and made no reply, and I inquired whether he had understood my question or not. "Yes," said he, with a serious look, "I know what you mean. I have heard of it, but have never seen it. It is only known to our chiefs and great men." "And what," I asked, "do they say about it?" "People say," he replied, with grave innocence, "that it is a magic medicine, and that great men keep it as a protection against their enemies." He had no idea of the manner in which it was used, but he knew from popular report that it was a mysterious medicine which preserved great men from the machinations of their enemies.

We halted a day at Khozdár with our kind hosts, Major Harrison and Dr Bowman, in order to rest our cattle, and on the 18th January marched sixteen miles to Kamál Khan, one of the principal villages in the plain or valley of Bághwána. Major Harrison accompanied us with an escort of Sindh Horse, Dr Bowman remaining with the camp at Khozdár.

Our route was northward, up the pebbly bed of a wide and shallow drainage channel, towards a gap in the hills. The road winds for some miles between low ridges and hills of bare rock by a gradual ascent, and at halfway brought us to the Chikú Koh *kauda,* or "gap," a low watershed marking the boundary between the Khozdár and Bághwána valleys. We here found the path somewhat obstructed by the remains of a stone breastwork, built four years ago by the rebel chief Núruddín, Mingal, when he took the field against the Khan of Calát, to contest the possession of the village of Kamál Khan.

The breastwork and barricades had been only partially destroyed, and their *débris* had been left to encumber the road, just as they did at the time the defences were demolished—a characteristic instance of oriental apathy and negligence.

From this point we passed down a gentle slope on to the plain of Bághwána, and crossed a wide extent of cultivated land to the village of Kamál Khan, where we camped near a small stream of clear fresh water, which comes from a spring in the hills two miles off.

Kamál Khan is a good-sized village, or rather, it consists of two villages close together, which contain in all some four hundred houses. Across the plain, at the foot of the hills to the north, are seen some other villages surrounded by leafless trees. The surface is generally cultivated, and divided into little fields, the sides of which are banked up with earth, so as to retain rain-water.

The elevation of this valley is about 4530 feet, as indicated by the aneroid barometer. In summer, when the gardens are in full foliage and the crops are ripening, it must be a pretty place in this waste of hills, and is said to possess an agreeable climate, notwithstanding the bare heat-radiating rocks that encompass it about. At this season, however, it wears a dull, dreary, and bleak look —its winter aspect—and has a raw, cold climate, of which we were made sensible by the prevailing state of the weather, for the sky was overcast with clouds, and a cutting north-east wind penetrated to our very bones. The plain itself appears a bare flat, without either villages or trees, and towards the east presents a great patch snow-white with saline efflorescence.

During the afternoon we received a visit from the chief men of the place. Amongst them were Sardár Mír Muhammad, Mingal of Wadd, a stanch friend and sup-

porter of the Khan of Calát in these times of sedition and revolt by which he is beset. He was accompanied by Abdul Aziz Khan, Náib of Qwetta, and two intelligent-looking young lads, sons respectively of the Sardár of the Sansunni and the Mammassani, or Muhammad Hassani. They were all very plainly clad, and remarkably simple in their manners. About them was none of that ceremony and etiquette, in the observance of which independent orientals are so punctilious; indeed, their bearing was more like that of subjects than of independent chiefs. The two former were old men, with nothing noteworthy about them; but the two lads were remarkably bright-eyed and intelligent youths of eighteen or nineteen years, and so alike, they might have been brothers. Their features were very striking, and different from any we had yet seen; they may be described as a combination of the very widely separated Jewish and negro physiognomy, and reminded me of the Ethiopian figures one sees represented in the Egyptian sculptures.

After our visitors had retired, I heard a voice outside the tent inquiring where the *Farangi Hakim*, or "European doctor," was to be found. The man spoke with a harsh and impetuous voice, and I, curious to see him and know his errand, stepped out and announced myself to a wild-looking Brahoe with the scar of a sword straight across the nose and one half of the face. "But," he replied, making a rapid survey of me, "you are not the man I want. Where is the doctor of Khozdár? Is not he here?" "No, he is not here," I answered; "we left him at Khozdár." "Well," he rejoined, turning brusquely to depart, "I want nothing from you. It was him I came to see." "Perhaps," I said, motioning him to stop, "I can do for you what you require of the Khozdár doctor." "No," he replied, stepping away with as much haste as

he had come; "I only came to thank him for his kindness to me, and for curing this wound across my face;" and before I could ask another question, the impatient Brahoe was off on his own business.

I now learned from Major Harrison that he was a trooper in the service of the Khan of Calát, and was engaged against the rebels in the battle fought some few months ago near Gorú in the Khad Mastung valley. In the charge against the enemy he received a sword-cut across the face, by which the nose and upper lip were severed, and fell down in front of the mouth, hanging only by a thin shred of the cheek. Recovering from the shock, the trooper at once sheathed his sword, and securing the divided parts as they were with the end of his turban passed across the face and fastened in the folds above, rode straight off the field on the road to Khozdár. After a ride of upwards of seventy miles he arrived at Dr Bowman's camp, and was at once received under that gentleman's skilful care. The satisfactory result, and the accident of our journey this way, produced this pleasing instance of Brahoe gratitude and trust in the skill of European doctors. The man, on hearing of the march of our camp from Khozdár, had come in from a distant village to thank his benefactor, and not finding him, hurried away to reach his home before nightfall.

It is a too commonly expressed opinion amongst us in this country that the natives have no sense of gratitude for benefits conferred or for favours received. But this, I am persuaded, is a wrong conclusion; and its injustice is proved by the above-described incident, which is only one of many similar instances that have come to my personal knowledge, and a further reference to which here would be irrelevant to the purpose of this book.

19th January.—From Bághwána we marched twenty-

six miles to Lákoryán. Leaving Kamál Khan, we followed a small stream over a succession of fields of young corn, just sprouting above the surface, and then, passing some walled pomegranate gardens fringed with willow-trees, entered amongst low hills set close together on either side of an intervening drainage gully. At about three miles we came to the spring-head of the little stream we had followed from camp. The spring issues at the foot of some bare rocky bluffs, and forms a small pool round which grow some eight or ten date-palms, conspicuous as being the only trees in the vicinity.

From this point we turned to the right, and proceeding due north over some very rough ground, dropped into a narrow ravine between high banks of bare rock; and following it some distance, emerged upon the wide plateau or tableland of Loghai, the village of the same name standing away to the west. In the hills to the south-west, near the village of Ferozabad, are the Khappar lead-mines. They are said to give employment to about two hundred men.

There are no trees visible on the Lohgai plateau, nor is there any jangal, but the surface is thinly sprinkled with a very stunted growth of the camel-thorn (*Rhazzia stricta, Withiana congulans*), two or three kinds of salsola, and a coarse grass growing in tufts. Here and there, too, are some patches of cultivation.

From this we passed through some low rocky ridges on to a similar but more extensive tableland, divided by low ridges of rock into the plateau of Mughali, Tútah, and Záwah. We started from Kamál Khan at 7.50 A.M., and arrived at the entrance to the Záwah defile at 10.10 A.M., thus, reckoning the pace of our horses at four miles an hour, making the distance about nine and a half miles.

We halted here for breakfast, on the edge of a little

stream of brackish water, whilst the baggage went on ahead. Close by is a ridge of bare rock without a particle of vegetation on it, and along its base are the traces of a very ancient village. The foundation walls are very massive, and built substantially of dressed stone; the surface everywhere around is covered with bits of red pottery.

At 1.10 P.M. we mounted our camels, and left Záwah by a narrow winding defile, down which flows the thready rivulet on which we had halted. After proceeding up the defile some distance, we passed over some very rocky ground by a rough track, and rose suddenly to the crest of a ridge of hills running north and south. Descending a little from this, we reach the tableland of Jiwán. This is an open plateau, and, unlike the others, is thickly covered with pasture herbs and bushes, amongst which are interspersed small isolated patches of ploughed land. We saw no villages, however, nor any signs of a camp in the vicinity ,though our native escort assured us that there were hundreds of *tumans* hidden away in the nooks and hollows of the mountains, to which the Brahoe retire at this season, with their flocks, for shelter from the cold winds that blow over the open country.

Traversing this plateau, we crossed a deep ravine, opposite a cavern excavated in its high bank of shingle, and known as Duzdán ná Khond, or "the robber's retreat." Here my camel showed signs of fatigue, and became so shaky on his legs, that I became apprehensive of some misfortune, and, to avoid the chance of breaking my neck against the rocks, relieved him of my weight, and mounted my horse, which was being led along close behind us. The severity of the weather and the want of his accustomed forage, combined with the roughness of the roads and our land marches, had told unfavourable upon the

poor brute, and it was as much as he could do to keep up with our party till we reached Kandahar. Here the milder climate and several days' rest brought him round to his former self, and he afterwards carried me down to Baghdad, where he passed into the possession of the camel's best friend—an Arab.

Beyond the ravine we crossed a ridge of rocky hills by a very rough and narrow path, and emerged upon the Lákoryán tableland, an enclosed plateau that rises considerably up to the hills on the north and west. We passed a good deal of cultivation on our route across it, and at 4.30 P.M. camped—or rather, waited for our camp, for the baggage did not come up till 7.30 P.M., by which time it was quite dark—near a spring at the foot of the hills to the north-west. There is no village nor other sign of habitation here, except a small enclosure containing a few roofless huts, a few hundred yards from the spring at which we have taken up our position for the night. We passed a large *gaur-band* on the plateau, and at the foot of the hills towards the north-east saw a great collection of them. It was too late for us to go and explore them; but, from what we could see, they appeared to mark the site of some ancient city. The dark lines of their massive walls are very conspicuous against the lighter colours of the hillside.

Whilst waiting the arrival of our tents, we collected some dry bushes of the camel-thorn and some kinds of salsola, and made a fire to warm ourselves, and point out our whereabouts to the baggagers, who were yet some way behind, for to the repeated shouts and calls of our party there came no response.

There are no supplies procurable here, and the water is very limited in quantity, and, though not brackish, of decidedly inferior quality. By previous arrangement

some fuel and fodder had been collected here for our party, but the supply fell very far short of our requirements. The fodder was distributed in small quantities amongst the troopers of our escort, and the fuel—the few faggots there were—was mostly appropriated by our cook. Along the raised banks of some fields near the enclosure above mentioned were six or seven circular vaulted pits excavated in the ground. They are used as storehouses for grain or straw or chaff, and are entered through a small hole at the top. This aperture is only slightly raised above the level of the ground, and is covered by a lid plastered over with mud cement until required to be removed. These grain-pits were examined in the hopes that they might enable us to increase the rations served out to our cattle; but, to our disappointment, they were all found empty, like the country itself.

During the night a steady soaking rain set in; and as it continued in the morning, there was some question as to whether we should be able to proceed on our march. But the point was soon settled when we found the impossibility of procuring any provisions here either for man or beast. So we struck our tents, and at 8.40 A.M. set out on our march of twenty miles to Khan Calá of Súráb, and a most trying and disagreeable march it proved. As we left camp, heavy mists hung over the country, and obscured everything from view beyond a couple of hundred yards or so, whilst a thin drenching rain, that presently changed to sleet and then to snow, descended very perseveringly upon us. Fortunately for us, the soil here is a coarse gravel, with only a small admixture of earth, and our cattle consequently got over it without hindrance.

After riding half-an-hour in a north-westerly direction, we turned northwards into a narrow gap in the hills, and

beyond it came to the Anjíra plateau, and at 10.10 A.M. halted at a *saráe* near its north end, for shelter from the rain and for breakfast. In the gap we passed amongst a number of very fine and extensive *gaur-band.* They are the largest we have seen, and, from their position and appearance, were probably built as defensive works. Two or three of these massive breastworks were on the plain a little in advance of the ridge of hills separating Lákoryán from Anjíra, but most of them were built across gaps between the prominent peaks of the ridge. On the Anjíra side of the ridge, on some level ground to the right of the road, we found a large collection of very substantial walls, of from two to eight feet high. They appeared like the remains of an ancient town. Owing to the inclement weather we did not stop to examine them.

Near the *saráe* is a little stream, which carries the drainage of this plateau down to the Míloh rivulet, which it joins somewhere near Narr; and on a turfy bank a few hundred yards off is a solitary hut, with an adjoining walled enclosure. In the latter stands a masonry pillar, about ten feet high, and of recent construction. The monument, our companions informed us, is built on the spot where the corpse of the late Nasír Khan, brother of the present chief of Calát, was washed previous to conveyance for burial in the family sepulchre, he having died here on his way to the capital.

Whilst here, the rain ceased, and the sky cleared for a while, and we got a view of the country around, and a more dreary and inhospitable-looking prospect it would be difficult to find out of Balochistan. To the north, above the lower ridges bounding the plateau in that direction, was seen the snow-topped Harboí mountain, and it was the only feature that relieved the general ruggedness of the bare hills around. The plateau itself,

like that of Lákoryán, is covered with saline efflorescence, and supports only a thin growth of pasture herbs. Away to the north-east we spied a few leafless trees around a small hamlet, and by it observed a flock of sheep, tended by a couple of shepherds. Nearer at hand the plain was covered by a wide extent of cemetery, thickly crowded with graves, whilst solitary tombs were here and there scattered over the general surface, and only attracted attention by the shreds of rag floating in the breeze from the poles supported in the pile of loose stones that covered them.

At noon we mounted our horses and proceeded on our way, the clouds again lowering and threatening more rain, by which, indeed, we were very soon overtaken in the form of a storm from the north-west. We had crossed a succession of ridges and gullies, the rocks of which were green, blue, and red-coloured sandstone, amongst masses of lighter hue full of fossil ammonites, oysters, and other marine shells, and emerged on a wide plateau called Khulkná Khad, where we were exposed to the full force of a numbing north wind and blinding drifts of snow.

We made our way across this bleak plateau as best we could, and passed *en route* a weather-bound káfila of sixty camels, with wool from Núshkí for Karáchí. The camels with their pack-saddles on were let loose to graze on the wormwood, camel-thorn, and saltworts, which here covered the surface more thickly than we had anywhere seen; whilst the drivers, having piled the loads in the form of a circle, and spread felt cloths across from one load to the other, crouched for protection from the weather under the shelter thus afforded. A few of them stepped out to view us as we rode by, and fine manly-looking fellows they were—all Afghans.

Beyond this we crossed a low ridge of hills by a narrow

and rough strait, at the entrance to which we noticed a number of perfect *cháp* circles, and four or five *cheda* pillars—one of which, to the right of our path, occupied a very conspicuous position on the ledge of a prominent rock—and then entered on the wide and undulating table-land of Azákhel and Súráb, on which are several villages and fruit-gardens, and more cultivation than we have anywhere seen in this country as yet; in fact, we here reached an inhabited region. Our path skirted the hills to the east, and led past a roadside shrine called Lulla Sulemán ná Kher. The head of the tomb is marked by four or five long poles, to which are fastened numberless shreds of cloth, stuck upright in a heap of loose stones, samples of the rocks of the surrounding mountains, and on the top of them lie a number of horns of the wild goat and wild sheep. I stopped to examine these, and amongst the stones found a fine fossil convoluted conch, which I told an attendant trooper I wanted, and he, without hesitation, took it up and brought it into camp, and I subsequently sent it to Peshawar with some horns and other specimens from Kandahar, as I shall have occasion to mention hereafter. I did not see any granite amongst the stones on this shrine, and hence conclude that there is none in the adjacent hills, for the pile is formed by contributions of devotees from all the surrounding country.

Away to the right from Sulemán ná Kher we saw the villages and gardens of Ghijdegán and Dhand, and farther on, passing the collection of hamlets known as Nighár, at 2.45. P.M. arrived at Khan Calá of Súráb, where we were very glad to find shelter in a dirty little hut vacated for us, and thaw our frozen limbs. The last six miles of our march were most trying from the intense cold and driving snow, and completely numbed

us, so that we could not have held out against it much longer. The north wind is most piercing, and cuts to the very bones. It is called *Shomál bád*, or "north wind" *par excellence*, by the natives, and is dreaded as extremely dangerous, often proving fatal by numbing the powers of life. The villagers expressed astonishment at our travelling in such weather, and some of our Khozdár escort chimed in with, "It 's only the Sáhibs who ever think of doing such things; and when they go forward, we must follow them. Surely there is a special providence that presides over their protection."

In truth, our native attendants suffered severely. The hands, feet, and faces of several of the troopers of our escort of Sindh Horse became swollen, puffy, and painful, but they held out manfully to the end. Not so our Khozdár attendants; they succumbed to the weather even before we had accomplished half the march, and this is the more remarkable, as they were travelling in their own country. They one by one wrapped up their faces in the capacious folds of their turbans so closely that there was barely room for them to use their eyes, and gathering their loose cloaks about them, sat their horses more like bundles of clothes than horsemen. Having thus resigned themselves to their fate, they gradually fell away from our party, and took shelter in the first villages we came to.

We ourselves were not without showing evidences of the effects of the wintry blast. The snow freezing upon our mustaches and beards had stiffened them, so that talking became a painful exertion; we therefore proceeded in silence, with our heads set down against the howling wind and driving snow, and presently dropped away from one another—the General here, Major Harrison there, and I elsewhere—each following his own pace to the

village ahead of us. My feet were so numbed that on dismounting I did not feel the ground, and consequently nearly fell, and it was some minutes before I could freely use my limbs.

Our baggage did not come up till 7.30. P.M., and both men and cattle were much exhausted, but plenty of food and warm shelter soon revived them. Three or four of our baggagers went off with their mules to the nearest villages we came to, and did not rejoin our party till the next morning. With the exception of one muleteer, who deserted with the cloak and fur coat we provided for him, none of our party were much the worse for the exposure.

CHAPTER III.

SÚRÁB is a populous valley, very fertile, and freely watered by many little streams from the mountains. Its elevation is about 5910 feet at Khan Calá, and consequently its winter is a rigorous season. It now wears a most dreary aspect, but in summer it is said to be bright with cornfields and gardens in full force. At that season, too, the Azákhel and Khulkná Khad plateaux are covered with the busy camps of the Mingal Brahoe, who are now dispersed amongst the lower hills of Nal and Wadd.

The migratory life led by these people is one more of necessity than of choice it seems; for their hills are so bare, that they produce no timber fit for building purposes, nor forage sufficient for the support of the flocks, whilst much of the soil of the plateaux is so gravelly and impregnated with salines as to be unfit either for cultivation or for building the domed huts so common in Kandahar and many parts of Persia; and, besides, though last mentioned, not the least difficulty is the general scarcity of water everywhere. Since we left the Míloh rivulet at Narr, we have not seen a single stream one could not easily step across dryshod.

Towards midnight the wind subsided, the clouds dispersed, the stars shone out, and a hard frost set in. Fortunately we were all warmly housed in the village, and did not suffer from it; and this is as much as I can say for it on that score. In other respects, our domicile was none of the most agreeable, for though tired and

sleepy by the day's exertion and suffering, it was impossible to get either rest or sleep. The fire, lighted in the centre of our little hut, filled its single unventilated chamber with blinding clouds of suffocating smoke. We no sooner escaped these troubles by lying close on the ground, when our attempts to sleep were at once dissipated by another form of torment, to wit, the fierce attacks of multitudes of the most vicious fleas and other vermin of that sort. They literally swarmed all over the place, and allowed us no rest throughout the night. I could only exist by repeatedly going out and breathing a little fresh air, which at daylight I found to be 23° Fah. It must have been colder during the night, though it did not feel so, probably owing to the subsidence of the wind.

21*st January*.—Whilst the baggage was being loaded, I examined some faggots of the fuel that had been collected here from the adjacent hills for the use of our camp, and recognised the following plants, with their native names following each, namely :—Juniper (*hápurs*), ephedra (*nárôm*, the *hóm* of the Afghans), wild almond (*harshîn*), wild olive (*khat*, the *khoan* of the Afghans), wild peach (*kotor*), and salvadora oleoides? (*pipli*). The last is said to be poisonous to camels, though not to goats and sheep. On the Anjíra plateau I obtained specimens of the following plants, viz. :—Caper spurge (*ritáchk*), peganum (*kisánkúr*), artemisia sp. (*khardarno*), caroxylon (*righit*), camel-thorn (*shenálo*), withiana congulans (*panîr band*), and a species of lycopodion (*kásákun*).

We set out from Súráb at 10.45 A.M., and proceeded due north over an undulating plateau with hills on either hand. The soil was spongy with efflorescent salines, and the surface was covered with a thick growth of aromatic wormwood. A strong and keen north wind blew against

us the whole day. On starting, I went off the road a little to get a couple of blue pigeons I had seen alight on a ploughed field. The cold was so intense, by reason of the wind, that my fingers, although encased in thick woollen gloves, were at once numbed, and I could only carry my gun by shifting it constantly from hand to hand. Presently the pain became very acute, and lasted for more than half-an-hour, whilst I rubbed the hands together to restore the circulation. The poor pigeons must have had a hard time of it battling against the relentless blasts of Boreas; and the fate that transferred them from the bare clods of a wintry wind-scoured field to the warm recesses of a well-seasoned "blaze-pan" (a very excellent kind of travelling stewpan) was, after all, not so cruel a one as it might have been had some hungry hawk forestalled me.

After marching an hour, we passed Hajíka hamlet under the hills to the right; and still continuing over a wide pasture tract, at 1.20 P.M. arrived at Gandaghen Saráe, and camped under the lee of its walls for protection from the wind, our escort finding shelter in its interior. There is a large pool of water here, fed by a sluggish spring oozing from under a ledge of conglomerate rock, only slightly raised above the general level of the country. We found it frozen over. Our escort, after watering their horses here, galloped them about for a quarter of an hour or more, to prevent spasms from the combined effects of wind and water, and not from the fear, as I supposed, of any ill effects from the water itself, which was very brackish.

Gandaghen is thirteen miles from Súráb, and there is neither water, nor tree, nor habitation, nor cultivation on the road between them. Hajíka was the only village we saw, and it lay some miles off the road. The weather was

clear and sunny, with a blue sky, but the air was biting cold, and the north wind quite withering. At 9 P.M. the thermometer fell to 16° Fah., and at daylight stood at 10° Fah. At this place two more of our mule-drivers deserted with the warm clothing we had provided for them; they were both Pathans of Kandahar.

Our next stage was fifteen miles to Rodinjo. The morning was bright and sunny, but bitterly cold, with a keen north wind. Our tent awnings were frozen stiff as boards, and could not be struck till near 10 A.M., for fear of the cloth snapping. The morning sun, however, thawed them sufficiently for packing, and by 10.35 A.M. we were fairly started on the march. We followed a well-trodden path over the pasture land of Mall, and at about half-way came to the camping-ground of Damb, where is a small pool of brackish water at the foot of a detached mound.

I struck off the road in company with our *mihmándár* (conductor and entertainer), Mulla Dost Muhammad, in hopes of getting a hare, of which animals he assured us there were untold numbers in the wormwood scrub covering the plain. We had ridden some distance without seeing a single living creature, or any signs of one except the shell of a tortoise (here called *sarkúk*), and the shrivelled skin of a hedgehog or *jájak*, as it is here called. My companion was telling me that the egg of the tortoise was used by the Brahoe, whipped up with water and smeared over the postules, as a remedy to prevent pitting from small-pox; and I was just making a mental note to the effect that an ordinary hen's egg might be used with equal advantage under similar circumstances, when a hare dashed out across our path. I was holding my gun, a double-barrelled breech-loader by Dougall, resting against the shoulder at the moment, but it was instantly down at

the "present," and fired, but no puss was to be seen. "You have missed," said the Mulla; "her hour of death (*ajal*) has not arrived." "I am not sure of that," I said; "I heard a squeak, and am going to see;" so saying, I dismounted, and giving him my pony to hold, moved forward to examine the bushes, the while adjusting a fresh cartridge. I had hardly advanced forty or fifty paces, when I instinctively "ducked" to a sudden, sharp, rushing sound, *wsheeooh*, close over my head, and caught sight of a great bird alight at a bush some forty or so yards ahead. To step aside and fire straight upon him was the work of an instant, and then running up, I found a great black eagle sprawling over the hare, whose stomach was already torn open. Both were secured to my saddle-straps, and the pony, taking fright at these unaccustomed bodies dangling against his flanks, set off at full speed across the plain towards the rest of the party, whom we overtook at Damb. The hare formed a welcome addition to our *blaze*, and the black eagle (*siyáh waccáb*) forms the largest specimen amongst the bird-skins I collected on this journey. The stretch of the wings from tip to tip measured very nearly eight feet.

Beyond Damb we halted half-an-hour at a pebbly ravine skirting a low ridge, to let the baggage get on, and then proceeding over an undulating country similar to that already traversed, arrived at Rodinjo at 2.20 P.M., and camped under the lee of the *saráe* outside the village for shelter from the wind. This is a neat little village of about 180 houses. Many little hill-streams run over the surface, which is widely cultivated. There are some very fine white poplar and willow trees here, and two or three small apricot orchards. The elevation of Rodinjo is 6650 feet above the sea.

23*d* *January.*—The cold during the night was severe.

At daylight the mercury stood at 14° Fah., and between seven and eight A.M. rose to 22° Fah. Our servants were so numbed and stupefied by it that we could not get them to move till they had had some hours sunning. We got away at 11.10 A.M., and proceeded northwards over an undulating plain bounded on the east and west by low hills. The width of the plain is about six miles, and its surface presents nothing but an unvaried scrub of wormwood growing on a soft, spongy, and gravelly soil. Neither village, nor tree, nor camp, nor, except a few very widely separated little patches, cultivation is to be seen, nor is any water to be found on it.

After marching an hour we came to a ridge of magnesian limestone, at the foot of which a small well is sunk in the rock. Beyond this we entered a narrow gully, winding between high banks of gravel and shingle, and rose up to a gap from which the valley of Calát, and the Mírí or palace, dominating the town at the end of a subsiding ridge of rock, lay before us. The scene was wild and dreary, and all nature seemed withered by the chill of winter.

From the gap we went down a long declivity between low ridges, and passing under the walls of the Mírí, and round the fortifications of the town, crossed the largest rivulet we have seen in the country, and alighted at a house prepared, or, I should properly say, emptied, for our reception, in a garden a mile to the north of the town, our arrival being announced by a salute of eleven guns from the citadel—distance, thirteen miles. A little way down the slope from the gap above mentioned, we were met by an *isticbál*, or ceremonial reception party, headed by Mír Karam Khan, a handsome youth of some eighteen years, with glossy black curly ringlets hanging over his shoulders. He is a nephew of the Khan's

(sister's son), and though so young, already looks worn out and enervated by too early and too free an abuse of the pleasures prized by Eastern potentates. He was gaily dressed, and mounted on a powerful and spirited horse, richly caparisoned with silver-mounted trappings. But the whole effect of this *grande tenue* was marred by his timid seat and awkward clutches every now and again, as the horse pranced, at the high pommel of the saddle, which rose up in front as if it had been purposely put there for the rider to hold on by.

He was attended by Mír Saggid Muhammad, Iltáfzai, a cousin of the Khan's, and was followed by a party of twenty-five or thirty horsemen—the most ragged and motley troop I ever saw. There was the Persian and the Pathan, the Brahoe and the Baloch, the Sindhí and the Sídí, each clad in his own national costume and armour, but the poorest of its kind, and all mounted on very inferior, weedy, and unkept ponies. They gradually dropped off from us as we passed under the town.

Two hours after our arrival, we donned our uniforms and went to call on the Khan at the Míri. The cold was withering, and a keen north wind cut us to the very bones. The ground was frozen hard, and snow-wreaths lay under the shade of the walls. Our path led across a brisk rivulet, flowing in a wide pebbly channel—the same we had crossed a while ago ; and then past some walled fields to the town itself, which we entered by a gate leading into the main bazaar—a poor and decayed collection of shops ranged on each side of a filthy street. From this we went up a steep and slippery ascent, very narrow, and flanked by high walls. Dismounting at the top, we groped our way through a dark winding passage, strewed with all sorts of filth and litter, and redolent of the nastiest smells, and suddenly arrived at the door of the

Khan's reception room, where we found him standing to receive us.

We shook hands all round, with the usual complimentary phrases, and at once entering the room, were conducted to a row of chairs placed at its upper end. Khudádád Khan, the chief of Calát, and Major-General Pollock occupied the two central seats, and Major Harrison and myself those on either side. On the floor in front of us were spread two dirty old Persian carpets, separated by a space in which was placed a great dish of live charcoal. At the edge of the carpets, to the right and left, sat a number of court officials, and at the further end fronting us stood the Khan's bodyguard, a dozen of the most unshorn, ragged, and ruffianly set of cut-throats it would be possible to collect anywhere. No two were clad or armed alike, and each looked a greater scoundrel than his neighbour. Where the Khan collected such a unique set of villains I cannot understand. I never saw anything to equal their barbarous attire and rascally looks anywhere.

One more personage remains to complete the picture of the Khan's court as we found it on this memorable occasion, for I never think of that cold ride without a shiver running through my limbs. Crouched up against the wall to the left of our row of chairs was a portly individual with a jovial fat face and a sleek beard, which would have been white had he but treated it to a little soap and water. He shuffled about under the bundle of clothes—neither clean nor new—that mostly concealed his figure, as from time to time he joined in the conversation as one in authority and in the Khan's confidence. This was Wazír Walí Muhammad, aged seventy years, the most sensible man in Calát, the Khan's truest friend, and a stanch ally of the British Government, of which

his experience runs through the past and present generation. He was a friend to Masson when he visited this place in 1831, and he was present when the town was taken, eight years later, by the force under General Willshire, the chief, Mihráb Khan, being killed in the defence, with four hundred of his men.

The present chief, Khudádád Khan, is about thirty-eight years of age. He has a vacant and at times silly look, and his conversation is trifling. He does not convey the impression of being a man of any weight or ability, and is said to spend most of his time amongst his women. During our visit his two sons were introduced. They were pretty children and richly dressed. The eldest, Mír Mahmúd, was aged seven years, and the other, Mír Shahnawáz, was aged three years.

Such is the composition of the court of Calát. The reception room in which we were assembled is a very mean and neglected chamber. The roof is low and the walls—they had been whitewashed, but apparently very long ago—were cracked in a dangerous manner, and altogether the place wore a very poor and untidy look. The north and west sides of the chamber were occupied by a succession of latticed windows, from which there is a fine prospect of the whole valley and its villages and gardens. This is the one redeeming point in the whole palace, which is only a jumble of huts piled together one above the other to a great height above the rest of the town, of which it forms the most prominent object as seen from a distance.

It is not usual for the Khan to winter here, owing to the severity of the climate. His winter residence is in the milder climate of Gandáva where he has a palace. This year he is kept here by the rebellion of his barons.

We took our leave, and returned to our quarters by the

route we came, and very glad to get under shelter again, for our close-fitting uniforms were ill calculated to protect us from such cold, which is here greater than we have anywhere experienced. During the night the thermometer must have sunk to zero outside, for next morning it stood at 8° Fah. in a court full of servants and cattle, and warmed by several little fires. By my aneroid barometer I estimated the elevation of Calát at about 6750 feet above the sea. Hard frost prevailed all the time we were here.

We halted here the next day, and at four P.M. the Khan, attended by his son, Mír Mahmúd, and nephew, Mír Kuram Khan, came to return our visit. He was richly dressed, and rode a fine Baloch horse caparisoned with gold trappings; but he is altogether wanting in deportment, and impressed me even more unfavourably than he did yesterday.

He is the head of the Kambaráni family, who claim Arab descent, and profess to come originally from Aleppo. This family has held the government for several generations, and is now reckoned as the royal tribe amongst the Brahoe, though they themselves are neither Brahoe nor Baloch. The Kambaráni take wives from both tribes, but they give their daughters to neither, though all are Sunni Muhammadans. In the days of their prosperity, the Kambaráni chiefs ruled over the whole of Balochistan as independent despots, owning only nominal allegiance to the Afghan monarchy established by Shah Ahmad, Durráni. At that time, as now, Balochistan comprised six principal divisions, viz., Kach, Gandáva, Jhálawán, Calát, Sahárawán, Makrán, and Las Bela. Only the four first of these divisions now acknowledge the authority of the Calát chief. Las Bela is independent under a *quasi* tributary chief; whilst

Makrán is divided between Persia and a number of petty local chiefs, whose tenures possess no stability owing to their intestine feuds and rivalries. The endurance of the rule of the present chief of Calát, too, does not appear very secure, owing to the prolonged rebellion of some of his principal barons.

The Khan's visit was not a very long one, nor very entertaining. He repeated the same queries with which he assailed us yesterday. "How old are you?" "Are you married?" "How many children have you?" and so forth. "How many teeth have you?" only was wanting to bring the list of impertinences to a climax. My gun was produced for his inspection, and the General's gyroscope was set in motion for the amusement of his son. He handled the gun awkwardly, and examined it perfunctorily, without a trace of interest, as if the attempt to understand its mechanism were quite a hopeless task. The wonderful performances of the gyroscope drew forth some exclamations of astonishment, and when, by an erratic dash, it startled an old gentleman sitting on the floor into a sudden somersault in his haste to escape its attack, it produced a decided impression, not quite free from suspicions as to its being some infernal machine, the real purposes of which we kept secret. "Or else," said one of the attendants to his neighbour, as the Khan took his departure, "why should they carry such a thing about with them? Did you feel its weight and force as it spun?"

In the evening, after our visit yesterday, the Khan sent us a *zújafát*, or cooked dinner of several native dishes. This evening he sent us tea, sheep, fowls, eggs, butter, flour, &c., for our servants; and the Wazír Walí Muhammad, who enjoys the reputation of being a clever gastronomic, sent us a rich and varied assortment of dishes,

which fully supported the credit of his specialty. They differed little from the *menu* which it is the delight of Afghans to set before their guests.

Calát is the capital of Balochistan, and the summer residence of the chief. It is a fortified little town, situated on the plain at the extremity of a low ridge of hills called Sháh Mírán, and contains about 8000 inhabitants—a mixture of Baloch, Brahoe, Jat, and Dihwár, with a few Hindu families. The town is indescribably filthy, and wears a thoroughly decayed look. It is the largest town in the country, and the valley in which it stands is the most populous. There are several villages and fruit-gardens crowded together on the upper part of the valley near the town. They produce excellent apricots, plums, peaches, and other fruits, which are dried and exported. The mulberry and *sanjit* (*oleagnus*) are common here. The graceful foliage of the latter adorns the water-courses, of which there are a great number in all directions, from hill-streams and the subterranean conduits called *kárez*.

Great care and attention is paid to the culture of these gardens. They are entirely in the hands of the Dihwár, a Persian-speaking people, who here correspond to the Tájik of Afghanistan, and, like them, are Sunni Muhammadans. In fact, there is not a Shia in the country, and the sect is abominated with truly religious hatred. Lucerne (*ushpusht*) is largely grown here as a fodder crop, and yields five or six or even eight crops a year, under careful irrigation and manuring. I saw some men digging up the roots of the plant as food for their cattle. They are long and fibrous, and are considered very nourishing food for cows and goats, &c. Beetroot too is grown here, and tobacco in small quantity.

In the gardens here we found numbers of thrushes,

starlings, and magpies. We also saw the red-billed crow and the golden eagle. The magpie (here called *shakúk*, and at Kabul, *kalghúchak*) is of the same colour and character as the English bird, but smaller in size. The villagers here were friendly, and free from the arrogance of the Afghan. They appeared a peaceable, industrious and thriving community.

25*th January.*—We left Calát, under a salute of eleven guns, at 11.10. A.M., and marched twenty-six miles to the village of Mundi Hájí in the Mungachar valley. Our route was due north down the slope of the Calát valley. At about the third mile we cleared the villages and gardens, and going on over corn-fields and across irrigation streams, at the sixth mile came to the Babá Walí *ziyárat*, a sacred shrine on the further side of a deep pebbly ravine.

Here we parted from our kind friend Major Harrison, Political Agent at the Court of Calát ("the fortress," in Arabic), and stood a few minutes to view the landscape we had left behind us at the southern extremity of the valley. Calát, with its lofty citadel and towering palace, stood forth the most dominant feature in the scene. Below it were crowded together a number of villages, gardens, and corn-fields, that told of peace and plenty, despite their present forlorn look under the withering blasts of an almost arctic winter; whilst the background was closed by a great snow-clad mountain, on the other side of which is Nichára. Such was Calát as we saw it, but such, fortunately, is not always its appearance. The forests of naked twigs and branches that now testify to the severity of the season will a few weeks hence put forth their buds, and in summer will be bowed down with the weight of their foliage and fruit. The snowy barrier above will disappear, and disclose dark belts of the arbor vitæ and pistacia, whilst the bare plain

below will put on its coat of green, and roll with fields of yellow corn. As described, the summer must indeed be a delightful season here; and if it is mild in proportion to the severity of the winter, I can understand the ecstasies with which the natives expatiate on its delights. Taking a last look at Calát, and a parting adieu from our friend, we turned and faced the dreary waste of hill and dale that stretched away before us to the northward.

Our road skirted a low ridge of hills on our left, and led by a well-beaten path over the pasture ground of Bandúkhí. At the ninth mile we passed a cross-road leading to the village of Girání on the other side of the ridge to our left, and beyond it gently descended to the pastures of Marján, from which we rose on to an undulating upland tract, leaving the valley to our right, and came to the Laghání Kotal. This is a rough pass over a ridge of slate and sandstone hills, and conducts down a long and stony hill-skirt to the plain of Mungachar, which is an alluvial valley, intersected by numerous *kárez* conduits, dotted here and there with villages, and covered with great patches of snow-white saline encrustations. From the top of the pass we got a good view of the Chihltan mountain away to the north, and of the Kárcháp range away to the south-west, both deeply covered with snow; whilst nearer at hand, to our right front and right, were the lesser hills of Koh Márán and Keláb, just whitened at their summits.

On descending to the valley, we had to make a long detour to the right, in order to avoid a wide extent of mire, produced by flooding the fields from the *kárez* streams, and only reached Mundi Hájí at the foot of Bidiring hill at five P.M. This is a little hamlet of six or seven detached houses; and as the evening air was very cold, and our baggage not even in sight across the plain

(it did not all come up till ten P.M.), we took shelter in the principal house, which was very willingly vacated by its tenants for our use.

On our way across the valley we passed the ruins of a village called Dádar. It was the largest of the ten or twelve villages that are scattered over the Mungachar plain, and was plundered and destroyed by the rebel Sherdil Khan some eight years ago, when he ousted the present Khan of Calát, as has already been mentioned.

Whilst we were waiting the arrival of our baggage, our host, Ummed Khan, Ráisání, walked in and unconcernedly seated himself on the carpet he had obligingly spread for us. He was a petty farmer, of simple unsophisticated manners, and quite charmed us with his good nature, sensible conversation, and freedom from prejudice. He was explaining to us the protective virtues of a bag of dust that attracted my attention as it hung against one of the two props supporting the roof, when the arrival of our cook with the kitchen establishment was announced, and he disappeared to provide fuel and water. Having done this, he returned and favoured us with his company, whilst we disposed of our evening meal; and we now heard the history of the bag above mentioned. It was briefly this:—Saggid Maurúsí, the patron saint of this place, and whose shrine stands on a rocky mound hard by, was a very holy man. During his life he dispensed charms with a liberal hand for the protection of the faithful against all manner of evils; and since his death, so great was the sanctity of his character, the virtues of his charms have been communicated to the ashes of his tomb. All who seek the intercession of the saint carry away a little of the dust from his shrine, and keep it in their houses, to avert the evil eye, and protect the inmates and their cattle, &c., from sickness

or other calamity. The dust is called *khurda* and is an undoubted efficacious charm.

Our host having paused in his conversation, I offered him a cup of tea, which, to my surprise—accustomed as I had been to the narrow prejudices of Indian caste—he readily accepted, as also some cold fowl. Another cup of tea and another fowl was offered for the lady of the house, whose bright eyes were curiously peering at us from the doorway of an opposite chamber. The husband took them away, and presently a merry laugh of gratification assured us of the appreciation of the attention. Early next morning, whilst doing a rough toilet outside, my glass propped against a wall, I caught the reflection of our landlady straining her eyes from the opposite side of the court to see what I was looking into as my comb and brushes performed their usual offices. Turning round, I gratified her curiosity with a peep at her own comely features in the glass. Her delight and unrestrained simplicity were most amusing. She held the mirror in both hands before her, viewed herself in it, posed her head first on this side then on the other, smiled, frowned, stared, trimmed her mouth, smoothed her hair, and stroked her nose in succession. She turned the mirror round and examined its back a moment, and then again devoted herself to its reflecting surface, and, taking up her baby, placed its cheek against her own, and viewed both together, and smiled with innocent satisfaction. It was an amusing spectacle, and in every particular, excepting the baby, was the exact repetition of what I have seen a monkey do with a looking-glass. The young woman was so evidently pleased with the mirror, that I gave it to her, and she ran off inside the house, no doubt to look at it afresh.

We left Mundi Háji at 8.10 A.M., and marched twenty-

six miles, and camped at the Kárez Amánullah. The morning air was sharp, and, by the thermometer, showed nine degrees of frost. Our path led over a narrow stony upland, covered with artemisia scrub, and bounded on either side by the hill ranges of Bidiring and Buzi, both of which were tipped with snow. In two hours we reached the crest of the upland, and by a gentle slope in another hour reached a roadside shrine on the border of the Khad Mastung, or Lower Mastung valley.

We halted here awhile to allow the baggage to get on ahead, and meanwhile examined the horns, of which a great number adorned the shrine. They were mostly those of the ibex and uriár (or wild sheep), here called *het* and *kharr* respectively, and in Persia *buz* and *bakhta*. None of the horns were very large or unusually fine, but I took a couple of each kind as specimens.

Before us, to the northward, lay a great waste, on which, at about five miles off, stood the village of Gorú, with wide patches of white soda efflorescence scattered here and there over the plain. Far away to the north, the prospect is closed by the snowy mass of the Chihltan mountain, which separates Mastung from Shál.

After a halt of an hour and a half we proceeded, and passing the Sháwání cultivation and Gorú cemetery, at 3.30 P.M. arrived at our camping-ground. The valley dips gently to the northward, and presents a very dreary aspect. The soil is powdery, and surcharged with salines, which here and there form great sheets of snow-white encrustation. The cultivation is very scanty, and all *khushkába*, that is, dependent on the skies for irrigation. The fields are little square patches, banked up on all sides to catch and retain what rain showers upon them. Not a tree is visible on the plain; the Sháwání Brahoe huts are scattered over its surface in clusters of four or

five together, but are mostly situated along the base of the Chuttok hills bounding the valley to the westward.

At Amánullah we pitched our camp in the hollows of some sandy undulations of the surface, by way of shelter from the north wind, which swept over the plain in gusts of chilling force. Hard by, lower down the course of the *kárez*, are the ten or twelve huts composing the village. They looked poor hovels, and were quite in keeping with the dreary and wintry aspect of the country.

We set out hence at 8.30 next morning, and marched nine miles to Mastung, where we arrived in two hours, and alighted at quarters prepared for us in the fort. The first part of our route was over the Amánullah cultivation, and across a deep *kárez* cut, on to an undulating waste, beyond which we came to the corn-fields and walled gardens of Mastung.

As we approached Mastung, a flight of blue pigeons settled on a ploughed field off the road, and I turned off and shot three of them, all very plump, and with their crops full of grain. Out of curiosity I opened the crop of one, and counted its contents. They were as follows, namely :—320 grains of barley, 20 of wheat, 50 of millet, 5 of peas or pulse, and several other smaller grains I did not recognise. The flight consisted of upwards of a hundred pigeons, and during the march we had seen several such flights. From these data, some idea may be formed of the loss inflicted on the farmer by these birds. One of our escort, who witnessed the process of investigation above described, expressed great astonishment, and observed that the birds had met a "justly deserved fate for robbing the widows' store." The meaning of the allusion is, I presume, that the general out-turn of the harvest being diminished by the depredations of these birds, the widows' store would suffer in proportion.

At two miles from Mastung we were met by a party of fifty horsemen, headed by Náib 'Abdurrahmán, the governor of the district. He was a fine handsome man, of quiet and unassuming demeanour, but was poorly clad and badly mounted. His cavalcade, too, was a sorry collection of both men and horses. As regards the brute part of the gathering, this is surprising, for the country here is highly cultivated, and produces abundance of forage. The Náib conducted us through a succession of walled gardens to the quarters prepared for us inside the fort, in front of the gate of which were drawn up twenty files of infantry, with a band of three tin pipes and two drums, to receive us with military honours. As we came up, the commanding officer, with a wide sweep of his sword, brought its edge to the tip of his nose, and holding it there perpendicularly, exactly between the eyes, shouted, in a stentorian voice, "Generaylee saloot!" a summons that started a man from each end of the line six paces to the front, and fixed the rest, with gaping mouths and muskets held at all slopes, full gaze upon us. We now came abreast of the commanding officer, who all of a sudden missed the music, the band being intently absorbed in the spectacle of our procession; but a quick turn, and some violent gesticulations in their direction, immediately startled the three youths with the tin pipes into the perpetration of three shrill squeaks, which were accompanied by a rattle on the drums by their two juvenile comrades behind.

The General acknowledged the honour with a graceful salute, and we passed through the fort gate into a succession of narrow winding passages leading from courtyard to courtyard, all strewn with several inches of stable refuse and disfigured by dung-heaps, till at length we came to one larger than the others, though not a whit less filthy,

where a guard of four soldiers drawn up opposite a portal informed us we had reached our quarters, and a salute of eleven guns announced the fact to the townspeople.

The interior, happily, was not in keeping with the exterior. The two rooms of which the house consisted had been swept, and clean carpets had been laid down for our reception, and, as we entered, fires were lighted to warm them. Altogether we were agreeably surprised, and found our lodging, despite the surroundings, a very comfortable shelter from the wintry blasts outside.

The northern part of the Mastung valley is highly cultivated, and populous villages, fruit gardens, and cornfields follow each other in close succession, and extend in one unbroken stretch for several miles along the foot of the Hamách and Khark hills, separating the valley from the Dashti Bedaulat. The gardens produce the grape, apple, apricot, quince, almond, plum, cherry, pomegranate, oleagnus, and mulberry. The pear and peach do not grow here, though they do abundantly in the adjoining valley of Shál. The fields produce wheat, barley, maize, millet, pulse, lucerne, madder, tobacco, and the common vegetables, such as carrots, turnips, onions, cabbages, &c., but not cotton, The inhabitants are Brahoe and Dihwár, with some Baloch and Afghan families and Hindu traders.

In summer Mastung must be a delighful residence, both in respect of climate and scenery. The winter is cold and bleak, but mild in comparison with its rigorous severity at Calát. Its elevation is about 5600 feet above the sea, and it is partially sheltered from the north wind by the hills bounding it in that direction. Its climate is described as very salubrious, and certainly the healthy looks of its inhabitants support the truth of the assertion.

Its scenery is very fine in itself, but, compared with the dreary wastes and rugged wilds of the country to the southward, is quite charming, by reason of its profuse vegetation and crowded population. The precipitous heights of Chihltan towering above the valley to the north constitute the grand feature of the scenery, and at this season, shrouded as the mountain is in a thick mantle of snow, present a magnificent spectacle by reason of their massive grandeur and overpowering proximity. Chihltan is the highest and best-wooded mountain in this country, but it is very steep and rugged, the trees being scattered in small clumps on favouring ledges and in deep recesses. The arbor vitæ, pistacia kabulica, mountain ash, wild fig, and mulberry are the principal trees found on the mountain. It is said to abound in snakes and pythons, also wild goat and wild sheep. The wolf, leopard, and hyena are also found in it, but not the bear.

Towards sunset the sky became overcast with clouds, and thick mists obscured the mountains from our view.

28*th January*.—We set out from Mastung at 7.15 A.M., whilst the signal gun in the citadel was slowly doling out a salute of eleven guns. The morning air was cold, dull, and misty, and presaged ill for the day. We no sooner cleared the gardens around the town, than we entered on a bare sandy tract of some miles in extent, in the midst of which, like an oasis in the desert, stands the little hamlet of Isá Khán. Away to the left were seen the villages and gardens of Fírí, and to the right those of Pringábád. Our route across the sandy waste was most trying. A blighting north wind swept down from the hills straight against us, and drove clouds of sand with blinding force before it. Our escort dwindled down to three or four horsemen who kept up with us, and they were so completely muffled up that it was impossible to get

them to hear a word we said, and utterly hopeless to draw them into conversation. Beyond this sandy waste we entered on a roügh ravine-cut gulf in the hills, and crossing the Mobí rivulet a little below the Khushrúd hamlet—the last of the Mastung villages in this direction —rose out of its deep ravine on to a sloping hill skirt, white with wavy wreaths of fresh snow, now frozen hard by the cold wind. Ascending thus along the base of Chihltan, we arrived at the entrance to the Nishpá or Dishpa Pass in three hours and a quarter—distance, thirteen miles. Here we halted under the bank of a rocky water-course to allow the baggage to come up, and to breakfast off such cold commodities as our cook had provided for us.

The view of the valley left behind us was completely obscured by dense clouds of sand driving across the plain, but immediately above us was a scene sufficient to rivet the attention with awe-inspiring sentiments. The beetling cliffs of Chihltan, here and there reft of their cumbrous loads of snow through sheer weight of its mass, rose above us in imposing magnitude, and, domineering over the lesser hills around, formed a picture such as is seldom equalled.

A little to the right of the Nishpá Pass is the Toghaghi hill, over the ridge of which is a *lak* or pass that conducts direct to the Dashtí Bedaulat plain. It is very difficult for laden camels, and is mostly used by footmen only. The Nishpá Pass, between Chihltan and Zindan mountains, is four miles long up to its crest, to which it winds by a very steady ascent. Though now covered with snow, we could here and there trace the road made through the pass in 1839 by the engineers of the British army. The pass is an easy one.

We reached the crest of the pass in a driving storm of

hail and sleet, and by the aneroid estimated its elevation at about 6000 feet. The descent from the crest turns to the right down to the Dashtí Bedaulat, leaving a forest of pistacia trees in a glen away to the left. The forest is called Hazár Ganjí, from the number of trees—*gwan* in Brahocki, and *khinjak* in Pushto, being the colloquial names of the pistacia kabulica.

The Dashtí Bedaulat is a singular hill-girt plain, perfectly level, and perfectly bare. It is, as the name implies, an unproductive waste, and this from the entire absence of water. It lies at the top of the Bolan Pass, the road from which skirts its border opposite to our position. From the Dashtí our road turned northward again, and led down a rough and stony defile to Sariáb in the valley of Shál. To the left the land is covered with a forest of *gwan* trees, and rises rapidly to the foot of the Chihltan range, and close on our right is the Koh Landi ridge, which separates us from the caravan road from Sariáb to Saribolán. In front of us is the plain of Shál. It lies at a considerably lower level, and wears a very bleak and wintry look, with its leafless gardens and bare fields, girt around by a mountain barrier topped with snow. At the edge of the Sariáb lands we were met by the Náib Abdul Latíf and a party of fifteen or sixteen horsemen—a most ragged and ruffianly set of rascals. We did not stop for the usual ceremony of compliments, as a shower of hail was, at the moment of our meeting, driving hard pellets with painful violence against our faces, but hurried on to the quarters prepared for us in a small fortified hamlet near the Lora rivulet. We arrived there at 2.45 P.M., after a very trying march of twenty-nine miles, and found the huts so filthy and close that we had our tents pitched in the court of the fort as soon as the baggage came up.

In fine weather this march would have been very enjoyable, for the scenery, of its kind, is very wild and grand. But our experiences have left anything but agreeable recollections of this part of our journey. During the first part of the route we were nearly suffocated with clouds of sand; in the pass we were for the time blinded by driving snows, and beyond we had to face pelting hail; whilst all the way our limbs were numbed through by a searching north wind, whose chilling blasts require to be felt to be properly appreciated.

Next day we marched thirteen miles to Shál Kot, or the Fort of Shál. We could not cross the Lora direct on account of the bogs and swamps on each side its course, so had to go back over the last few miles of yesterday's march, and make a detour round the southern end of the valley, till we reached the highroad from Shál to the Bolán.

Attended by a couple of horsemen, I followed the course of the stream for some distance, in the hopes of getting some wild duck. But the ground was so swampy and deep in mud, I could not get within shot. After much searching, my attendants found a spot where we forded the stream with some trouble, and on the other side I got a few snipe, and then rode off across the plain, and joined our own party a few miles from Shál.

Whilst shooting down the course of the Lora, I was much amused at the simplicity of my sole attendant, for his comrade had lagged far behind to wash himself and horse, both having become mud-begrimed by a fall in a bog. I was trying to light my pipe with the aid of a burning-glass I carried in my pocket, but finding the wind was too strong to allow of my succeeding in the attempt, I called the man up and bid him stand perfectly still. Then standing to the leeward, I caught a ray over the tip of his shoulder, and presently effected my purpose.

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Seeing this, the man turned and looked aside at his shoulder, and, to settle any doubts, rubbed it roughly with the opposite hand, whilst he stared a stare of wonderment at me. I assured him he was not on fire; that I had got mine from the sun and not from him, and that there was no cause for alarm; and, so saying, hurried after some wildfowl I saw alight farther down the stream, leaving him my horse to hold. I heard him muttering to himself, and caught the words, "*Toba! toba! chi balâ ast?*"—"Repentance! repentance! what devilry is it?"

On approaching Shâl we made a detour to the right to avoid a wide extent of flooded fields, and passed an extensive graveyard, close to which, on an open flat of ground, was pointed out to us a walled enclosure, containing the graves of the Europeans who died here in 1839-40. The wall is very low, but in good repair, and the sacred spot appears to be respected by the natives. Not far from it are the remains of Captain Bean's house, when he was Political Resident here. Though roofless, the shell is not very much damaged, and might be easily restored.

In front of the fort gate a military guard was drawn up to do honour to the General. It consisted of twenty-five men in a single row. As we came up, the officer in command gave the words in very plain English, "Rear rank take open order;" a signal at which three men stepped to the front, and gave the time to the rest in presenting arms, whilst the single gun in the citadel fired a salute. Entering the town, we were presently housed in quarters similiar to those at Mastung.

Shâl is a fortified town, and contains about twelve hundred houses collected round a central mound on which stands the citadel. The elevation of the citadel is much

above the town, and it is the prominent object in the valley, but its walls are very poor, and more or less in a state of decay. By the natives it is called Shál Kot, and by the Afghans Kwatta, or "the little fort," whence our Quetta. The valley of Shál is very similar to that of Mastung, and, like it, drains westward to Shorawak.

The garrison of Shál consists of one hundred infantry, almost all of whom are Afghans, with a few other mercenaries. There are besides fifty horsemen, and a dozen artillerymen for the one gun they have here. These troops are under the command of the Náib or governor, Abdul Latíf, who on emergency can collect a force of about five thousand *ilját*, or militia, from the neighbouring hills, armed with matchlock, sword, and shield.

Shál is described as a delightful residence in summer, and is said to possess a temperate and salubrious climate, in which respect it resembles the valley of Mastung. The whole valley is covered with villages and corn-fields and gardens, through the midst of which flows the Lora rivulet; but the soil is almost everywhere impregnated with nitre and soda-salts.

The scenery around is very fine, and affords a wide and varied field for the pencil of the artist, particularly at this season, when the rugged heights of the greater mountains are deeply covered with snow. Towards the east, the valley is closed by the lesser ranges of Siyah Pusht and Murdár. To the south are the Landi ridge and Chihltan mountain. From the latter projects the low range of Karassa which sweeps round the valley towards the Muchilagh range, forming its western boundary; and between them is a gap that leads into the Dulay valley and plain of Shorawak. To the north, the valley is

overlooked by the great Tokátú peak and Zarghún range. These last are occupied by the Domarr section of the Kákarr tribe. They are described as the most savage and hardy of all the Afghan mountaineers, and have proved quite irreclaimable by either the government of Kabul or that of Calát. They often give trouble on this border, and formerly used to plunder the country as far as the Nishpá Pass, in collusion with their brethren of the Bánzai section occupying the hills slopes of Shál. They harry the road into Peshín by Tal Chhotiyálí, so much so, that it is now deserted as a caravan route. This is the route that was proposed as one we might journey by, when it was found we could not proceed by the Bolan Pass; but, thanks to the decision of Sir William Merewether, we were directed into a safer route, and thus saved from falling into the clutches of these utter savages.

There is a road direct from Shál over the hills between Tokátú and Zarghún to the Tal Chhotiyálí route, but it is seldom used, owing to the risks from predatory Domarr, through whose territories it passes. These people have no large villages, but are scattered over the hills in caves and sheds with their flocks and sheep. During the winter, they descend to the lower valleys, where they pass the time in their black tents. They cultivate only sufficient ground for the supply of their wants, and for the most part live on the produce of their flocks, such as milk, butter, flesh, and the inspissated cheese known as *kroot*. From the goats' hair they manufacture ropes and the black tents called *kizhdi*, and from the sheep's wool they make the thick felt cloaks called *kosai*, which, with a pair of loose cotton trousers, constitute the whole winter dress of most of the people. The Domarr are said to muster nearly four thousand families.

A curious custom is said to prevail amongst them. In the spring and summer evenings, the young men and maidens of adjoining camps assemble on the hillsides, and shouting "*Pír murr nadai, jwandai dai*" ("The old man is not dead, he lives"), romp about till—I suppose on the principle of natural selection—the opposite sexes pair off in the favouring darkness, and chase each other amongst the trees and rocks, till summoned home by the calls of their respective parents. It does not appear that the custom leads to the contraction of matrimonial alliances amongst the performers, though to its observance is attributed the hardiness and populousness of the tribe.

During the afternoon, a messenger arrived from Cushlác with letters from the Afghan Commissioner for General Pollock, intimating his arrival there with a military escort for our safe conduct to Kandahar. It is therefore arranged that we proceed in the morning, apparently much to the relief of our host, the Náib Abdul Latíf, who seemed apprehensive lest the Afghan troops should cross the border into the district under his charge on the plea of meeting us, and thus unsettle the minds of his subjects with the idea that they were to be annexed to the Kabul dominions, between which and the territories of the Khan of Calát the Cushlác Lora is the present boundary.

Originally both Shál and Mastung with Shorawak formed part of the kingdom erected by Shah Ahmad, Durrani. They were subsequently made over to Nasír Khan, chief of Balochistan, in return for his allegiance and maintenance of a contingent of troops in the interest of the Afghan sovereign. These districts are still considered by the Afghans as portion of their country, though they remain under the rule of the Khan of Calát;

and in 1864, when Sherdil Khan usurped the government from the present chief, Khudádád Khan, the Governor of Kandahar made an attempt to reannex them to his province, but in this he was thwarted by the action of the British authorities, and the restoration of Khudádád Khan to his rightful government.

CHAPTER IV.

30*th January.*—Snow fell during the night, and this morning covers the whole plain to the depth of about six inches. We set out from Shál Kot at 9.10 A.M., under a salute from the fort as on arrival, and proceeded across the plain northwards to the foot of Tokátú mountain, where we came to the village of Kiroghar. This is a collection of some sixty detached huts on the stony hill skirt, and is about seven miles from the fort. It is occupied by the Bánzai section of the great Kákarr tribe. They have small colonies all along the hill skirts on the northern and eastern limits of the valley, and are said to number nearly five thousand families. They have been settled in these tracts for the past five generations, but were only properly reduced to the subjection of the Khan of Calát last year, previous to which they used to cause infinite loss and trouble by their plundering excursions on the Taghaghi Lak and Nishpá Pass, beetween Shál and Mastung. No caravan in those days was safe from their attacks. Last year the Náib led an expedition against them, and secured some of their chief men as hostages, and they now confine themselves to their own limits.

The Kákarr tribe, to which they belong, is one of the most numerous and powerful of the Afghan clans. They occupy all the hill country between this and the limits of Ghazni, where their border touches those of the Waziris and Ghilzais. To the eastward, their territories extend

up to the base of Koh Kassi of the Sulemán range. To the westward, between Toba Marúf and Tokátú, they share the hill slopes that drain to the Kandahar plain and Peshín valley with the Achakzai and Spin Tarin tribes respectively.

The strength of the Kákarr tribe is variously estimated, but they are probably not less than fifty thousand families. They are mostly a pastoral people, but some are settled in the valleys of the country as cultivators of the soil, whilst those to the westward are engaged in trade, and almost exclusively collect the asafœtida imported into India. For this purpose their camps spread over the Kandahar plain up to the confines of Herat.

We stopped a few minutes at Kiroghar to procure guides, for the snow had obliterated all traces of the road. None of the villagers, however, seemed at all inclined to help us in the difficulty. The Náib, Abdul Latíf, took this want of attention on their part as a personal affront, and very quickly lost control over his temper. His rotund figure visibly swelled with wrath as he peremptorily summoned the head man to his presence. Three or four horsemen at once scampered off to one of the huts, and presently Malik Jalál (the head man), accompanied by half-a-dozen men, were seen to emerge, and leisurely measure their steps across the snow to where the Naib stood.

This quiet indifference was more than the Náib could stand. He bounced about in his saddle in a tempest of anger, and, flashing his bright eyes from side to side, poured out a torrent of anathemas, and vowed a sharp vengeance nothing short of annihilation of the dog-begotten breed of Bánzai. At this moment I happened to inquire from one of the escort standing near me

whether some fine *márkhor*, or wild goat horns, that adorned an adjoining hut, were the produce of the mountain above us, but before he could reply, the infuriate Náib's mandate went forth to bring them to us; and in less time than it has taken to relate the occurrence, half-a-dozen of the largest horns were torn from their attachments, and laid on the snow before us. We hardly had time to examine them before the head man and his following came up, looking as unconcerned and independent as their circumstances entitled them to be. There was no thought on either side of the customary exchange of salutations, nor was the *salám alaikum*, and its reply, *wa alaikum salám*, uttered. Instead thereof, the Náib turned on the Malik with a volley of abuse, and demanded why he was not on the road to meet him. "Where," said he, "is the *chilam?* (pipe of friendship). Is this the sort of hospitality you show to your governor?" The unfortunate Malik was not allowed time to plead any excuses, but was summarily dismissed, and two of his men pushed to the front to point out the road. "Dishonoured wretch! dog!" said the Náib, "go and prepare for my return. I shall be your guest to-night." So saying, he ordered a couple of troopers to stay behind and see that an entertainment suited to himself and retinue was ready against their return, and our party proceeded forward.

In exchange for a couple of rupees, the owner of the horns willingly carried a couple of the largest pairs to our camp at Cushlác, and I subsequently sent them to Peshawar from Kandahar, for the purpose of comparing them with those of the Himalayan animal. I have since done so, but without discovering any appreciable difference.

From Kiroghar we proceeded westward along the stony skirt of Tokátú for a couple of miles, and then

winding round the mountain by a considerable rise to the northward, at about another mile came to a clump of trees at the spring-head of a strong stream issuing from the side of the hill and flowing down to the plain behind us.

We halted here awhile to await the arrival of the Afghan Commissioner, whom we saw in the distance advancing towards us with a troop of cavalry from the Murghí Pass in our front. Meanwhile the Náib Abdul Latíf took the opportunity to express his regret that he had not been able to entertain us more hospitably owing to the rapidity of our movements and the unfavouring condition of the elements. He assured us of his admiration of the British Government; that he considered all Englishmen his friends; and that he was proud to remember his association with Colonel Stacey and Captain Beam so long ago as 1839-40—names that are still remembered with gratitude and good-will in many a household in Shál and Mastung.

Whilst waiting here, I emptied my gun at a couple of red-legged rooks flying overhead. One of them with outstretched wings came down in a very graceful and slow pirouette, and fell dead at my feet; the other glided down very quickly in an oblique line, and fell against the rocks a hundred yards or so off. I was speculating on the nature of the causes that produced such different modes of descent, when my attention was diverted to our Afghan friends.

The cavalry were drawn up in a double line on one side of the road about five hundred yards off, whilst the Afghan Commissioner, Saggid Núr Muhammad Sháh—whom I shall henceforth always speak of as "the Saggid"—accompanied by three horsemen, rode down to where we stood. At fifty yards he dismounted, and we stepped

forward to meet him. As we raised our hats, he doffed his turban with both hands and made a low bow, and then replacing the costly Kashmir shawl, he embraced us successively Afghan fashion with sincere cordiality, repeating the while the usual string of salutations and complimentary inquiries. This ceremony over, we mounted, and proceeded up the slope, the Náib Abdul Latíf accompanying us with only three or four attendant horsemen.

As we came up to the cavalry, they saluted, and then followed in rear of our procession. They are a very fine set of men, with bold independent bearing, but with thoroughly friendly looks. They were excellently mounted, and the general superiority of their equipment quite took us by surprise. They wore blue hussar-jackets, top-boots, and scarlet busbies, and altogether looked a very serviceable set of men.

Before we reached the top of the Murghí Pass, about two and a half miles from the spring, we were caught in a snowstorm, which completely obscured the hills around, whilst the flakes, adhering to our beards and clothing, presently gave our whole party a grotesquely uncouth and hoary look. From the pass we descended through a narrow defile into the Peshín valley or district, near a couple of fine springs issuing from the rocks on our right. They are led over the plain in deep cuts for purposes of irrigation.

I was here so numbed by the cold, that I was glad of an excuse to dismount and warm myself by a trudge over the snow; so I followed down the course of one of the water-cuts in the direction of a couple of wild ducks I had marked down upon it. I had not proceeded far, gun in hand, when they rose from a pool on the other side of the stream. They both fell to a right and left shot, at only

a few paces from each other. I was considering how I might get them, when a trooper, who had followed me, urged his horse forward to a gap in the bank a little way off. The horse very naturally refused to slide down the gap into the water, and I told the rider to desist from urging him, remarking that the water was evidently deep, and he would certainly get wet. But the Afghan's spirit was roused by the sport, and he knew he was observed by his comrades. "My horse can swim, and that shot is worth a wetting," he said, as he struck his heels into the horse's flanks, and forced him into the stream. The plunge was so sudden, that the horse nearly lost his footing, but the trooper, cleverly recovering him, brought him out on the further bank through water half-way up the saddle-flaps, picked up the birds, and recrossed without misadventure. His spirited conduct excited our admiration, but amongst his comrades the shot was the theme of applause. The one was to them a matter of everyday occurrence, the other they had rarely if ever before witnessed. With us it was just the reverse. The one was an act seldom necessitated, the other only an ordinary occurrence. And thus it is that acts are valued out of all proportion to their real merits by the mere force of habitude, both by governments and individuals, whether civilised or uncivilised.

At about fourteen miles from Shál we crossed the Cushlác Lora, a small stream flowing on a pebbly bottom between high banks of shingle and clay. It marks the boundary between the territories of the Amir of Kabul and the Khan of Calát.

At this place Náib Abdul Latíf took leave of us, and returned to sup with his Kiroghar subjects. I can fancy that in him they found anything but an easily pleased guest. His temper had been ruffled by the morning's

mishap, and it was not improved by the inclement weather he had been exposed to in our company, for his beard was frozen into thick tangles, and a row of pendant icicles fringed the edge of his turban, whilst his crestfallen features betokened discontent, and an eagerness in his eyes spoke of a desire to wreak his vengeance on somebody or other. I fear his Bánzai hosts must have had a trying time of it on this memorable evening.

Beyond the Lora rivulet we came to a company of regular Afghan infantry drawn up on the roadside. They are a remarkably fine set of fellows, and were evidently picked men, meant to make an impression on us. They saluted as we passed on our way to the Saggid's camp, a little beyond the Shahjahán village.

Here we alighted at a tent prepared for us by the Saggid, and were hospitably regaled with tea and refreshments, our host joining us in the repast. The tent was richly furnished with thick Persian carpets and Herat felts, and was comfortably warmed by a large dish of live coal set on a movable platform in the centre. The shelter and comfort provided for us were most grateful to our numbed sensations and frozen limbs. We had marched the last five miles in a temperature of 22° Fah., with driving snow beating against us nearly the whole way, and, but for our friend's forethought, must have endured a hard time of it till our own tents arrived and could be pitched. It was three P.M. before we reached the Afghan camp, and our baggage did not come up till three hours later, having marched a distance of sixteen miles over snow.

31*st January.* — Halt at Cushlác, weather-bound. The thermometer sunk to 10° Fah. during the night, but this morning the sun shone out in a clear sky, and brought about a rapid thaw. In the afternoon, however, clouds

again overcast the sky, and at three P.M. snow commenced to fall, and continued all night, with a keen driving north wind. The fire inside our tent melted the snow on its roof, and as it trickled from the sides it formed great icicles upwards of three feet in length, and as thick as a man's arm above.

Our Afghan escort is sheltered in neat rows of comfortable little tents floored with thick felts, on which the men sleep. The horses, too, are completely encased in great rolls of thick felt clothing, which effectually protects them from the wind and weather.

1*st February.*—At seven A.M. the thermometer stood at 11° Fah. in the open air. The sky was clear, and a hard frost prevailed. We set out from Cushlác at 8.35 A.M., and marched eighteen miles to Hykalzai on the plain of Peshín, the ground covered with snow for most of the way. At two miles we crossed the Surmaghzi Tangi or pass, a low ridge of red marly mounds, which, but for the hard frost, would have proved very miry and slippery.

Beyond the pass we descended to the Peshín valley, which here presents a great open plain of undulating surface, here and there, where free from snow, showing a red clay soil, much furrowed by the action of water. At a mile beyond Hydarzai we halted half-an-hour near the village of Yár Muhammad, at a *kárez* of the same name, and had a fire lighted to warm ourselves whilst the baggage passed on. Whilst so engaged, Yár Muhammad himself, the founder of the village and *kárez* (water conduit) bearing his name, with half-a-dozen villagers, came up, and with genuine Afghan freedom seated themselves amongst us. He was a rough old man, with blear-eyes and snuff-stained nose. Without taking any notice of us, he bluntly inquired of the

Saggid who and what we were. On being told our errand, "That's all right," he replied; "our book tells us that the Christians are to be our friends in the hour of adversity; but it's well for them that they are travelling this way under your protection." The Saggid laughed, and said, "Such are Afghans! they put me to shame;" and his secretary, to prevent any further disclosures of sentiment on the part of our visitor, jocosely observed, "You talk too fast, old man: your speech is understood," tossing his head in my direction. The old man gave me a full stare, and inquired where I had learned Pushto. A minute later he put up his face towards me, asked me to look at his eyes, and give him some medicine to restore their failing sight.

From this place we proceeded over an undulating tract furrowed by water-cuts, and crossed from north-east to south-west by a succession of red clay banks, and beyond them reached the level plain. Here we crossed a branch of the Surkháb rivulet, and passing the ruins of two extensive villages, destroyed in 1841 by the army under General Nott, camped midway between Hykalzai and Khudáedádzai or Khwáezai at 3.10 P.M.

The whole plain is a sheet of snow, from beneath which here and there crop out red banks of miry clay. The general surface is dotted all over with numerous clusters of black tents, four or five in each, of the nomad Tarins. On the plain to the north-east is seen the castellated mound of Sea Calá or Red Fort, now in ruins. Beyond it are the large villages of Old and New Bázár, and by them flows the Surkháb or Red River, a tributary of the Peshín Lora. To the northward the valley is bounded by the Khwájah Amrán range, which runs north-east towards the Sufed Koh, which it joins to the eastward of Ghazni. Its several spurs to the southward have different names,

which are, from west to east, as pointed out to us, Khojah, Arnbí, Toba, and Surkháb. To the north of the Toba spur is the Sehna Dág or flat of the Sehn section of Kákarrs. It is described as an elevated tableland covered with rich pastures. Over it is a road to the Zhob valley of the Battezai Kákarrs. In the Surkháb hills rises the river of that name, and between it and Tokátú is a low range of hills, over which is the direct road from this to Dera Ghazi Khan by Tal Chhotiyáli. All these hills, as well as the plain, are now covered with snow, but in summer they are covered with rich pasture, and swarm with the flocks and camps of the nomad Afghans of the Tarin and Kákarr tribes.

The Tarin tribe comprises four great divisions, viz., the Abdáls or Durranís, the Tor Tarins, the Spin Tarins, and the Zard Tarins or Zarrins. The first occupy Kandahar and the valleys to its north-west. The second are settled in Peshín, of which they hold four-fifths, and in the Arghasán district south of the river Tarnak. The Spin Tarins occupy the Surkháb hills and the valleys at their eastern and western bases. And the Zarrins are settled in the valley of Zhob and in part of the Arghasán district. All except the Abdáls are mostly nomads, who retire with their flocks to the hills in summer, and move down to the plains for the winter. From their camps which we saw on the plain—and they were remarkably distinct on its white surface, the tents being all black—their numbers are nothing like what they are estimated.

Throughout this march the air was extremely cold. Icicles repeatedly formed on our beards and mustaches, and hung in long pendants from the necks of our camels. Our hands and feet were painfully benumbed for want of efficient protection. Several of our Afghan escort, I

observed, wore thick felt casings inside their capacious top-boots.

On the march, before reaching Hydarzai, we passed a couple of *khinjak* trees over a roadside shrine, at the foot of a low mound. Their trunks were studded with innumerable iron nails and wooden pegs driven into the bark—the tokens by which pilgrim-visitors ratify their vows to the saint.

From Hykalzai we marched next day fifteen miles to Aranbí Kárez. Our route was north-westerly across the plain, at this time everywhere covered with snow. The surface is marked here and there by the traces of cultivation, but for the most part is occupied by a thin scrub of wormwood, saltworts, and camel-thorn. At about half-way we crossed the Lora rivulet, which flowed in a slow stream twenty feet wide and two feet deep. Its bottom is soft and sandy, and abounds in quicksands. The channel of the river is much wider than its actual bed, and is formed by high shelving banks of clay. Over these are several narrow paths down to the river. We found them very slippery, and many of our escort and baggage animals fell in the descent, but without any material injury.

This Lora, or the Peshín Lora as it is called, drains the north-western portion of the plain, and receives as a tributary the Surkháb, which drains its eastern tracts. The united streams then flow over the plain south-westward towards Shorawak, being joined *en route* by the Cushlác Lora and the Shál Lora. From Shorawak the river flows north-westward towards the Helmand, but is lost in the sands of the desert before it reaches that river. None of the Loras are much utilised for purposes of irrigation in their own valleys, but on reaching Shorawak their united stream is almost exhausted by the

quantities drawn off from it for the fields. Shál and Peshín are irrigated by *kárez* streams and springs from the mountains, but the former are much more fertile than the latter. In Peshín one misses the gardens and trees so plentiful in Shál, and finds instead a wide pasture tract more or less uncultivated, and, in place of villages, dotted with nomad camps. Most of the irrigated land in Peshín is in the hands of the Saggids, who have for many generations been settled in this valley. They pay one-third the produce of their lands in kind to Government as revenue. The nomad Tarins, who hold the unirrigated tracts, pay only one-fifth to Government. The soil of Peshín is a red stiff clay, highly charged with salts of sorts. In the tract between Aranbí Kárez and Sra Calá quantities of alimentary salt are obtained from the soil, and sold in the Kandahar market at one and a half to two rupees per *man* of eighty pounds. The salt is dissolved in great pits filled with water. The clear solution is then filled into earthen pots and boiled down to a granular mass, which takes the form of the pot.

Peshín, owing to its inferior soil, is not a fertile valley, but corn is grown in quantity sufficient to meet the wants of its people. The seed is first cast over the surface and then ploughed over. In Shorawak the seed is sown by means of a kind of drill. It consists of a stiff leather funnel fixed to the tail of the plough, and furnished with a series of holes at the bottom. From this the grain drops into the furrow as it is cut by the plough.

The kangaroo-rat or jerboa, here called *khanrai*, abounds in Peshín, and is trapped for the sake of its fur. The *dalkafak*, a species of tree-marten with a short tail, is also found here and in the hills around.

After crossing the Lora, the Saggid left us to pay a

visit to his father's family at Pitao, a collection of five villages at the foot of the hills a few miles to the right of our road. His own sister was amongst them, and as he had not seen them for more than five years, he could not pass the home of his youth without going to see its inmates. He was not long about his business, for he rejoined us before we reached camp; and to our expressions of surprise at his haste, and hopes that he had not curtailed his visit on our behalf, he replied, "No; I only went to see my sister, and to come away at once. My uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, and cousins there on my father's side alone exceed two hundred in number; and, to tell you the truth, I am afraid to go amongst them, for they always want some token whereby to keep me in their memories."

Snow and sleet showered upon us nearly throughout this march, and the hills around were completely obscured by heavy clouds. On the line of march we passed a number of nomad camps of the Kákarr and Tor Tarin tribes, and some hundreds of their black tents dotted the surface, in clusters of four or five together, on either hand of our route. We dismounted at one of these tents or *kizhdi* to examine the interior, and were surprised to find how comfortable, roomy, clean, and warm it was, notwithstanding that camels, men, goats, sheep, and poultry were sheltered under one roof with their human owners, and sacks of grain and other provisions. The tent we examined was about thirty feet long by fifteen wide. The centre was supported by slim poles seven feet high, and the sides by others four feet high, and across them were passed light ribs of wood. Over this framework was stretched a single sheet of tough and waterproof black haircloth, woven in lengths a couple of yards wide, and sewn together. The interior was divided

into two portions by a row of sacks of corn. The one was excavated to a depth of two feet for the camels and oxen, &c.; the other was smooth, and clean swept. In its centre was a circular pit for fire, for the smoke of which there was no outlet except at the openings at either end of the tent. Around the sides were spread coarse woollen druggets and piles of the household property, and at the end opposite were set a couple of cots. The family we found to consist of three women, two men, and two boys. The women were much fairer than the men, and, with their general look of hardiness, were well featured, displaying much more character in their faces than the men. They were all large-limbed and robust people, and certainly lead the healthiest and happiest of lives.

Snow ceased to fall in the afternoon, and towards sunset the sky cleared, and we got a good view of the country around. Near our camp are the villages of Utmankhel, Torkhel, and Majai, all belonging to the Tor Tarins. Along the foot of the hills extending to the north-eastward are Pitao (a collection of five hamlets close together), Semzai and Alizai, all held by Saggids. They lie at the foot of Toba mountain. To their eastward are seen old and new Bázár and Sraculá on the plain.

3*d February.*—We left Aranbí Kárez at 8.15 A.M., in a heavy fall of snow, and proceeding north-west for about three miles, then diverged towards the hills on our right to avoid the heavy ground on the plain. We followed the stony hill skirt of Aranbí, a spur from the Toba mountain, for a short distance to the westward, and then passing round some low mounds ending on the plain, turned to the north. Here the clouds broke and the sun shone out, and we presently got an extensive view of the whole plain, on which towards the south are scattered many villages, remarkable for the absence of trees about

them. To the west, in the Dihsúri glen, we got a full view of the populous village of Abdullah Khan, surrounded by fruit gardens. This is the chief town of the Achakzai tribe, and during the Afghan war was held by Lieutenant Bosanquet with a detachment of troops.

Proceeding, we crossed two wide water-courses coming down from the Melán and Máchika glens on our right, and entered the Khojak *darra* or glen, which winds up to the foot of the Khojak Pass. It is narrow, and flanked on each side by low ridges of fissile slate. Its upper part is occupied by a forest of *khinjak* trees, and in its lower it receives, on the right and left respectively, the drainage from the Sanzali and Shamsikhán glens, in which we spied a number of *kizhdi* camps of the Achakzai.

The snow at Aranbí was only five or six inches deep. In this glen it was in some parts over three feet in depth, and where we camped, at the very foot of the ascent, in a gully called Churza (little gully), it was twenty inches deep. The last part of the march was most laborious, owing to the cattle sinking in the deep snow, and it was besides very trying on account of the painful glare from the snow under a bright sun. None of us had our spectacles at hand, and the only way I could at all bear the exposure was by hanging my handkerchief, quadruply folded, in front of my eyes. The intense reflection from the snow was exquisitely painful, even with the eyes closely blinked, and produced a copious flow of tears, and left a headache for the rest of the day. We arrived at Churza at 12.35 P.M., but the baggage did not all come up till late in the afternoon, though the distance was only twelve miles. A party of Achakzai cleared away the snow from a small piece of ground twenty feet square, to enable us to pitch a tent, but our escort and camp-followers passed the night on the snow, which here lay

between twenty inches and two feet deep. The space was very narrow, and all were much crowded together. Our Afghan escort, I observed, spread their thick felts on the snow, and went to sleep rolled up in their fur cloaks.

The hill above Churza is called Puras, and it is crossed by three paths, all very steep, and difficult at the best of times, but particularly so now. To the west, at a short distance, is a very narrow gully, down which flows a tiny little stream. This is the usual pass, but it was now blocked with drifted snow. A party of Achakzai were consequently sent off to clear a way through it for us, and next day we crossed the Khojak by it. The pass had been improved by the British army in 1839, but its difficulties are still many and great.

4th February.—Crossed the Khojak range to Chaman Choki—distance, six miles. At 7 A.M., our baggage with the infantry escort commenced moving out of camp up the hillside. In three hours and a half the last of it had left camp, and half-an-hour later we ourselves followed with the cavalry escort. The ascent was by a steep and narrow gully between close-set and almost vertical banks of slaty rock, which only admitted of our horses proceeding in single file. There was not so much snow as I expected, and what there was had been trodden down by the baggage. In half-an-hour we reached the summit of the ridge, and were at once enveloped in a dense mist of snowflakes, slowly settling on the ground, and completely obscuring the prospect. We stood here a few minutes to allow the baggage cattle to get out of the way, and then led our horses down the other side by a steep and slippery path trodden in the snow. In fifteen minutes we arrived at the foot of the steep, where commences a forest of *khinjak* trees, as on the other side. This place is called Cháokáh,

and from it the descent is by a gentle slope down a long glen drained by a shallow gully. As we descend, the snow lessens, and at the lower end of the glen disappears altogether, disclosing the ground, which is here of a bluish-brown colour, and made up of loose splinters of slate. Beyond the glen we passed between a succession of hummocks, and arrived at Chaman Choki, which, as the name implies, is a turfy hollow watered by a good spring.

The weather proved very unfavourable all day. Snow, sleet, and hail succeeded each other till late in the afternoon, when the sun struggled out from the clouds for a brief interval, preparatory to setting for the night. Between four and five o'clock a violent hailstorm swept over our camp and whitened the ground.

Our baggage did not all come into camp till the afternoon was well advanced, but the passage was effected without loss or injury, and the snow was warm compared with the bleak and barren highlands of Calát and Cushlác. Probably this was owing to the absence of the north wind. The Saggid's arrangements for crossing the Khojak were well made, and the result most satisfactory. By sending the baggage ahead of our own party, we avoided leaving any of it behind, and moreover deprived the Achakzai of any opportunity for pilfering or plundering, at either of which practices they are very ready when there is a chance of their effecting a safe retreat with the booty.

By the aneroid barometer, I estimated the elevation at Churza, on the southern foot of the Khojak Pass, to be 7000 feet; at the top of the pass, 7410 feet; and at Cháokáh, on the northern foot of the pass, at 5600 feet. The aneroid indications at each respectively were 22·82, 22·47, and 24.00. At the top of the pass there was very little snow—in fact, the slate was apparent in many places;

on the slopes were seen some *khinjak* trees and a number of shrubby bushes, mostly of a prickly nature. In spring the whole range is covered with excellent pasture, and produces great quantities of rhubarb, which is here called *pshâe.* Its stalks are preserved in the dried state under the name of *îrâe,* and they are used as a relish, cooked up with meat, &c.

5th February.—The day broke with a clear sky, and we got a splendid view of the wide sweeping plains of Kandahar, and the mountain ranges bounding it to the north and east.

We left Chaman at 8.30 A.M., and marched twenty-two miles to Gátaí. Our route was north-westerly down a gentle slope on to the undulating sweep of the plain, everywhere covered with rich pasture just commencing to sprout above the surface. Here and there are scattered a few camps of the Ashezai and Adozai sections of the Achakzai tribe, and at short intervals are the shallow water-runs that drain the plain to the westward by the Kadani river. We crossed this little stream at about half-way, and beyond it came to the isolated Baldak rock or hill, which marks the boundary here between the lands of the Núrzai and Achakzai.

We halted here a while to view the prospect behind us. The whole range of the Khwajah Amrán, running north-east and south-west, was seen to great advantage, and presented a very beautiful sight. The whole range formed a vast ridge of snow, here and there thrown up into higher masses, and all set upon a dark foundation of slate rocks, on which the snow-line, by contrast of colour, was marked with singular distinctness and regularity.

The most prominent peak, about the centre of the range, is the Nárin mountain, held by the Kákarrs. It is the source of the Kadani stream (we have just crossed

it), which, after a south-westerly course over the plain, is turned to the northward by the sand-hills of the desert, and, under the name of Dorí, joins the Arghasán near Dih Hájí.

To the south-west of Nárín is the Toba mountain, and between the two are the Sehna Dúgúna, or tablelands of the Sehn Kákarrs. The continuation south-west from Toba is the Khwajah Amrán, which ends at Shorawak, where is the shrine whence the range takes its name. Over it are the Khojak, Roghání, and Ghwája passes. The two first are *kotals* or "hill passes," and are very difficult; the last is a *darra* or "defile," and is easily traversed by laden camels; it is the road usually taken by caravans. To the west of Khwajah Amrán is the plain of Shorawak, held by the Bárech tribe. It is continuous with the Kandahar plain, and both are separated from the desert by a high coast-line of sand-cliffs. Though I could gain no confirmation of my views from the natives, I am inclined to think that the Peshín and Shál Loras, which are now lost in the sands of Shorawak, were formerly directed in one stream northerly by the desert cliffs, and ultimately joined the Kalani, or its continuation the Dorí, because the Kandahar plain is so much lower than the country in which these rivers rise. By the barometric indications I recorded on the march, the elevation of Shál is estimated at 5675 feet, Cushlác at 5150, and Hykalzai at 4800 feet. These three Loras unite before they reach Shorawak, and if their common stream, as I suppose, took a northerly course thence to Kandahar, it would descend several hundred feet, for the elevation of Kandahar is estimated at 3190 feet only.

To the north-east of Nárín is the Márúf mountain, and north-east of this again is the Sámai mountain, due south of Caláti Ghilzá. It is occupied by the Hotab section of

the Ghilzai tribe, whose clans extend from this right up to Kabul and the Sufed Koh. The Arghasán river rises by two branches in the Márúf and Sámai hills.

After a halt of three-quarters of an hour, we proceeded over a wide plain, here and there cultivated, and traversed in all directions by decayed and dry water-cuts, and at three P.M. arrived at the foot of a great granite rock, where we camped, near some springs issuing at the foot of an opposite granite hill. We ascended the hill near our camp for a view of the country, but on reaching its summit were overtaken by a thick mist and hailstorm, which completely obscured the distant view.

The general character of the plain, however, was clearly visible. It presents a wide surface, stretching east and west, and traversed by irregular broken ridges of bare rock, coursing from north-east to south-west. At distant intervals on the plain are seen a few domed villages, and two or three forts. But the most remarkable feature of the scene is the entire absence of trees—not even a shrub is to be seen. Even the nomad camps are few and far between. In the summer months the heat here must be, as it is described, quite unbearable. The plain is then a parched desert.

The springs near our camp are said to have made their appearance above the surface only three years ago. Previous to that time this place was entirely without water, and was not used as a camping-stage. The old stage was at Dand Gulai, at the foot of a hill five or six miles away to the south-west. But its waters having dried up, it is now deserted as a camping-ground.

From Gátaí we marched fourteen miles in a north-westerly direction, and camped at Mel Mándah, or the Mel ravine, near a *kárez* on its bank. A most trying north-wester blew against us with considerable force all

the way, and chilled us to the very bones. For the first ten miles our route was across a great plain, bounded towards the west by the cliffs of the desert, and on the east by the range of hills connecting the Nárin and Márúf mountains. The rest of our route was over a succession of undulating downs, backed in an irregular and broken line, from north-east to south-west, by a series of bare rugged hills. Throughout the march we saw no signs of habitation or cultivation; not a village nor a tent was seen on the whole route, nor even a single tree, nor any sign of cattle; nor did we see any water, except a brackish little pool about the tenth mile, where the road rises from the plain on to the downs. About a mile east of our camp is the Hardo hill, on which are said to be the remains of ancient walls. Its ridge separates the Kadani plain from that of Mulhid to its north, which extends north-east to the Arghasán river. The Mel Mándah, at this time a dry stony ravine, drains Hardo hill westward into the Dorí river.

Our next stage was eighteen miles to Máku Kárez, near the village of that name. Our route led north-westerly across the Mulhid plain. From it we got a good view of the Hardo ridge, and saw the outline of walls on its crest. There are said to be some extensive reservoirs here, excavated in the solid rock. Our companions could tell us nothing of these ruins, more than that they were once the habitations of the *kafir* (infidel) who in ancient times occupied this country. Probably they are Buddhist remains.

At about half-way we arrived at the top of the Barghanah Pass, in the ridge of the same name, and halted a few minutes to view the country. Away to the south, through gaps between the scattered ridges intersecting the plain, were seen bits of the Khojak range in its snowy

drapery. To the eastward was seen the great snowy mass of Sámai, and to its north-east appeared the Súrghar, or Redhill peak, whose offshoots are continuous with those of the Sufed Koh. Both Súrghar and Sámai drain westward into the Arghasán, which is formed by tributaries from these and the Márúf hills. To the east, Súrghar drains direct to the Gomal river and Sámai, by means of its tributary the Zhob stream. A great snowy spur is seen to project south-east from Sámai. It is said by our attendants to join the Zhob peak, and separate the Zhob and Bori valleys as a watershed, all to the north of it draining into the Gomal by the Zhob rivulet, and all to the south of it draining into the Nárí river by the Záo and Síbí streams, and tributaries from the Toba mountain. The Khwajah Amrán range and its continuation north-east in fact form a great watershed between the drainage of the Indus and the Helmand.

To the northward the view was obstructed by the Barghanah hills, but to the west and south-west were seen the red sand-cliffs of the desert, through gaps in the intervening ridges, right down to the northern limits of Shorawak. At the top of the pass the aneroid figured 25·38, thus giving its elevation at about 4100 feet. From the pass the road leads along the course of a great ravine, wide and stony, and here and there retaining pools of water, round which grew the tamarisk, and a tall reed called *durma* at Peshawar and *darga* here. After winding along the ravine for a few miles, we rose out of it on to the Barghanah plain, and camped on a good *kárez* stream at the little village of Mákú—elevation, 3500 feet; air, sharp and frosty; no wind, fortunately. About five miles to the west of our camp is the Tangí ridge of hills. On its further side is the Fathullah camping-ground on the old road between Kandahar and Peshín.

From Mákú we marched sixteen miles to Mund Hissar, a short distance from the river Tarnak. Our route was northerly across an undulating plain closed to the east-north-east by the Márúf mountain, which projects forwards from the Sámai range to the Arghasán river. Márúf was the favourite residence of Shah Ahmad, Durrani, the founder of the Afghan monarchy. He had a strong fort here, in which his family used to reside, and in which he himself ended his eventful career. Shah Ahmad for many years suffered from a foul disease, which destroyed the nose and palate by ulceration, and during the latter years of his life he used to wear a silver plate to mask the hideous deformity. When he felt his end approaching, he had himself conveyed in a small sedan covered with scarlet cloth, and carried by two men only, from Kandahar to his family seat at Márúf. He dismissed his courtiers at the gates of the city, and would allow no one to accompany him except a few mounted attendants. Thus quietly he retired from the scene of his labours and exploits, and expired in the midst of his family in the summer of 1773, shortly after his arrival at Márúf. His remains were carried back to the city he founded, and now rest under the mausoleum which is its only ornament.

Shah Ahmad was only fifty years old at the time of his death. He is said to have been a wise and just ruler, and of very simple and unostentatious habits. His repeated invasions of India enriched his country, whilst his successful campaigns against the Uzbaks and in Khorassan established the independence of his kingdom. He is always spoken of as the best of the Afghan sovereigns, and his memory is free from the vices and crimes that have so freely characterised the rule of his successors. His stronghold at Márúf was destroyed in

October 1839, by a detachment of the Bombay army marching from Ghazni to Peshín, in revenge for the massacre there of a body of four hundred camp-followers proceeding from Kandahar to India.

After marching six miles, we came to the river Arghasán. It is separated from the valley of the Tarnak by a long ridge of hills that extends away to the north-east, and where we crossed it flows in a wide shallow bed, hardly sunk below the level of the plain. Its channel is about one hundred and eighty yards wide, and the river is divided into two streams by an intervening strip of low tamarisk jangal. The river was about a foot deep, and not very swift. Its water was clear, and is said to be very wholesome. In flood seasons the water flows broadcast over the plain, which is then quickly covered with excellent pasture herbs.

The Yusufzai and Mahmand tribes of the Peshawar valley and hills were, according to their own accounts, originally settled as nomads on the banks of the Arghasán and the highlands of Ghwara Margha, to the north-east, sharing the former pastures with the Tarin tribe. But in a season of drought they fought with the latter, and were driven off to the eastward; and gradually working their way to Kabul, ultimately seized their present possessions from the Indian occupants, about four centuries ago.

Beyond the river, on either bank of which is a good irrigation canal, we wound round the end of the ridge of hills separating the valleys of the Tarnak and Arghasán; and passing the Naodih collection of domed huts, rose over some undulations and descended to the Tarnak valley; and going across it in the face of driving sleet and a biting cold north-west wind, camped close to the village of Mund Hissar. There is a large mound here with traces of ancient walls upon it. The village takes it name from

it. The weather here was bitterly cold, owing to the blasts of the north-west wind that swept the plain. At midday the ground was hard frozen, as were all the lesser irrigation streams. This village is crown property, and is the most prosperous-looking one we have seen since entering Afghanistan. It is surrounded by a wide extent of cultivated and freely irrigated land, but not a tree is to be seen anywhere about it. Its people are a mixture of various races and tribes, who hold their lands on condition of rendering one half the produce to government.

The whole country between this and Khojak, though entirely devoid of timber, and even brushwood, in the spring and autumn months is covered with a rich pasture, and supports vast flocks of goats and sheep. During the summer and winter months the country is almost entirely deserted, owing to the excessive heat of the one season, and rigorous cold of the other, as well as the scarcity of pasture. I was told by a merchant engaged in the trade, that the average export of wool from Kandahar to Karachi for the past ten years has been about five thousand candies (*kaodî*) annually. Each candy sells at Karachi for from one hundred and fifty to two hundred rupees, thus giving a profit to the province of from seventy-five thousand to one hundred thousand rupees a year, or £7500 to £10,000. The trade is capable of considerable extension, for large quantities of wool are still retained for home consumption in the manufacture of the felts called *namad* and *khosai*. The former are used as carpets and horse-clothing, and the latter is the ordinary winter dress of the peasantry.

During the march from Peshín we had noticed a large flock of sheep being daily driven along with our camp. We now learned that they formed part of the liberal

supplies provided by order of the Amir for our party, which the Saggid informed us he reckoned would have numbered at least two hundred people. But, as we did not exceed thirty in number all told, they were going back to Kandahar.

9th February.—Marched twelve miles from Mund Hissar to Kandahar. At about a mile we crossed the river Tarnak, the edges of which were lined with snow-wreaths. The river flows in a wide pebbly bed between two gravelly banks. Its stream is strong and rapid, and mid-stream is about three feet deep. The water is muddy just now, and is said to be always more or less turbid, in which particular it differs from its tributaries the Arghasán and Argandáb, both of which have clear streams.

Beyond the river we passed through a gap in a ridge of bare hills of naked rock, and at once emerged on the plain of Kandahar by a short descent from the hill skirt. The plain presented a wide hollow extending for many miles from north-east to south-west. Its general aspect was dreary in the extreme by comparison with the mass of villages, and gardens, and corn-fields crowded together about the city at its western extremity. Though yet in the poverty of its winter state, this part of the plain bore a decidedly fertile and flourishing look. On the verge of a desert plain to the north-east stood out the fortified parallelogram of Ahmad Shahí, the city of Kandahar, and to its west in attractive contrast rose the tall rows of dark cypresses, marking the sites of the pleasure gardens of its former brother chiefs. South of these lay a crowded mass of gardens, fields, and villages down to the banks of the Tarnak, whilst to the north and west the whole was shut in by the rocky heights of Baba Walí and Husen Shahr. Altogether it formed an oasis in the midst of a desert.

At three miles from the city we were met by a numerous and gaily-dressed company, who had come out for our *isticbal,* or ceremonial reception, with a troop of regular cavalry and a company of infantry. First of all, the cavalry formed a line on each side of our procession to keep off the crowd, whilst the infantry marched in front. We proceeded a little way in this order, when we came to a roadside mound on which were collected the party who had come out to do honour to the General. Here the infantry wheeled round and formed a street up the slope of the mound. General Pollock and our party dismounted, and then the leader of the *isticbal,* rising from the carpet on which he was seated, stepped forward to meet us, attended by four or five other nobles of the province. The Saggid introduced us to each in succession, and we shook hands all round with Sardar Mír Afzal Khan, Núr Muhammad Khan, Núr Ali Khan, and two others.

Sardar Mír Afzal Khan is a fine specimen of an Afghan noble of the old style. His bearing is courteous and dignified, with a tinge of hauteur. He was very richly dressed, and mounted on a handsome Arab horse with trappings of solid gold. At his side hung a scimitar with a gold embossed handle, and gold ornaments on the scabbard. His head was close shaven and covered with a splendid Kashmir shawl, the folds of which were not so closely adjusted as they might have been, for the motion of his horse more than once caused the headpiece to rock dangerously, as if about to fall. Mír Afzal Khan is about sixty years of age, and wears a short beard dyed red. He has sharp Jewish features, and a very prominent nose, and is said to bear a strong resemblance to the late Amir Dost Muhammad Khan. He is a son of the late Sardar Púrdil Khan, one of the many sons of the celebrated Páyandah Khan (who was executed at Kandahar

in 1806 by Shah Zamán), by a Durraní mother. Dost Muhammad was another son of Páyandah Khan by a Juwansher Cazilbash mother. Páyandah Khan was a Barakzai of the Muhammadzai branch, and was the first who raised the Barakzai tribe to the distinction and influence they have since his death enjoyed. He left a great many children, but twenty-two of his sons acquired notoriety by the parts they enacted in the political revolutions that convulsed the country on the death of Shah Tymúr, the son and successor of Shah Ahmad, the founder of the independent Afghan nationality. Of these, Fath Khan, whose mother was a Barakzai, was for many years the most important and powerful chief in the country, and thrice placed Tymur's son Mahmúd on the throne at Kabul, against his brothers Zamán and Shuja. He was inhumanly butchered in 1818 by Kamran the son of Mahmúd, and then his brothers all divided the country between them, and Dost Muhammad became Amir of Kabul. He was succeeded in 1863 by his son Sher Ali Khan, the present Amir. Sardar Mír Afzal Khan is consequently a cousin of the present Amir, and he is also his son-in-law, his daughter being Sher Ali's favourite wife, and the mother of the heir-apparent, Abdullah Jan. He has for many years past been governor of Furrah, and has been a stanch supporter of the Amir's cause during all his adversities, and was wounded in the arm by gunshot at the battle fought at Kajbáz, near Calati Ghizli, by the Amir against his rebel brother, Sardar Muhammad Amin, on 6th June 1865.

The Saggid was present in the fight, and described it to us only yesterday. It appears that both armies came into action suddenly, and by surprise. The Amir's eldest son, Muhammad Ali, was killed by a cannon-shot, and his uncle, Muhammad Amin, pushing forward to take

advantage of the confusion thus produced, was hit in the head by a rifle-bullet and killed at once. Mír Afzal Khan is now looked on as the most influential chief in the country, and his coming out in person to meet and do honour to the representative of the British Government is considered a mark of sincere good-will on the part of the Amir's Government.

But to return from this digression to our procession to Kandahar. After a hurried interchange of salutations we mounted our horses, and, in company with a brilliant crowd of cavaliers, proceeded towards the city. The cortége numbered about a hundred and fifty of the nobility and gentry of the province, and gave us a good idea of the chivalry of Kandahar. A better-mounted and more picturesque body of men I have never seen. The variety of costume and colour, the easy independence of the men, their courteous yet self-confident bearing, and the variety of their arms, formed an interesting spectacle, of which no description I can give will convey a proper idea. Some wore rich velvets or bright-coloured broadcloths, cut to the national pattern; others wore the national dress made of the finest kinds of home material, and a few there were who had adopted a semi-European style of costume, an ill-judged mixture, which did not show to advantage amongst the handsomer and more costly native costumes. Next to the riders, the horses attracted our attention. They were all uncommonly well mounted. The quality of the horse with most seemed to be a greater object of solicitude than either that of their dress or their arms. The favourite weapon was a dagger stuck sideways in the folds of the waistband; but many wore a sword hung at the side, and some carried an English rifle or a native matchlock slung over the shoulder or across the back.

At first starting there was a slight confusion, owing to the eagerness of all parties to occupy the foremost ranks; but our troop of regular cavalry, forming a line on each side of our party, kept the crowd from pressing too closely upon us, whilst the company of infantry, marching ahead, kept the road clear.

Our path led across a succession of corn-fields and *kárez* streams, and passing between the villages of Dih Khojah and Hodera, took us round by the Bardurrani gate to the north side of the city. We proceeded along this, past the Hazrat-jí shrine and the city cemetery, and then turning down the other side, turned off from the Topkhana gate, and crossing the *pátáo* canals, entered the road leading from the Herat gate westward to the garden of Rahmdil Khan. When I was here in 1857-58, with Lumsden's mission to the court of the heir-apparent, the late Sardar Ghulam Hydar Khan, this road was adorned by an avenue of tall poplar-trees. I now missed them, and inquiring the cause of their disappearance, was told that they had been, one by one, cut down, and used as fuel by the townspeople during the troublous times following on the death of Dost Muhammad.

As we proceeded we found the latter half of the road, this erst avenue, was lined by a large body of troops, and behind them, in a field to the left, was drawn up a half battery of artillery. The troops comprised nearly the whole of the Kandahar garrison, and were paraded in the following order:—First, a regiment of regular cavalry, of which a troop was on duty with our party, next three regiments of regular infantry (two of Kabulis and one of Kandaharis), and lastly, a small body of Kandahar militia. The men were not as fine a body as I had expected to see, judging from the company that had escorted us from Peshín. These men belonged to one

of the Kabul regiments, and had evidently been picked for the duty, for the purpose of making an impression. Their colonel, Taj Muhammad, Ghilzai, had come down with the Saggid to meet us at the Calát border, and was evidently proud of his men, and somewhat enthusiastically used to try and persuade us that all the Kabul army were just as fine, if not superior fellows.

We now saw the rest of the regiment to which they belonged, for there was no possibility of mistaking its identity, their uniform of its kind being unique. Their uniform was a tight jacket and trousers, cut on the old English pattern, but of a striped material called *ticken*, the same as is used for making mattress-cases at home. The head-dress was the native quilted conical cap or *topi*, with a boss of scarlet wool stuck on to its point. The other Kabuli regiment wore red jackets, and the Kandahari one a uniform of dingy yellow colour. The militia were the most sensibly dressed of all, and, encased in their great sheepskin coats, looked the only comfortable people on the parade.

As we came up to the troops, a startling object pranced his horse to the front of the line, and gave the word for a general salute, but the words were not yet out of his mouth, when our horses stood stock-still, and, pricking their ears, commenced snorting with fear. Our own persuasive measures, aided by the banging of the guns close beside us, presently overcame their objections, and they shied and shuffled past the object of their terror—whom we now discovered to be no other than our road-companion, Colonel Taj Muhammad—in no very dignified manner. The Colonel had left us, on approaching the city, to superintend the arrangements for the parade, and he now completely took us by surprise by the wonderful change in his dress. A Russian-pattern forage-cap, with

a broad gold band and straight peak, adorned his head, but the body was covered by a capacious overcoat of chessboard pattern, in great squares of brightest red, white, and blue. Having passed him, our steeds recovered their equanimity, which was more than we had, and enabled the General to acknowledge the honours of "dipped colours" and "God save the Queen" with becoming grace and dignity.

At the end of the line we ran the gantlet of another apparition similar to the first, and entered Rahmdil Khan's garden, where his summer palace had been prepared for our reception. Sardars Mír Afzal Khan and Núr Muhammad Khan conducted us to our quarters, and after partaking of some tea and sweets that had been provided for our refreshment, took their leave of us, and we saw no more of them here. The first thing we did on being left alone was to stop the pendulums of no less than five American clocks, which, whether they figured or not, most decidedly ticked, and that too with a vigour and rapidity that gave rise to the surmise that they were racing to make up for lost time, having been only just wound up and set agoing for the occasion.

CHAPTER V.

We halted four days at Kandahar to recruit our cattle, and replace the broken-down ones by new purchases. Our entertainment all this time was most hospitable, and was really more than we could conveniently endure. The apartments were luxuriously furnished with Persian carpets, Herat felts, and Kashmir embroideries. Several coloured glass globes were suspended from the ceiling, and every niche that was not already occupied by an American clock—and there were some ten or twelve such —was ornamented with a glass lamp. The clocks were all of the same pattern, and brightly gilded all over, and, together with the globes and lamps, appeared to form part of an investment ventured in this yet barbarous region by some enterprising merchant with a partiality for "Yankee notions."

We had hardly been left alone in our palatial quarters when a succession of huge trays of all sorts of sweetmeats began to arrive. Each was borne in by two servants, one supporting each end, and deposited one after the other on the floor. The array was quite alarming, for I knew they would go to our servants for disposal, and was certain they would exceed the bounds of prudence and moderation; a surmise in which I was not far wrong, for nearly all of them had to undergo a physicking before we set out on our onward journey. One of the trays in particular attracted our attention, on account of the variety of zoological forms its surface was crowded with.

We dubbed it "Noah's Ark," and kept it till our departure, partly from a suspicion that the different species of animals might not all be good for the food of man, and partly as an amusing specimen of the artistic skill of the confectioners of Kandahar. Much cannot be said for their proficiency in the art of moulding. Their figures generally left a good deal for the imagination to supplement before their identity could be satisfactorily brought home to the mind; but some, with even the most liberal allowance of fancy, were altogether beyond recognition. One figure in particular afforded us much amusement from its puzzling resemblance to several totally distinct animals, and various were the speculations hazarded as to its real prototype. Looked at on one side, it was pronounced to be a hare, but this was negatived by the length of its tail. Then it was suggested that it was meant to represent a wolf; but this was objected to on account of the square form of the head and face. "Perhaps it's a tiger," observed one of our attendants. "Perhaps it is," said Ghulam Ahmad, the General's Munshí, "or any other animal you like to call it. The material is the same, and just as good under either name." This was a well-directed hint to the servants, some of whom he observed were inclined to differ in opinion as to the respective qualities of the different mathematical figures and animal forms which were about to be divided amongst them. "Yes," chimed in his assistant, "whether disc or diamond, sun or star, the sugar of all is alike, and the pistacio paste equally thick; whether elephant, ox, or horse, the candy is alike transparent in all, whilst the difference in size is nothing to what it is between the real animals."

After these encouraging signs of a peaceable division of the spoils, we were glad to see the trays removed, for

their size and number incommoded our movements. On their removal, an excellent *zujáfat*, or cooked dinner, was served up Afghan fashion, and with the profusion of Afghan hospitality. The principal dish, as a matter of course, was the *puláo*—a whole sheep stuffed with a rich and savoury store of pistacio and almond kernels, with raisins, dried apricots, and preserved plums, &c., and concealed under a tumulus of rice mixed with pomegranate seeds, caraways, cardamums, and other aids to digestion, and reeking with appetising perfumes. Around it were placed, in crowded confusion, a most substantial array of comestibles, the variety and excellence of which were rather puzzling to inquiring foreigners with only limited powers of digestion. There was the *yakhni*, the *mattanjan*, and the *corma*, the *kabáb*, the *cúmá*, and the *cúrút*, with the *phirín*, and *falúda*, and the *nucl* by way of dessert, together with sherbets of sorts, sweet preserves and sour preserves, and bread in the forms of the *nán*, *paráta*, *bákir-khání*, and *tuaki*. Our host, the Saggid, with an inviting *bismillah* ("In the name of God," used as an invitation to commence any act), stretched forth his hand against the *puláo*, and we followed suit, but without making the smallest impression on the savoury heap before us. With this as a secure foundation, we dipped from dish to dish to make acquaintance with their contents. Each had particular merits of its own, but as only an Afghan palate can distinguish them, of course they were not appreciated by us. The Saggid, who had seen a good deal of the English in India, and was familiar with our mode of living, was careful to point out the dishes most resembling our own; but alas! for the prejudice of human nature, I could trace no points of similarity, and would have preferred a good mutton-chop and some mealy potatoes to all the rich *chef*

d'œuvres of the Afghan culinary science that loaded the table. As a nation the Afghans are gross feeders. They eat largely and consume astonishing quantities of fatty matter. The merit of any particular dish with them depends more upon the quantity and quality of the melted butter or fat in which it swims than on the tenderness or flavour of the flesh, and the more rancid the fatty matter is, the more highly is it esteemed. This is particularly the case amongst the peasantry and the nomads, amongst whom it is an ordinary occurrence to dispose of the tail of a *dumba* sheep between three or four mouths at a single meal. The tail of this variety of sheep is a mass of pure fat, and weighs from six to eighteen pounds. The hardy out-door life they lead requires that they should have a certain amount of carbonaceous pabulum in their food; and as by their religion they are debarred from the use of fermented liquors, the deficiency is very probably supplied by the abundant use of fat and butter. At all events, they lay great stress on a liberal supply of *roghan*, or grease, in all their food, and to its plentiful use, I believe, is to be attributed their physical superiority, combined, of course, with the influences of climate, which, taken alone, are not sufficient to account for their large limbs and robust frames.

At length our part of the performance came to a close, and the row of attendants marching in, carried off the feast to the side-apartments, where, in the character of hosts, they entertained our domestics. The Saggid now took leave of us to go to his home in the city, and we put out most of the lamps and candles, that filled the room with a painful glare, and increased its already close temperature.

The Afghans have no idea of domestic comfort or refinement according to the European standard, nor have

they any taste in the arrangement of their houses. The rooms prepared for us, though full of costly and really fine specimens of native manufacture, were yet singularly deficient in comfort and tasteful decoration. The Saggid, and his coadjutor here, General Safdar Ali, had accompanied the Amir Sher Ali Khan on his visit to India in the spring of 1869, for the conference at Amballa, and they now attempted to light up our quarters here after the fashion they had seen in our houses in India. Lamps and candles without stint were lighted, and set wherever there was room to stand them, without reference to the amount of light required, or the proper places for exhibiting it. Consequently, the room, which was entirely unventilated, except through the doorways opening into side-chambers, speedily became insupportably hot and stifling, so much so, that we were obliged before we could go to sleep to open all the doors and let a draught of the cold frosty night air through the house.

Next morning we rode out with the Saggid and General Safdar Ali to visit the gold-mine at the foot of the hills to the north of the city. The mine is situated in a small creek running up north-east into an angle formed by a spur projecting on to the Kandahar plain from the Baba Walí range. The hills are of a very hard and compact blue limestone, but the surface of the creek and the adjoining plain is a coarse gravel, containing fragments of greenstone, hornblende, quartz, and mica-schist. Coursing down the centre of the creek is a tortuous little water-course, now dry, and with only a few wreaths of snow lying under the shade of its rough conglomerate banks.

The mine is situated half-way up the creek, and on its southern side, close to the ridge of blue limestone. It is a wide excavation straight down into the soil, and in a

soft easily-worked rock, quite different from any in the vicinity. The piles of excavated rock heaped up round the mouth of the pit presented a remarkable variety of colours, amongst which black, blackish-green, bluish-green, reddish-orange and fawn colour were the most prominent. I examined several of these stones, and found them to consist of particles of greensand, hornblende, felspar, quartz, and mica, bound together in a gritty ferruginous clay. The formation appears to be one of decomposed sienite, and is sufficiently compact to require blasting in the excavation.

We descended into the great irregular pit by a steep path in its side, and saw the miners at work. The process is very rough, and simply this : A vein of quartz, from three or four inches to only half an inch or less thick, is exposed in the rock, either by the use of the pickaxe or by the aid of gunpowder. The workmen then examine the vein with the naked eye, and if any particles of gold are detected, they are removed, with the surrounding portion of matrix, by means of a chisel and hammer. The gold-dust thus removed is collected by each workman separately in small baskets, and taken to the city, where it is treated for the separation of the precious metal, as will be described presently.

An immense number of quartz veins traverse the rock in all directions, and in several of them we saw the compressed flakes of gold *in situ*. In two or three instances the metal was in thick lumpy masses, nearly the size of an almond. The pit is about one hundred and twenty feet long, by thirty or forty wide, and about eighty feet deep in the centre. Its sides are sloping and irregular, owing to the tracing up of veins for a short distance in different directions. There must be an immense amount of waste in this rough process, and no

doubt the heaps of excavated rock lying about the mouth of the pit would yield to the experienced miner a very profitable return.

The mine was discovered in 1860 in the following manner. A shepherd boy, tending his flock at graze on the creek, picked up a bit of quartz studded with granules of gold. He took it home to his father, who carried it to a Hindu to see if he could get anything for it. The Hindu, true to the instincts of his race, in whom the love of gold is an innate quality, at once recognised the value of the discovery, and gradually, after his own fashion, got out of the lad's father the exact spot on which the specimen was discovered. His next step was to apprise the Governor, and the site was at once explored. At a few feet below the superficial gravel, the ferruginous formation of disintegrated quartz and sienite above described was exposed, and in the veins on its surface gold was discovered. The site was at once claimed as crown property, and work was forthwith commenced by Government.

The mine has now been worked nearly twelve years, but with several intermissions. For the first two or three years it is said to have yielded very abundantly. It is now farmed by a contractor, at an annual rental of five thousand rupees, or five hundred pounds. The yearly cost of working it is set down at another five hundred pounds, but this is palpably a gross exaggeration. The profits, it is pretended, hardly cover rent and working charges, though the reverse is pretty generally believed to be the fact, notwithstanding the contractor's solemn protestations to the contrary, and his bold appeals to God, his prophet, and all the saints as witnesses to the truth of his assertions. There is little doubt that the mine, worked as it is now even, is a really profitable speculation; but in a country such as this, where life and property are pro-

verbially insecure, it would be most unsafe to admit the truth, for to do so would assuredly provoke the cupidity of the ruler, whose despotic will brooks no hindrance in the accomplishment of his desire, be it just or unjust. Hence it is that all classes below the nobility, and not a few even among that favoured class, as a precautionary safeguard, assume an appearance of poverty, and by common consent profane their most sacred characters for the support of a falsehood which is apparent to all.

Under the difficulties of such a position it is impossible for the stranger to arrive at an approximation to the truth. But that the mine does pay under the disadvantageous conditions mentioned, is best evidenced by the fact of its continued operation. We had no opportunities during our short stay here of ascertaining the extent of the auriferous formation, disclosed by the excavation of the mine. But as the surface gravel of the plain north of the city is of the same character as that on the creek in which the mine is situated, it may be reasonable to suppose that the gold-yielding stratum extends for some distance under the alluvium of the plain. If this be so, Kandahar is destined to prove a valuable acquisition to its future possessors. Under European exploration and skilled working, it would assuredly produce an hundred-fold of what it has hitherto done. For in the creek itself only one pit has been dug at the actual spot on which the metal was first discovered. All the rest of the surface is yet untouched, and under the existing government of the country it is destined to remain so.

On leaving the mine we passed through the Baba Walí ridge to the shrine of the same name, dedicated to the patron saint of Kandahar, for a view of the Argandáb valley, the most populous and fertile district of the whole province. From its source in the hills north-west

of Ghazni, to its junction with the Tarnak at Doúb, it has thirty-one villages on the right bank, and thirty-four on the left. They are mostly occupied by Popalzai and Alikozai Durranis. Though now seen in the depth of winter, the valley has a remarkably prosperous and fertile look. We returned through the Baba Walí range by a recently-made carriage-road blasted through the rock, in the track of an old pass a little to the west of the one we entered by. On return to our quarters, we found the miners ready with their implements and a small stock of quartz to show us the process by which they extracted the gold. The process appeared very simple and efficacious. The bits of quartz, ascertained by the eyesight to contain particles of gold, are first coarsely pounded between stones, and then reduced to powder in an ordinary handmill. The powder is next placed on a reed winnowing tray, and shaken so as to separate the particles of gold and finer dust from the grit. From the latter the larger bits of gold are picked out and thrown into a crucible, and melted with the aid of a few grains of *borax flua.* When melted it is poured into an iron trough, previously greased, or rather smeared, with oil, and at once cools into an ingot of bright gold. The fine dust left on the winnow is thrown into an earthen jar furnished with a wide mouth. The jar is then half filled with water and shaken about a little while. The whole is then stirred with the hand and the turbid water poured off. This process is repeated four or five times, till the water ceases to become turbid. A small quantity of quicksilver is next added to the residue of sand, some fresh water is poured on, and the whole stirred with the hand. The water and particles of sand suspended in it are then poured off, and the quicksilver amalgam left at the bottom of the vessel is removed to a strong piece of

cloth, and twisted tightly till the quicksilver is expressed as much as it thus can be. The mass of gold alloy is then put into a crucible with a few grains of borax, and melted over a charcoal fire. The molten mass is finally poured into the iron trough mentioned, and at once solidifies into a small bar of bright gold. Such was the process gone through in our presence. Even in this there was a good deal of waste, owing to the rejection of the coarser grit. With proper crushing machinery there is no doubt the yield would be considerably increased.

This afternoon we received a post *viâ* Khozdár and Calát, with dates from Jacobabad up to the 18th January. The courier described the route as almost closed by snow in Shál and Peshín, where, it seems, more snow has fallen since our passage over the Khojak. Whilst reading our papers, General Safdar Ali was announced. He brought a *nazar*, or present, on the part of the Amir for General Pollock, as the representative of the British Government. It consisted of fifteen silk bags ranged on a tray, and each bag contained one thousand Kandahari rupees, the value of which is about a shilling each.

A north-west wind has prevailed nearly all day, and the air is keen and frosty. During the night boisterous gusts of wind disturbed our slumbers and threatened to overturn some of the tall trees in our garden. In the forenoon we visited the ruins of Shahri Kuhna or Husen Shahr, the "old city," or "city of Husen." The latter name it derives from the last of its sovereigns, Mír Husen, Ghilzai, the second son of the celebrated Mír Wais, and brother of Mír Mahmúd, the invader of Persia, and the destroyer of the Saffair dynasty by the wanton massacre in cold blood of nearly one hundred members of the royal family.

The city was taken and destroyed by Nádir Shah in

1738, after a long siege, during which the Afghan defenders displayed such conspicuous bravery that Nádir largely recruited his army from amongst them, and advanced on his victorious career towards India.

On our way to the ruins we visited the shrine of Sultan Wais, and examined the great porphyry bowl supposed to be the begging-pot of Fo or Budh. It is a circular bowl four feet wide, and two feet deep in the centre (inside measurement), and the sides are four inches thick. When struck with the knuckle, the stone, which is a hard compact black porphyry, gives out a clear metallic ring. The interior still bears very distinct marks of the chisel, and on one side under the rim bears a Persian inscription in two lines of very indistinct letters, amongst which the words *Shahryár* (or Prince) *Jaláluddin* are recognisable, as also the word *táríbh* or "date." The exterior is covered with Arabic letters in four lines, below which is an ornamental border, from which grooves converge to a central point at the bottom of the bowl. Many of the words in the inscription were recognised as Persian, but we had not time to decipher it. General Pollock had an accurate transcript of the whole prepared by a scribe in the city, and forwarded it, I believe, to Sir John Kaye.

The keeper of the shrine could tell us nothing about the history of this curious relic, except that it, and a smaller one with handles on each side, which was carried away by the British in 1840, had been brought here by Hazrat Ali, but from where nobody knows. Possibly it may have come from Peshín, which in documents is still written Foshanj and Foshín.

The bowl now rests against the trunk of an old mulberry-tree in a corner of the enclosure of the tomb of Sultan Wais. The trunk of the tree is studded all over

with hundreds of iron nails and wooden pegs, like the trees described on the march to Hykalzai. About the enclosure were lying a number of great balls, chiselled out of solid blocks of limestone. The largest were about fourteen inches in diameter, and the smaller ones five or six inches only. They were, our attendants informed us, some of the balls used in ancient sieges of the adjoining city in the time of the Arabs. They were propelled by a machine called *manjaníc* in Arabic—a sort of ballista or catapult.

From the ruins of the old city we went on to those of Nadirabad, now surrounded by marshes caused by the overflow of irrigation canals, and returned to our quarters by the southern side of the present city, or Ahmad Shahí. The fortifications have been recently repaired and fresh plastered, and have been strengthened by the construction of a series of redoubts, called *Kása burj.*

12*th February.*—We visited the city this afternoon with the Saggid and General Safdar Ali. We entered at the Herat gate, and at the Chársú turned to the left up the Shahí bazaar, and crossing the parade-ground, where we received a salute of fifteen guns, passed into the *Arg* or "citadel," which was our prison-house for thirteen months when I was here in 1857-58 with Lumsden's mission. I say prison-house, because we could never move outside it but once a day for exercise, and then accompanied by a strong guard, as is described in my "Journal of a Mission to Afghanistan in 1857-58." From the citadel we went to see the tomb of Ahmad Shah, Durrani, the founder of the city, and thence passing out at the Topkhana gate, returned to our quarters in the garden of the late Sardar Rahmdil Khan.

The main bazaars had evidently been put in order for our visit. The streets had been swept, and the shops

stocked with a very varied assortment of merchandise and domestic wares, which were now displayed to the best advantage. The sides of the main thoroughfare were lined with a picturesque crowd of citizens and foreigners, brought here by their trade callings. The demeanour of the crowd was quiet and orderly, and their looks were expressive of good-will; which is more than could be said of any similar crowd in the bazaars of Peshawar, as was very justly remarked at the time by General Pollock. As we passed along, I now and again caught a finger pointing at me with "*Haghah dai*" ("That's him"); and in the Chársú, where we had to pick our way through a closely packed crowd, I was greeted with more than one nod of recognition, and the familiar "*Jorhasted?*" ("Are you well?") "*Khúsh ámadad*" ("You are welcome"), &c.

The citadel, which is now occupied by Sardar Mír Afzal Khan, Governor of Farrah, and his family, is in a very decayed and neglected state, and the court of the public audience hall is disgracefully filthy. The court and quarters formerly occupied by the mission of 1857 are now tenanted by General Safdar Ali, the Amir's military governor of the city.

From the citadel we passed through the artillery lines, a wretched collection of half-ruined and tumbledown hovels, choked with dung-heaps, horse litter, and filth of every description, and turned off to the Ahmad Sháhi mausoleum. The approach to it is over an uneven bit of ground, which is one mass of ordure, the stench from which was perfectly dreadful. It quite sickened us, and kept us spitting till we got out into the open country again. The tomb, like everything else here, appears neglected and fast going to decay. The stone platform on which it stands is broken at the edges, and the steps

leading up to it, though only three or four, are suffered to crumble under the feet of visitors without an attempt at repair. The dome has a very dilapidated look from the falling off here and there of the coloured tiles that cover it, whilst those that are still left make the disfigurement the more prominent by their bright glaze. Where uncovered, the mortar is honeycombed by the nests of a colony of blue pigeons, which have here found a safe asylum even from their natural enemies of the hawk species. The interior is occupied by a central tomb, under which repose, in the odour of sanctity—though those surrounding it are anything but sanctified—the ashes of the first and greatest of the Durrani kings. Near it are some smaller tombs, the graves of various members of the king's family. The cupola is very tastefully decorated by a fine Arabesque gilding, in which run all round the sides—the dome being supported on an octagonal building—a series of quotations from the Curán. These, in the light admitted through the fine reticulations of the lattice windows, appeared remarkable fresh and bright, though untouched since their first production a century ago. We doffed our hats as we entered the sacred precincts, as our attendants took off their shoes at the threshold, excepting only the Saggid and General Safdar Ali and Colonel Taj Muhammad, who were much too tightly strapped in their odd compounds of Asiatic and European military uniforms to attempt any such disarrangement of their evidently unaccustomed habiliments. The *mujawwir*, or keeper of the shrine—for amongst this saint-loving people the tenant of so grand a tomb could hardly escape being converted into so holy a character—was quite pleased at this mark of respect on our part, and made himself very agreeable by his welcome and readiness to afford information. "I know," said he, with a hasty and timid glance

at the shodden feet of our companions, "that this is the manner in which Europeans testify their reverence for holy places. The officers who visited this tomb when the British army was here observed the same custom, and always uncovered the head on entering beneath this roof. It is quite correct. Every nation has its own customs; you uncover the head, and we uncover the feet. In either case, respect for the departed great is the object, and by either observance it is manifested. It is all right." The old man told us he was seventy-two years old, and had not been beyond the precincts of the tomb for the last thirty years. It was his world. He had not been as far as the bazaars in all this time, nor had he seen the cantonments built by the British outside the city. This sounds incredible, but I don't think it improbable, for I know of three or four instances amongst the Yusufzais of the Peshawar valley, in which old men have assured me that in their whole lives they had never moved beyond the limits of their own villages, not even so far as to visit the next village, hardly three miles distant. How the old *mujawwir* managed to exist so long—for one can hardly say live with propriety—in this vile stinking corner of this filthy city, is not to be understood except on the explanation of habit becoming second nature. Both the confinement and the atmosphere had however left their mark upon him, and had blanched his gaunt sickly visage as white as the beard that graced his tall lank figure.

From the mausoleum we passed through a quarter of the city which had evidently not been prepared for our visit. The narrow lanes were filthy in the extreme, the shops were very poorly stocked, and altogether the place looked oppressed, as indeed it is, by the unpaid, ill-clad, and hungry soldiery we found lounging about its alleys.

We were glad to pass out of the Topkhana gate, and once more breathe the fresh air of the open country.

From what we saw on this occasion, and from what we heard during our short stay here, there is no doubt that the condition of Kandahar, as regards population and prosperity, is even worse than it was when I was residing here fourteen years ago. The oppression of its successive governors, the frequent military operations in this direction, and the location of a strong body of troops in the city during the last ten or twelve years, has almost completely ruined the place, and has reduced the citizens to a state of poverty bordering on despair.

The discontent of the people is universal, and many a secret prayer is offered up for the speedy return of the British, and many a sigh expresses the regret that they ever left the country. Our just rule and humanity, our care of the friendless sick, our charitable treatment of the poor, and the wealth we scattered amongst the people, are now remembered with gratitude, and eager is the hope of our return. This is not an exaggerated picture, and speaks well for the philanthropic character of the short-lived British rule in this province, when we consider that our occupation of the country was but a military aggression. But even if they had never had a practical experience of British rule, the desire of the Kandaharis for the return of our authority and extension of the British government to their province, is explained by the glowing accounts they receive from their returning merchants of the prosperity, happiness, and liberty that reign in India, whilst they render them more impatient of the tyranny under which they are forced to groan.

Hundreds of families, it is said, have left the city during the last ten years, to seek their fortune under more favourable rulers. The city is said to contain five

thousand houses, but fully a third part of it is either deserted or in ruins, and the population does not exceed eighteen thousand, if it even reaches that number. Indeed it is astonishing how the city holds out so long under the anomalous circumstances of its government and the ill-restrained license of an unpaid soldiery.

I was told by a non-commissioned officer of the Corps of Guides, who was now spending his furlough here amongst his relations, and whom I formerly knew when I was with that regiment, that the condition of the people was deplorable. Hearing of our approach, he came out to meet us at Mund Hissar, and attended daily at our quarters during our stay here. From him I learned that numbers of the citizens were anxious to see the General, and represent their grievances to him; and that hundreds, remembering the charitable dispensary I had opened here during my former visit, were daily endeavouring to gain admittance to our quarters for medicine and advice regarding their several ailments and afflictions, but that both classes were prohibited by the sentries posted round us with strict orders to prevent the people from holding any communication with us, lest we should hear their complaints, and what they had to say against our hosts.

The city is now governed by three sets of rulers, each independent of the other, but all answerable to the Amir. Thus General Safdar Ali is the military governor. His troops are six months in arrears of pay, and make up the deficiency by plundering the citizens. His nephew (sister's son), Sultan Muhammad, is the civil governor. He has to pacify the townspeople under their troubles, and to screw from them the city dues or taxes. Then there is Núr Ali, the son of Sardar Sher Ali Khan, the late governor, who is himself just now at Kabul rendering an

account of his recent charge. He is a luxurious youth, clad in rich velvets and cloth of gold, and on behalf of his father collects the revenues outside the city The consequence of this triangular arrangement is that the people are effectually crushed and bewildered. They know not who are their rulers, and in vain seek redress from one to the other, only to find themselves fleeced by each in turn. As my informant pathetically remarked, "There is no pleasure in life here. The bazaar you saw to-day is not the everyday bazaar. There is no trade in the place. How should there be any? The people have no money. It has all been taken from them, and where it goes to nobody knows. There is no life (or spirits) left in the people. They are resigned to their fate, till God answers their prayers, and sends them a new set of rulers."

Truly their condition is such as to call for pity. I observed, in our progress through the city, that the people had a sickly appearance compared with the generality of Afghans, and wore a subdued timid look, altogether at variance with the national character. They are, as we heard from more than one source, only waiting a change of masters. In their present temper, anybody would be welcomed by the Kandaharis, even a fresh set of their own rulers would afford them a temporary relief; but a foreigner, whether British, Persian, or Russian, they would hail with delight, and their city would fall to the invader without even much show of resistance, for the garrison could look for no support from the people they had so hardly oppressed.

The Government of Kandahar, besides the city and suburbs, includes about two hundred villages. Altogether they yield an annual revenue of about twenty-two laks of rupees to the Amir's treasury. Of this total, about nine laks are derived from the city dues and taxes. Almost

the whole of this sum is expended on the civil and military establishments of the government, so that very little finds its way to the imperial treasury. The revenue is not all collected in cash; on the contrary, a considerable proportion is taken in kind, such as corn, cattle, sheep, and so forth; and the collection of much of this last is avoided, as far as government is concerned, by the issue of bonds, or *barát*, on the peasantry and landholders, to the extent of their dues of revenue. These bonds are distributed amongst the civil and military officials in lieu of wages. They exact their full dues, and extort as much more as their official influence and the submission of the peasantry enable them to do. The system is one of the worst that can be imagined, leads to untold oppression, and is utterly destructive of the peace and prosperity of the country.

During the last two days a number of workmen have been employed in erecting palisades along the sides of the tank in front of our quarters, and along the cypress avenues on each side of it, preparatory to a grand illumination and display of fireworks, fixed for this evening, in honour of the General's arrival here. At seven o'clock, darkness having set in, the performance of the evening commenced. Thousands of little lamps, which had been fixed with dabs of mud at short intervals along the cross poles of the palisading, were lighted, and produced a very pretty effect. Innumerable tapering flames reflected their long trembling shadows across the placid surface of the tank, and lighted the long rows of avenue on either side with a glare of brilliancy, highly intensified by the impenetrable gloom of the close-set sombre foliage above, and the darkness of the night-enshrouded vista of the garden beyond. We had not sufficiently feasted our eyes on this attractive scene, when its brilliancy was thrown

into the shade by the noisy eruption of a whole series of "volcanoes," the contents of which shot out in a rushing jet of yellow scintillating flakes, and finished up with a loud bang, that sometimes exploded, and always overturned the volcano. Flights of rockets, roman candles, wheels, &c., followed, whilst crackers thrown into the tank scud about its surface with an angry hissing, presently plunging into its depths, and anon rising with a suffocating gurgle jarring ungratefully on the ears, and finally expiring in the throes of a death-struggle. There were besides some elephants, horses, and other nondescript animals, that were fixed in the foremost places, as masterpieces of the pyrotechnist's art, but the less said of them the better. They emitted jets of fire and volumes of smoke from the wrong places at the wrong moments, so that, when moved to combat against each other, their clumsy shells revealed, as they rocked from side to side in their efforts to fall, the bare limbs of the human machinery that struggled to support them in their proper positions against the shocks of the exploding combustibles embedded in their flanks and extremities. Altogether the display, though a grand effort, and perhaps a feat on the part of the pyrotechnists of Kandahar, was inferior to what one sees in India, and in any European capital would be hissed at as a downright failure. The purpose, however, was noways affected by the performance, and the honour was fully appreciated as a mark of good-will and respect for the Government it was our privilege to represent.

The next day was devoted to the final arrangements for our departure on the morrow. Fresh cattle had been purchased for our camp and baggage, some new servants had been entertained, and it was necessary now to see that all were properly equipped and provided for their journey. During the afternoon we had a long interview

with some Hindu bankers of the city, from whom we took a small advance in exchange for notes of hand upon the Government treasury at Shikárpúr. They had correspondents at Herat, Kabul, Shikárpúr, and Amritsar, but not at Mashhad, Balkh, or Bukhára. They confirmed what we had heard from other sources regarding the oppressed state of the city, and the systematic plundering of the citizens that daily goes on, but said that their own community—the Hindu traders—were not interfered with. They assured us that the rich furniture of our apartments was mostly the confiscated property of Sardar Muhammad Sharúf Khan, the Amir's rebel brother, who has just been deported to India as a state prisoner. With the timidity and suspicion common to their class here, they spoke in low tones and with uneasy furtive glances around; and presently, when the Saggid came in for his usual afternoon cup of tea, they were evidently discomposed, and quickly retired on the first symptoms of acquiescence in their departure. The Saggid brought us some fine nosegays of blue violets, the familiar scent of which quite perfumed the room. He found me busily penning notes, and jocularly remarked, "I know you people always write down everything you see and hear, and afterwards publish it to the world. Now pray, Doctor Sahib, what have you been writing about me?" This was an unexpectedly home question; but following in his own merry mood, I evaded a direct reply by the remark that his observation was quite correct; that as a nation we were given to writing, and that with some of us the habit exceeded the bounds of moderation and utility, and was then called a *cacoethes scribendi.* "Very likely, very likely," interposed the Saggid; "no doubt you people write a great deal more than is of any earthly use, but the habit is not without its merits. Now

you will have doubtless written down all about the country you have come through, and will know it better than its own inhabitants." I here observed that, with the most careful and leisurely inquiries, we could hardly expect to attain to such perfection. "Nay, but you do," said the Saggid; "you go riding along and come to a village. To the first man you meet in it you say, 'What's the name of this village?' He tells you, and then you say, 'What do you call that hill?' and he gives you its name. Out comes your note-book, and down go the names, and by and by all the world knows that there is such a hill near such a village, a fact nobody else in the country is aware of except the inhabitants of the actual locality."

The Saggid was as much amused by this telling *argumentum ad hominem* as we were, and added, "Now, by way of illustration, I will tell you what occurred to me many years ago, when, as a young man, I went to Bangalore with a batch of horses for sale. An English officer who spoke Persian asked me one day about my country, and when I told him the name of my village, he turned it up in his map, and said, 'Yes, I see. There is a place near it called Ganda China.' 'No,' said I, 'there is no such place near it, nor even in the country.' 'There must be,' maintained he. Well, considering I knew my own country best, I thought it useless arguing the point, so remained silent, allowing him to have his own way. When I returned home and recounted my adventures in the Deccan, amongst others I mentioned this circumstance, with no very flattering allusion to the English officer's obstinacy. 'You are wrong, Shah Sahib' (the respectful title by which Saggids are addressed), said two or three voices. 'Ganda China is the briny bog at the further end of the hollow behind our hill.' 'Well,' said I, 'I never knew

that before.' So the English officer, you see, knew what I did not of my native place."

In the following conversation the Saggid, to his credit be it recorded, spoke most sensibly, and with a freedom from prejudice for which we were not prepared. He lamented the ignorance of his own people, and the jealousy they evinced of our learning anything about their country: "As if," said he, "you could not send any number of Afghans into it, instructed to bring you whatever information you required regarding it." He very truly observed that we knew more of the history and topography of his country than the most learned native in it could ever hope to do in their present state of benighted ignorance. As an instance, he mentioned a discussion at which he was present at the Amir's court shortly before he set out from Kabul to meet us, in which not a single member present could tell the exact locality of Chinaran, of which they knew nothing more than that it was an important fort on the Persian frontier in the time of Shah Ahmad, but in what part of the frontier nobody could tell.

14*th February.*—At noon we set out from Rahmdil Khan's garden, under a salute of fifteen guns from the artillery, drawn up for the purpose outside the gate. Our route led over fields of young corn, burnt yellow by the recent hard frosts, and across a succession of irrigation streams to the village of Chihldukhtarán, beyond which we came to the Chihlzina. We alighted here, and ascended the rock for the sake of the view, which, the weather being fine and clear, was very distinct and extensive over the plain to the eastward and northwestward. In the former direction, the furthest point seen was the snow-topped peak of Surghar, on the further side of which we were told lies the Abistada lake. To the

north-west is the great snowy range of Shah Macsúd, closing the prospect by a lofty ridge running from north-east to south-west. Beyond it lies the Derawat valley.

On descending we took leave of General Safdar Ali, who returned to Kandahar with a troop of regular cavalry, and proceeded in company with the Saggid and Colonel Taj Muhammad, escorted by a company of regular infantry, and a party of two hundred and fifty irregular horse, fine active fellows, very well mounted, and generally well armed. At a short distance we passed between the villages of Mír Bazár on the left and Gundigán on the right. This last is built on a couple of artificial mounds, and is noteworthy as being the only Shia village of Parsiwans in the whole province. Beyond these the road skirts a ridge of rocky hills to the left, and has the village of Murghán some way off to the right, where flows the river Argandáb. Further on we came to an extensive roadside graveyard, in which the tomb of the celebrated Mír Wais, Ghilzai, forms the most prominent object, as much from the height of its cupola above the more humble tombs around, as from the state of its decay and neglect. Passing these and the adjoining Kohkarán village, we camped a mile beyond on an open gravelly patch between the Kohkarán hill and the river bank, having marched seven miles from Kandahar.

On approaching Kohkarán, the lord of the manor, Sardar Núr Muhammad Khan, came out to meet us, and invited us to his fort for refreshment; but as it stood a little way out of our road, we politely declined, and he accompanied our party into camp, where his servants presently arrived with trays of food of sorts, and amongst the dishes a huge bowl of the national *curút*, which is, I believe, a close relation to the *sour kraut* of the Germans. Sardar Núr Muhammad Khan is a son of the late Tymúr Culí Khan,

own brother of the late Wazir Fath Khan, Bárakzai. He is reputed as being one of the wealthiest of the Afghan nobles, and has always adhered loyally to the cause of the present Amir during the long period of his trials and adversities. During the siege of Herat by the late Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, he was imprisoned and tortured by Shahnawáz Khan (who continued the defence after the death of his father, Sultan Ahmad Khan), on the suspicion of being a secret partisan of the Dost's. He now told me that he was at the time in command of the Herat garrison, and that God alone preserved his life. On the fall of Herat in May 1863, Shahnawáz fled to the Persians, and became their pensioner at Tahrán. His brother, Sikandar Khan, fled to Turkistan, and took service with the Russians, by whom he was treated with distinction, and sent to St Petersburg. Another brother, Abdullah Khan, fell into the Amir's hands, and being a youth of some parts, was sent to reside at Kabul under surveillance.

Sardar Núr Muhammad Khan had accompanied the Amir Sher Ali in all his wanderings, and shared his misfortunes. He spoke in the gloomiest words of the future prospects of his country, and seemed glad to retire from the troubles of public life to the solitude and quiet of his country-seat. He had been here about twenty months, and seldom went beyond his own domain. He came out to meet us with Sardar Mír Afzul Khan's *isticbál* from Kandahar, but except on such occasions he seldom even goes to the city.

He is a fine, blunt, and honest Afghan, with prepossessing looks and very hospitable manners. His time is mostly spent in improving his castle, to which he has just added an extensive range of stables for the hundred horses his stud consists of. He is said to possess some of the best Arab, Baloch, and Turkman horses in the

country. He was mounted on a beautiful Arab himself, and by his side rode an attendant mounted on a great Turkman of wonderful strength and fleetness, as he proved to us by putting the animal to its full speed across the plain.

He told us that this winter was the severest season known to have occurred during the past twenty years, and, as an instance of its severity, assured us that the black partridges in his vineyards had all been killed by the cold, numbers having been found lying dead upon the snow.

From our camp we have a full view of the Argandáb valley, and the crowd of villages and gardens along the course of its river. Numerous canals are drawn off from its stream for purposes of irrigation, and for the water supply of Kandahar. To the northward the valley extends in a wide upland pasture tract to the foot of the ridge of hills separating it from the adjoining Khákrez valley. The hills have a very barren look, and are crossed by several passes practicable to footmen only.

From Kohkarán we marched eighteen miles, and camped on the roadside between Hanz Maddad Khan and Sang Hissár. At a short distance from camp we crossed a deep irrigation canal, and at once descended a steep clay bank into the bed of the Argandáb river. The channel here is very wide and boulder-strewed, and the river flows through its centre, and there are besides two little streams, one under each bank. The current is strong and stirrup-deep. We found hundreds of wild-fowl and coolan along the pools bordering the river; and I went off with Colonel Taj Muhammad and shot a few teal and purse-necks. The coolan were much too vigilant to allow us to get within range. During the hot-weather rains, this river swells into a raging torrent, and

is quite impassable for three or four days together. The farther bank of the river is low, and lined by an irrigation canal similar to that on the other bank.

Beyond the river, the road passes through a wide extent of corn-fields and villages, known collectively as Sanzari, and bounding them to the southward is a ridge of hills called Takhti Sanzari, on which we could trace indistinctly the remains of ancient ruins.

We cleared the Sanzari lands at a roadside *ziárat*, over the door of which were fixed some iben and markhor horns; and leaving the Ashogha canal and village to the left, entered on a vast treeless waste, that gently slopes up to the Khákrez range towards the north. We followed a well-trodden path over the gravelly plain in a south-west direction, and leaving the Sufed Rawán villages and cultivation along the river bank to our left, camped a little beyond the Hanz Maddad, and close to a ruined mound called Sang Hissar.

The *hanz*, or reservoir, named after its builder, Maddad Khan, of whom nobody could tell us anything, is now, like everything else in this country, fast going to ruin. It has long been dry, and the projecting wings from the central dome, which were meant as a shelter for the wayfarer, are now choked with the débris of the crumbling walls and heaps of drift sand. At the *hanz* the road branches—one track goes due west across the plain to Kishkinákhud and Girishk, and the other south-west to Garmsel by the route of Calá Búst.

Westward of this point the country assumes an aspect altogether different from that we have hitherto traversed. It presents a vast expanse of undulating desert plain, upon which abut the terminal offsets from the great mountain ranges to the northward and eastward. The weather being fine and the atmosphere singularly clear, we were

enabled to get a very extensive view of the general aspect and configuration of the country.

To the west were the terminal spurs of the Khákrez range, ending on the plain, and concealing from view the valley of that name, and on which we looked back as we advanced on our route. To the west and south respectively, the horizon was cut by an arid waste and sandy desert. Close at hand to the east, between the junction of the Argandáb with the Tarnak, is the termination of the Baba Walí range. To its north lies the valley of the Argandáb, running up north-east as far as the eye can reach in a continual succession of villages, gardens, and corn-fields, a picture of prosperity strikingly in contrast with the arid and bare aspect of the country to the south of the range. In this latter direction the parallel ranges of Arghasan, Barghana, and Kadani, coursing the wide plateau from north-east to south-west, all terminate in low ridges that abut upon the Dori river opposite to the sand-cliffs of the great desert that separates Kandahar and Sistan from the mountain region of Makran.

The angle of junction of the Argandáb and Tarnak is called Doaba. To the south of the Takhti Sanzari it is continuous with the Panjwaí district on the banks of the Tarnak. It is very populous, and is covered with villages and gardens, celebrated for the excellence of their pomegranates. From Panjwaí there is a direct route across the desert to Hazárjuft. The distance is said to be only eighty miles. The desert skirt from this point, along the course of the Dori right down to the end of the Lora river on the plain of Shorawak and Nushki, is said to afford excellent winter pasturage for camels and sheep. This skirt forms a tract some fifteen or twenty miles wide on the border of the actual sandy desert, and is at this season occupied by the camps of the nomad

Achakzai, Núrzai, and Barech Afghans. It produces lucerne, clover, carrot, and other wild herbs in profusion during the spring. Our next stage was twenty-two miles, to the river bank near the hamlet called, from its adjacent spring, Chashma. It is included in the lands of Kishkinákhud. Our route was by a well-beaten path on the gravelly plain at about two miles from the river, towards which it slightly inclined as we proceeded westward.

To the left of our course, along a narrow strip on the river bank, are the collection of villages and gardens known as Bágh Marez and Sháhmír. Amongst them, conspicuous for its neatness and strength, is the little fort of Khúshdil Khan, son of the late Sardar Mihrdil Khan, and elder brother of Sardar Sher Ali Khan, the recent governor of Kandahar. He has always held aloof from politics, and spends his life in the seclusion of his country retreat. On the farther side of the river the land rises at once into a high coast, formed by round bluffs that stretch away towards the desert in a tossed and billowy surface of loose sand.

To the right of our route lay the Kishkinákhud plain. It supports a very scattered and thin growth of pasture herbs, amongst which we noticed some stunted bushes of the camel-thorn and sensitive mimosa. As we advanced we came abreast of the Khákrez valley away to the north across the plain. It has a dreary and desert look, and appeared uninhabited. It has no perennial stream, but is drained by a central ravine which crosses the plain as a wide and shallow water-run, called Khákrez Shela. We crossed it dryshod a little way short of camp.

Beyond Khákrez is the Shah Macsúd range of hills, now covered with snow. The hills are said to be well stocked with large trees, and amongst them the wild or bitter almond. We were assured that the Popalzais, who hold

this country, had of late years taken to grafting the wild trees as they grew on the hillsides with the sweet and cultivated almond, and with complete success.

At the foot of a dark spur branching off southward from the main range was pointed out the site of the ruins of Mywand. They are described as very extensive; and in the time of Mahmúd of Ghazni, the city was the seat of the government of his wazir, Mír Hassan. At the head of the valley, to its north, are the sulphur hot springs of Garmába, resorted to by the natives of the vicinity as a remedy for rheumatism and diseases of the skin.

During the latter part of the march we passed a couple of roadside hamlets occupied by Hotab Ghilzais, and watered by *kârez* streams. There was very little cultivation about, and the villagers appeared a very poor and miserable set.

The weather is fine and clear, and the air delightfully fresh and mild. We are now fairly clear of the hills, and are entered upon the great basin of the Kandahar drainage.

17*th February.*—We set out from Chashma at eight A.M., and marched twenty-three miles to Baldakhán by a good gravelly path following the course of the river at about a mile from its right bank. At about the third mile we passed the hamlet of Mulla Azím, occupied by Mandínzai Isháczais, who are *astánadár* of the Saraban Afghans (that is to say, descendants of an Afghan saint of the Saraban division of the nation), and consequently hold their lands rent free, and enjoy other privileges and immunities accorded to members of the priest class. Beyond this we entered on the Bandi Tymúr, a long strip of villages and cultivation extending for twelve miles or so along the right bank of the river, which here flows over a wide pebbly channel interspersed with patches of

dwarf tamarisk jangal. The soil is everywhere gravelly and charged with salines, which here and there form extensive encrustations on the surface. Several *kárez* streams, brought from the undulating tract of Kháki Chanpán to the north, cross the road at intervals, and a succession of irrigation canals led off from the river intersect the country on either side. The tract derives its name from an ancient *band* or weir thrown across the river in the time of Tymúr. We did not see any signs of this dam, nor could we learn that any traces of it were still in existence.

To the north of the Bandi Tymúr tract are first the Miskárez hamlets and cultivation, and beyond them are the Kháki Chanpán hamlets, concealed from view in the sheltered hollows of the undulating pasture tract of that name. Away to the north beyond it, between the Khákrez and Shah Macsúd ranges, is seen the Ghorát valley, in which are the hot sulphur springs of Garmába already mentioned. To the north of Ghorát is seen the Dosang range of hills, that separate it from the Derawat valley, which drains by a perennial stream to the Helmand in Zamindáwar. This is described as a very populous and fertile valley, continuous to the north-east with the country of the Hazerahs. To the north-west of it, a range of hills intervening, is the Washír valley, which drains to the river of Khásh.

To the south, on the left of our route, the sandy desert abuts upon the river in a high bank of water-worn stones, in the sheltered hollows between which is a close succession of nomad camps, that extend in a continuous line for nearly fifty miles, for we marched in sight of them to within a few miles of Calá Búst. The camps were on shelving banks close upon the river bed, and were seldom

more than half-a-mile apart. Their unbroken black line upon the red ground of the sandy bluffs formed a very prominent object of attraction, and the extent of the cordon proved the numerical strength of the nomads to far exceed the limit of what we had supposed their numbers to be. I counted sixty-three camps in view at the same time. The number of tents in each ranged from twenty up to eighty, but the majority appeared to contain from forty to fifty tents. If we allow two hundred camps along the river from Chashma to Búst, and reckon only forty tents in each, it will give a total of eight thousand tents or families; and if we take each family to consist of five individuals, it will give us forty thousand as the total of the nomad population massed in this part of the country. The calculation is by no means exaggerated; on the contrary I believe it to be under the mark.

Similar encampments, we are assured, extend along the desert skirt, where it abuts on the channels of the Tarnak and Dori rivers, right down to Shorawak, and are reckoned to contain a total of not less than forty thousand tents, or two hundred thousand souls. These nomads include a number of tribes from all the hill country between this and Kabul. They come down from the highlands with their cattle and flocks during September and October, pass the winter here, and return to their summer pastures during March and April. Their sheep and camels find abundant pasture at this season on the borders of the desert, and are scattered over its surface to a distance of twelve or fifteen miles from the river. There are here and there superficial pools of rain-water (called *náwar*) on the pasture tracts, but generally the cattle are driven down to water at the river every third or fourth

day. A couple of centuries ago nearly the entire Afghan nation were nomads, or, as they are here called, *kizhdi nishín*, from their mode of dwelling, and sometimes *sahára nishín*, from the place of habitation.

At about the sixth mile of our march we passed another roadside hamlet of the Mándinzai Isháczais. Some of the villagers came out and took up a position on the road in front of us, with a Curán suspended across the path in a sheet stretched between two poles hastily stuck into the ground. We passed under the sacred volume, and received the blessing of its owners in return for a rupee given to them by the Saggid. Our grooms, with uplifted arms, made a bound, touched the book, and then their foreheads and hearts, the while invoking the prophet's blessing.

At about half-way on this march we passed the ruins of an old town and the remains of a fort overlooking the river. Beyond this the country is bare and desolate. The soil is either a coarse gravel covered with a thin jangal of camel-thorn, or it is a spongy clay white with excess of salines. For many miles here the road passes through a long succession of salt-pits. Near Ballakhan we turned off to the left, and camped on a saline tract close to the river.

A high north-east wind blew all day, and, fortunately for us, drove clouds of salt dust against our backs, instead of in our faces. The sky became cloudy in the afternoon, and towards sunset gusty showers of rain fell. On the line of march we were overtaken by a courier from Jacobabad with our letters and newspapers, and dates up to the 26th January. We spent the evening in reading the news of the world we had left behind us.

Next to returning to one's own, there is nothing so delightful as the receiving intelligence from them. We

always hailed the arrival of our posts with unconcealed joy; and no sooner possessed ourselves of the contents of one, than we looked forward to the arrival of another, with an eagerness that only those placed in similar circumstances could possibly evince.

CHAPTER VI.

18*th February.*—We marched from Ballakhan twenty-eight miles, and camped on the bank of the river Helmand, close under the citadel of Búst. The night proved stormy, and a good deal of rain fell, rendering the ground for several miles from camp very heavy and deep in mud. At two miles from camp, we passed the ruins of Ballakhan, on a mound some little way off to the right of the road; and a little farther on, the Júe Mahmand, also to the right of the road. This tract, as far west as the Kárez-i-Sarkár, is held by the Núrzais, whose camps of black tents and settlements of reed huts dot the surface at short intervals. We found large herds of their camels, oxen, goats, and sheep at graze on the scanty pastures the surface afforded.

The country here is similar to that traversed yesterday. Deep irrigation canals, now mostly dry, intersect it in all directions, and, crossing the road at short intervals, present obstructions to the free passage of the traveller. The soil is everywhere spongy and charged with salines, yet a considerable extent is brought under cultivation. The natives cure the land of these salts by first sowing with rice and then with clover, and after this the soil is said to be fit for any crop.

For several miles our road led over a succession of salt-pits and ovens, and lying about we found several samples of the alimentary salt prepared here from the soil. It was in fine white granules, massed together in

the form of the earthen vessel in which the salt had been evaporated. The process of collecting the salt is very rough and simple. A circular pit or conical basin, seven or eight feet deep, and about twelve feet in diameter, is excavated. Around its circumference is dug a succession of smaller pits or circular basins, each about two feet wide by one and a half feet deep. On one side of the large pit is a deep excavation, to which the descent from the pit is by a sloping bank. In this excavation is a domed oven, with a couple of fireplaces. At a little distance off are the piles of earth scraped from the surface and ready for treatment. And, lastly, circling round each pit is a small water-cut, led off from a larger stream running along the line of the pits.

Such is the machinery. The process is simply this: A shovelful of earth is taken from the heap and washed in the basins (a shovelful for each) circling the pit. The liquor from these is, whilst yet turbid, run into the great central pit, by breaking away a channel for it with the fingers. This channel is then closed with a dab of mud, and fresh earth washed, and the liquor run off as before; and so on till the pit is nearly full of brine. This is allowed to stand till the liquor clears. It is then ladled out into earthen jars, set on the fire, and boiled to evaporation successively, till the jar is filled with a cake of granular salt. The jars are then broken, and the mass of salt (which retains its shape) is ready for conveyance to market.

Large quantities of this salt are used by the nomad population, and a good deal is taken to Kandahar. The quantity turned out here annually must be very great. The salt-pits extend over at least ten miles of country we traversed, and we saw certainly several thousand pits.

These saline tracts are not so utterly waste as one

would imagine. The soil, though curable for purposes of cultivation, as above mentioned, spontaneously supports a growth, which is more or less abundant, of artemisia, saltworts of three or four kinds, camel-thorn, dwarf tamarisk, and some thorny bushes called *karkanna*. These afford excellent pasture for camels, and the oxen and sheep fattened on them are said to thrive and improve in flesh better than on the hill pastures, which often produce fatal bowel complaints.

As we went along, I made an unsuccessful detour after a flock of coolan I had seen alight some way off to the right of our route, and came upon some immense herds of camels, oxen, and sheep, all grazing together in the vicinity of nomad camps scattered over the country. The sheep are all of the fat-tailed variety, called *gad* here and *dumba* in India, and appeared of large size and in excellent condition. They are shorn twice a year, and the wool fetches the nomad one rupee per sheep. The milk, cheese, and *curát* is valued at another rupee for each sheep, and a lamb at a third; so that the nomad's annual profit from his flock may be reckoned at three rupees per head of sheep he owns.

I passed close to several tents, and spoke to some of the men. They did not seem very well disposed, and stared at me rather savagely. Colonel Taj Muhammad, who accompanied me with three or four troopers, hurried me back to our party, saying these men were not to be trusted; and as our party was small, it was not safe to tarry long amongst them. His hint was not lost, and we soon left the savages to their native wilds, and speculations as to the booty that had escaped their clutches.

At a little short of half-way we halted a while at a mound near some Núrzai tents, whilst the baggage went ahead. At a mile to the north is the Nurullah Khush-

kába, so called on account of its aridity, the undulating tract being void of water. At about twelve miles north by west from the mound is the Girishk fort, and below it, on the Helmand, we saw the Dubrár mound, and on the plain to the west the Mukhattar mound, an isolated heap of ruins, marking the site of an ancient fort. The governor of Girishk is Muhammad Alam Khan, son of the late Saggid Muhammad Khan of Peshawar, and for several years a servant of the British Government in the Panjab. A messenger met us here from the fort, to say that the governor was absent in the Zamindáwar district collecting the revenue, or he would have come out to pay his respects to the General.

Whilst here, I took out my note-book to jot down a few memoranda of the road we had traversed, and the Saggid, seeing the movement, jocularly observed, "Now I know what you are going to write." "What?" inquired I, rather curiously. "People, savages—country, a desert waste; what else can you say?" he very aptly replied. "But I will tell you something much more amusing than anything you have got in your Kandahar book." This last allusion, I must confess, took me by surprise. I was about to ask where he had seen the book, when he anticipated the query. "Yes, we know all about it; and when the durbar at Kabul is dull, your book is produced, and sets them all a-laughing." "That's satisfactory," said I. "Ah!" he replied, "but you have been very hard upon our faults." "Come," said I, in self-defence, "I have not abused you as your writers habitually abuse us." "Well, no. The argument cuts both ways. Anyhow we are no better than you have painted us."

I asked how the book got to Kabul, and learned that it had been taken there by Cázi Abdul Cádir, to whom I gave a copy when he was a Government servant

at Peshawar. The Cázi had learnt English at the mission school in that frontier station, and, possessed of my book, was now the interpreter of its pages at Kabul. I attempted to explain that the book was not meant for Afghan readers, and the Saggid very good-naturedly helped me out of the difficulty by saying that his people were now accustomed to the hard words of foreigners by reading the English newspapers and other books brought to the country from India. He expressed astonishment at the freedom of criticism allowed to the press, and could not understand how any Government could exist under such uncontrolled discussion of its acts. "You people puzzle us entirely," said he. "No other Government would permit a public discussion of its acts, but you seem to court it. It is a very bad system, and encourages disaffection." We endeavoured to explain that the freedom of the press was characteristic of the British system of government, and that the channel thus afforded for the unfettered expression of public opinion was one of the greatest safeguards of the Government, and a powerful instrument in the maintenance of public order. "It may be so for you; you are the best judges of your own interests. It would not do for us. The Government would not last a day under such a system here." It was now time for us to be on our way again, so the stories we were to have heard were reserved for another occasion.

Our route continued south-west along the course of the river, the opposite bank of which was lined by a black cordon of closely-packed nomad camps. At six miles we came to Júe Sarkár, a little way off to the right of the road. It is a modern country-house, standing in the midst of its own gardens enclosed by high mud walls, and watered by a *kárez* stream. The late Sardar Kuhudil Khan built

this house as a country residence in 1846, after he had annexed the Garmsel to Kandahar. It is now occupied by his grandson, Gul Muhammad Khan, son of Muhammad Sadíc Khan, the torturer of M. Ferrier, as is so graphically described by that traveller in his account of his adventures in this country.

A little farther on are some hamlets scattered amongst the ruins of Lashkari Bazar, which originally formed a suburb of the ancient city of Búst, now lying some six miles ahead. From this point onwards, in fact, our path lay through a succession of ruins, with here and there patches of cultivation between the clusters of decayed mansions and towers, right up to the fort and citadel of Búst.

At a few miles from our camp on the river bank we passed a roadside shrine, and stopped at the cabin of a *faqír* in charge of it for a drink of water. It was perfect brine, from a small well hard by, yet the mendicant assured us it was the only water he used, and his sickly look and attenuated figure did not belie the assertion. His life of penance secures him the reverence of the nomads of the neighbourhood, and elicited marked respect from our escort.

We halted a day at Búst to rest our cattle and prepare them for the next march, which was to be a long one across the desert. The delay afforded us the opportunity to explore the rivers around. From the top of the citadel, which commands an extensive view, we found that they covered an area of many square miles on the left bank of the Helmand, and extended over the plain for seven or eight miles to the east and north. The citadel and fort form a compact mass of ruins altogether separate from the rest of the Búst city.

The fort is a long parallelogram lying due north and

south on the river's bank. The walls are very thick, and strengthened at short intervals by semilunar bastions or buttresses. On the inner face they bear the traces of chambers, and the top all round appears to have supported houses. At each angle is a very substantial circular bastion, except at the south-west angle, which is occupied by the citadel. This is a lofty structure on a foundation of solid red brick masonry, that rises straight out of the river bed, and is washed by its stream in the season of full flood. The highest point of the citadel is about two hundred feet above the bed of the river, and is run up into a square tower, used apparently as a look-out station.

From its top we got a very extensive view of the country, but could not see Girishk, though the fort of Nadali on the plain opposite to it was distinctly visible. A more dreary outlook than this station affords could be found in few countries. Beyond the strip of villages and cultivation on its farther bank, and the collection of hamlets and walled gardens in the angle of junction between the Helmand and Argandáb, nothing is to be seen but a vast undulating desert tract, limited towards the south by a bold coast of high sand-cliffs.

The southern portion of the fort, in which the citadel stands, is separated from the rest by a deep ditch some forty feet wide, and running east and west. The eastern half of this division is fortified against the rest of the fort, and contains the remains of several large public edifices. The most noteworthy is a fine arch built of red bricks set in ornamental patterns. The arch is of broad lancet shape, about sixty feet high in the centre, and fifty-four feet across from basement to basement on the level of the ground. The arch extends due north and south, and from the ornamental designs and Arabic cha-

racters on the façades fronting the east, it was most probably the portal of the principal mosque.

The western half of this division is occupied by a lofty artificial mound, on the summit of which stands the citadel. Through the whole depth of this mound is sunk a very remarkable well, closed above by a large cupola. The well is built very substantially of red brick and mortar, and is descended to the very bottom by a spiral staircase, which, in the upper part of the shaft, opens successively into three tiers of circular chambers, that look into the shaft through a succession of arches in its circumference. In each tier are four chambers circling the well, and communicating with each other by arched passages; and at the back of each chamber, away from the well shaft, is an arched recess.

The depth of the well is about 130 feet, and its diameter 18 feet. We found the bottom dry, and covered with a thick layer of débris, sticks, and rubbish. Some labourers were set to work to clear this away; but as at a depth of four feet there was still only débris, the work was discontinued, and we mounted up to the open air again. The well was evidently fed from the river by some subterranean channel, and its waters rose and fell with that of its stream, as was indicated by the different appearance of the bricks in the lowest part of its shaft.

The chambers opening on the well were no doubt used as a cool retreat in the hot weather; and that the well was used for the supply of the citadel is evidenced by the rope-marks worn into the bricks on the lower edge of the openings.

The rest of the fort interior extends away to the northward. Its area is covered with bricks and pottery, but shows no traces of buildings. It is of the same width as the citadel divisions, but six or seven times more in

length. The citadel rises out of the river bed; but the west face of the whole fort is separated from the river, which here makes a bend to the west, by an intervening strip of land. The whole fortification is surrounded by a wide ditch and covered way. There is a gateway in the east face, just beyond the interior ditch, separating the citadel from the rest of the fort, and there is another gate opposite to it, fronting the river. The citadel was entered by a small gate in the centre of its southern face. Each gateway is protected by outflanking bastions. Altogether, the place appears to have been a very strong and important frontier fortress, and commanded the approach from Sistan by Garmsel towards Kandahar.

The General got a party of workmen together, and made some small excavations in different parts of the citadel; but our stay was too short to admit of any extensive exploration of this kind. Several bits of glass and china of superior manufacture were turned up, and two or three "fire altar" Sassanian coins were also found. The china was of two different kinds: one, the common material with the familiar blue designs; the other a coarse-grained material, coated with a glazed crust of mother-of-pearl appearance, and pale lilac hue. Some fragments of glass goblets and bowls were found, and attracted our attention as being far superior to any manufacture of the kind now to be found in this or the adjacent countries, or India itself. One in particular I observed formed part of a large bowl: the glass was fine, clear, and thin, and ribbed with bands of a rich chocolate-brown colour.

Búst or Bost is the site of a very ancient city. Malcolm, in his "History of Persia," says it is identical with the ancient *Abeste;* and he states that in A.D. 977, when Sebuktaghín was at Ghazni, it was in the posses-

sion of one Tegha, who being expelled, applied to Sebuktaghín for aid, and was by him reinstated, on condition of paying tribute. Tegha failed to do so, and was consequently suddenly attacked by Sebuktaghín, the perfidious Tegha effecting his escape. This Sebuktaghín was a *ghulám*, or body-soldier of the refractory Bukhara noble Abustakín, who settled and founded Ghazni. At this period the Indian prince Jaipál was King of Kabul, and Kulif, the Sámání, was Prince of Sistan.

Erskine, in his "Life of the Emperor Babur," mentions that Búst was besieged, A.D. 1542, by the Emperor Humáyún, on his advance against Kandahar, with a Persian army, and the fort surrendered to him. Previous to this, in A.D. 1498, the same author states, the fort of Búst was captured by Sultan Husen Mirzá, Báikara, when he set out from Herat, his capital, against his rebel son, Khusran, at Kandahar. He was obliged, however, to retire from Kandahar, and to give up this fort; but he found in it supplies sufficient to provision his whole army, and enable them to retrace their steps comfortably.

Búst was finally dismantled and destroyed in A.D. 1738 by Nadir Shah, when he advanced against Kandahar on his way to India. In all these sieges, the fort alone, it appears, was occupied as a strategetical position; the city and suburbs had remained a mass of ruins, in much the same state as they are now, since the desolating invasion of Changhiz in A.D. 1222.

In the present century, Kuhudil Khan, having annexed Garmsel to his principality of Kandahar in 1845, had some intention of restoring the fort of Búst, and had commenced the repair of its walls. But the jealousy of Persia, and other troubles nearer home, put a stop to the work; and he died in 1855, before he could carry out his original design. The site is well placed to command

the approach through Garmsel, and is sufficiently near to afford efficient support to Girishk, twenty miles higher up the river on the opposite bank.

Our camp here was pitched right on the river bank, immediately to the south of the citadel. The channel is from 250 to 300 yards wide, between straight banks about twenty feet high ; but the stream at this season is only about eighty or ninety yards wide, on a firm pebbly bed. It was forded in several places opposite our camp by horsemen going across in search of fodder. The water reached the saddle-flaps, and flowed in a clear gentle stream. By the aneroid barometer I made the elevation of this place 2490 feet above the sea.

Whilst here, a courier arrived with our post from India, with dates up to the 1st February from Jacobabad. We now learned, for the first time, and to our no small surprise, that our party had been attacked, and our baggage plundered, by the rebel Brahoe on our way through the Míloh Pass. How the false report originated it was not difficult to surmise, considering the troubled state of the country at the time of our passage through it, and the readiness of the Indian newspapers to chronicle exciting news from the frontier states. A courier also arrived with letters for the General from Sir F. Goldsmid, dated Sihkoha, 2d February. His party had arrived there the previous day, after a trying march from Bandar Abbas, crossing *en route* a range of mountains on which the cold was as great as that we experienced in Balochistan, the thermometer sinking to 5° Fah. This courier, through ignorance of the route we had taken, proceeded by Farrah and Girishk to Kandahar, whence he was put on our right track, and hence the delay in his arrival.

20*th February.*—Culá Búst to Hazárjuft, forty miles. We set out at 6.45 A.M., and passing some villages and

and walled gardens, proceeded in a S.S.E. direction, along the left bank of the Helmand, which here divides into several channels, separated by long island strips. At three miles we came to the Argandáb, where it joins the Helmand, at a bend the latter river makes to the westward, opposite an abrupt sandhill bluff.

The angle between the point of junction of these two rivers is dotted with clusters of reed cabins, mud huts, and walled vineyards, belonging to different tribes, such as the Núrzai, Achakzai, Barakzai, Barech, Uzbak, and others.

The Argandáb, or Tarnak, as it is also called, flows close under the cliffs of the sandy desert to the south, and joining the Helmand at its sudden bend to the westward, appears to receive that river as an affluent, whereas itself is really the confluent. Its channel here is very wide and sandy, showing marks of a considerable backwater in the flood season. As we saw it, the Argandáb here has a shallow gentle stream, about forty yards wide, and only two feet deep in the centre. The water flows over a sandy bottom, and, like the Tarnak at Kandahar, is very turbid.

Beyond the river we rose on to the desert skirt through a gap in the sandhills, and then winding round to the S.S.W., proceeded over a dreary waste of sandhills and hollows. At a mile from the river the road divides into two branches. That to the right follows the course of the Helmand, and passes straight across ridge and gully, whilst that to the left sweeps round over an undulating sandy waste called Ním-chol, or "half desert," and at twelve miles joins the first at Gudar Burhana, where is a ford across the Helmand to the Záras district of Girishk.

Our baggage proceeded by the former route; we took the latter, and got a good view of the desert skirt. I made a detour of a few miles to the south in quest of

some bustard I had marked in that direction, and was surprised to find the surface covered with a by no means sparse jangal. There was a great variety of plants and bushes fit for fuel, and a thin grass was everywhere sprouting from the loose soil of red sand. A species of tamarisk called *taghaz*, and a kind of willow called *bárak*, were the most common shrubs. The latter is burnt for charcoal, which is used in the manufacture of gunpowder. The small species of jujube and a variety of salsolaceæ were also observed, but the great majority I did not recognise at all.

I could now understand the reason of this tract being the winter resort of the nomad tribes of Southern Afghanistan. It produces a more varied and richer vegetation than the wide plains and bleak steppes of the Kandahar basin, and the hollows between its undulations provide a shelter from the keen wintry blasts that sweep the plain country with blighting severity.

As far as the eye could reach, south, east, and west, was one vast undulating surface of brushwood thinly scattered over a billowy sea of reddish-yellow sand. I galloped some way ahead of my attendant troopers, and found myself alone on this desolate scene, with the horizon as its limit. Though the surface was scored with a multitude of long lines of cattle-tracks trending to the river, not a tent was to be seen, nor any living creature; even the bustard I was following vanished from my view. I reined up a moment to view the scene, and suddenly the oppression of its silence weighed upon me, and told me I was alone. A reverie was stealing over me, when presently my horse, neighing with impatience, broke the current of my thoughts, and turned my attention to the direction he himself had faced to. Appearing over a sandhill in the distant rear, I saw a horseman

urging his horse towards me, and waving his arm in the direction of the river. Not knowing what might be up, I galloped off in the direction indicated, and we shortly after met on the beaten track which had been followed by our party. An explanation followed, and he chidingly informed me that we had got too far away from the main body. "We ourselves," he said, "never think of going alone into these wastes. The wandering nomads are always lurking after the unwary traveller on their domain, and view him only as a God-send to be stripped and plundered, if not killed. God forbid that any evil should befall you. Our heads are answer for your safety." With this mild reproof, he proposed we should hasten on, which we forthwith did, and overtook our party in the wide hollow of Gudar Burhána. Beyond this we ascended a high ridge of sand, and turning off the road to the right, mounted one of the hummocks overlooking the Helmand, and alighted for breakfast at eighteen miles from Búst, and nearly half-way to Hazárjuft. Meanwhile our baggage with the infantry escort passed on ahead.

From our elevated position we got an extensive view of the great plain to the northward. Nádali and Calá Búst were indistinctly visible to the north and north-east respectively, and away to the west was seen the black isolated Landi hill called also Khanishín, the only hill to be seen in the whole prospect. Immediately below us flowed the still stream of the Helmand, and on its opposite bank lay the populous and well-cultivated tract of Záras. It is included in the Girishk district, and is freely irrigated from canals drawn of from the Helmand some miles above the position of Búst. Its principal villages are Khalach, Záras, Surkhdazd, Shahmalán, and Moín Calá; the last in the direction of Hazárjuft.

The air was delightfully pure and mild, the sky without a cloud, and the noonday sun agreeably warm. Our simple fare, cold fowl and the leavened cakes of wheat bread called *nán*, washed down with fresh water, was enjoyed with a relish and appetite that only such exercise and such a climate combined could produce. An attendant with a stock of cold provisions and a supply of water always accompanied us on the march, and we generally halted half-way on the march for breakfast on some convenient roadside spot. Our host, the Saggid, always joined us at the repast, and generally produced some home-made sweetmeats as a *bonne bouche* at the close of the meal. We enjoyed these *al fresco* breakfasts thoroughly. The cleanliness and excellence of the Afghan cookery made full amends for the want of variety in the fare. The simple food was, to my mind, far preferable and more wholesome than the doubtful compounds prepared by our Indian servants in imitation of the orthodox English dishes that commonly load our tables in India. In the roasting of a fowl the Afghan certainly excels. In their hands the toughest rooster comes to the feast plump, tender, and juicy, and with a flavour not to be surpassed. The secret lies in the slow process of roasting over live embers, with a free use of melted butter as the fowl is turned from side to side.

At one P.M., after a rest of an hour and forty minutes, we mounted our camels and set out again on our route. For an hour and a half we followed a beaten track across a billowy surface of loose red sand, and then passing a ruined hostelry called Rabát, entered on a firm gravelly tract, thickly strewed with smooth black pebbles, and perfectly bare of vegetation. We crossed this by a gentle slope down to the Hazárjuft plain, and at four P.M.

camped close on the river bank a little beyond a terminal bluff of the sand-cliffs bounding it to the south.

The Hazárjuft plain is a wide reach between the river and a great sweep southwards of the desert cliffs, and, as its name implies, contains land enough to employ a "thousand yoke" of oxen or ploughs. It is coursed in all directions by irrigation canals drawn from the river, and contains four or five fortified villages, around which are the reed-hut settlements of various dependent tribes.

Hazárjuft is the *jágír* or fief of Azád Khan, Nanshirwáni Baloch, whose family reside here in the principal village of the district. It is a square fort, with towers at each angle and over the gateway. The Khan himself resides at Kharán, of which place he is governor on the part of the Kabul Amir. The other forts here are held by the Adozai and Umarzai divisions of the Núrzai Afghans, who are the hereditary owners of the soil.

In all this march there is no water after crossing the Argandáb. Our infantry escort were much exhausted by the length of the journey, and fairly broke down some miles short of its end. We passed several of them lying on the roadside completely prostrated by thirst, and they were unable to come on till we sent out water to them from Hazárjuft. They had started with an ample supply for the whole march, but, with the improvidence characteristic of Afghans, had wasted it before they got half through the journey, and hence their sufferings.

The journey might be divided in two stages of eighteen and twenty-two miles, making Gudar Barhana on the river bank the halting-place. In the hot season this would be absolutely necessary, otherwise the long exposure to the burning sands would be destructive alike to man and beast. The elevation of Hazárjuft is 2360 feet above the sea.

The most remarkable features of the Hazárjuft plain are the wide extent of its cultivation, and the vast number of ruins scattered over its surface. Some of these are of ancient date, and others bear the traces of fortifications raised upon artificial mounds, but the majority are evidently merely the remains of the temporary settlements of the migratory tribes, who shift about from place to place according to their pleasure, or, as more frequently is the case, through force of feuds amongst themselves, and disagreements with the lord of the manor.

In examining the arrangement, size, and disposition of these crumbling walls, one sees that they differ only from the existing temporary settlements around in the loss of their roofs and fronts. These are formed of basketwork frames of tamarisk twigs, coated on the outside with a plaster of clay and straw mixed together, and are easily transportable, though the necessity for this is not apparent, as the material of which they are made is found in any quantity all along the river course.

Our next stage was fourteen miles to Mian Pushta. The road follows a S.S.W. course, and diverges somewhat from the river. It passes over a level tract of rich alluvium, everywhere cultivated, and intersected in every direction by irrigation canals, now mostly dry.

At three miles we passed the Amir Biland *ziarat*, ensconced in a tamarisk grove. It is dedicated to the memory of a conquering Arab saint, said to be a son or grandson of the Amir Hamza. Hard by is a village of the same name, and further on are the two little forts of Warweshán. On the plain around are scattered a number of hut settlements of the Núrzais. They are named after the chiefs by whom they were founded, or by whom they are now ruled. Two of these are named Muhammad Ghaus, and others are Aslam Khan, Lájwar,

Khan Muhammad, Fatu Muhammad, Sardar Khan, Abbasabad, &c. Each settlement comprised from 120 to 250 huts. Beyond all these is the Kushti village, and then Mian Pushta.

I struck off the road, and followed the windings of the river for some miles. Its northern or right bank rises directly into high cliffs, that mark the coast-line of the great Khásh desert. In all the extent from Hazárjuft to the Khanishín hill, the alluvium is all on the left bank of the river. The right bank in this course rises at once up to the desert.

On my way along the river, I crossed a succession of deep and narrow water-cuts running in a south and south-easterly direction. Some of them proved difficult to cross. The channel of the river is very wide, and is fringed on each side by thick belts of tamarisk jangal. This extends all along the river course into Sistan, and in some parts assumes the proportions of a forest. The river itself flows in a clear stream, about a hundred yards wide, close under the right bank. The bed is strewed with great boulders, and water-fowl of every kind swarm in its pools. I found an immense flock of pelicans, geese, and ducks all together in a space of a couple of miles. I shot two or three pelicans with No. 2 shot, but they carried away the charges without a sign of discomfort.

Turning away from the river, I came to a *ziarat* dedicated to Sultan Wais, or Pír Kisrí. It is held in great veneration here, and is shaded by a clump of very fine and large *paddah* trees (*Salix babylonica*), growing on the sides of a deep irrigation canal that flows by it.

From Mian Pushta we marched eighteen miles to Sufár. Our route was S.S.W. over a long stretch of corn-fields, interrupted now and again by patches of

camel-thorn, salsolaceæ, and other pasture plants. The alluvium here narrows considerably in width, and the desert cliffs approach to within a couple or three miles of the river. Shortly after starting, we came to the Abbasabad settlement. It consists of about a hundred huts of "wattle and dab," belonging to Adozai Núrzais. Some of the huts were formed of the wicker frames of tamarisk withes before mentioned, supported on side-walls, and closed by another at the rear; but most were besides thatched with a long reed that grows abundantly along the river's course.

A little farther on we passed a *ziarat* or shrine, shaded by a clump of trees, close under the desert bluffs to our left. High up in the perpendicular face of one of these cliffs we observed a row of three tall arched openings. They appeared of regular formation, and no means of approach were traceable on the cliff, nor could anybody tell us anything about them. At about mid-way on the march we passed the turreted and bastioned little fort of Lakhi. Around it are ranged a number of thatched-hut settlements of the Adozai and Alizai Núrzais. Each settlement, of which there were five or six, is protected by its own outlying towers. Each settlement consists of from thirty to forty huts, ranged on each side of a wide street, and in each the towers stand, one at each end of this.

I struck off the road here, and followed the river course for some miles. Its bed is nearly a mile and a half wide, and covered with tamarisk jangal, camel-thorn, and reeds. I found some herds of black cattle and a few camels at graze, and noticed, by the drift sticking to the trees, that the hot-weather flood of the river must be at least twelve feet above its present level, and fill the whole channel. Water-cuts and weirs occur at frequent

intervals, and water-mills are found on most of them; but they are only worked in the cold season.

Gun in hand (for I had been shooting wild-fowl along the river), I entered one of these wicker cabins, out of curiosity to see the interior, and found three men coiled up in their felt cloaks or *khosai*, lazily watching the working of the mill. Neither of them moved more than to turn his eyes on me with a blank stare, and my *salám alaikum* only drew on me a harder gaze. "Have you no tongue?" said I, addressing the semblance of humanity crouched nearest the entrance, as his uplifted eyes and dropped jaw confronted me. A simple nod answered in the affirmative. "Then who are you?" This loosened his tongue. "Pukhtún," said he, boldly. "What Pukhtún?"—"Núrzai." "What Núrzai?"—"Adozai." "What Adozai?"—"Sulemán Khel." "Where do you live?"—"There," with a jerk of the head in the direction of the river, utterly indifferent as to whether he were right or wrong. "What 's that you are grinding?"—"Wheat."

This was enough for me, and I paused to give him an innings, the while looking from one to the other. Neither volunteered a word to my expectant glances; so with a *Da Khudáe pa amán* (to the protection of God), Afghan fashion, I left them to their indolent ease and stolid indifference. Proceeding some way, I faced about to see if either of them had been moved by curiosity to come out and look after us. Not a bit of it; they had not moved from their comfortable lairs.

This incident filled me with surprise, because these men could never have seen a European before, considering we are the first who are known to have visited this portion of Garmsel. I expressed my astonishment to Colonel Taj Muhammad, who had accompanied me,

observing that the stupid unconcern of the millers had surprised me much more than my sudden intrusion upon their retreat had incommoded them. He explained their impassibility on the ground of their being mere country bumpkins. "Besides," said he, glancing at the *chogha* or Afghan cloak I wore (for though we were walking, the morning air was sufficiently cold to render such an outside covering very acceptable), "from the way you went at them about their tribes, they most likely took you for a Kabul Sardar." However flattering the allusion, it did not satisfy my mind; and farther on in the march, after we rejoined the main party, we met another instance of the boorish independence characteristic of the Afghan peasantry.

As we passed their several settlements, the people generally crowded to the roadside to view our party, and we usually gave them the *salâm*, without, however, eliciting any reply. On this occasion the crowd, lining each side of a narrow roadway, were quite close to us; and as they took no notice of our *salâm*, the Saggid remonstrated with them for their want of civility, and gave them a lecture on the sin of neglecting to reply to such salutation. His harangue made little impression, and, for the most part, fell upon deaf ears. One man did say *Starai ma sha*, equivalent to our "I hope you are not tired," and his neighbour stretched out his fist with a significant cock of the thumb, and an inquiring nod of the head, a gesture which amongst these untutored people is used to signify robust health and fitness, but the rest did not even rise from their squatting postures.

They were hardy-looking people, but have repulsive features, and are very dark complexioned. Some of their young women we saw were fairer and comely, but

the old dames were perfect hags, wrinkled and ragged. Their dress is of a coarse home-made cotton called *karbás*, and consists of a loose shift and trousers, the latter generally dyed blue. The wealth of these people consists in corn and cattle. The former is exported in large quantity across the desert to Núshki and Khárán for the Balochistan markets.

Our camp at Sufár is close on the river bank. Throughout the march the country is covered with ruins, which exceed the present habitations in their number and extent.

From Sufár we marched fourteen miles to Banádir Jumá Khan, where we camped on the river bank. During the first half of the march our route was south-west away from the river, across a wide alluvial tract, which extends eight or ten miles southward before it rises up to the desert border, here forming a wide semi-circle of low undulations, very different from the high cliffs on either side of it. During the latter half of the march our route was west by south to the river bank.

At about five miles we came to the extensive ruins of Sultan Khwajah, in the midst of which stands a lofty fortress larger than that of Búst. On the opposite or right bank of the river, crowning the top of a prominent cliff, is a solitary commanding tower of red brick, now apparently deserted and in decay.

At five miles farther on we came to Banádir Tálú Khan, a poor collection of some hundred and fifty wattle-and-dab huts, in the midst of ruins of former habitations, and vineyards without vines. There are several of these *banádir* (plural of the Arabic *bandar*, a port or market-town) on this part of the river, each distinguished by the name of its presiding chief or that of its founder.

There is considerably less cultivation in this part of the country, and a large portion of the surface is a saline waste covered with camel-thorn and saltworts. The irrigation canals too are met at more distant intervals. The river bed here is fully a mile broad, and is occupied by long island strips of tamarisk jangal, abounding in wild pig, hare, and partridge.

From our camp, looking due south across the *banádir* reach or bay of alluvium, we got a distant view of Harboh hill in the sandy desert. It has a good spring of water, and is on the caravan route from Núshki to Rúdbár. Straight to our front, or nearly due west, is the Khanishín hill or Koh Landi, so named from the villages on either side of its isolated mass.

So far we have had fine sunny weather since leaving Búst, and the air has been delightfully mild and fresh. The crops are everywhere sprouting, and give the country a green look. But the absence of trees (except the small clumps round distant *ziarats*, and the jangal in the river bed), and the vast number of ruins, tell of neglect and bygone prosperity, and are the silent witnesses to centuries of anarchy and oppression, that have converted a fertile garden into a comparatively desert waste.

24th February.—Banádir Jumá Khan to Landi Ishácczai, fourteen miles. The country is much the same as that traversed before, but the desert cliffs rapidly approach the river, and considerably narrow the width of the alluvium on its left bank, and finally slope off to the high sandy ridge that, projecting from Koh Khanishín, abuts upon the river in lofty perpendicular cliffs, and turns its course to the north-west.

At a few miles from camp we passed over a long strip of perfectly level ground, covered to redness with

little bits of broken pottery, but without a trace of walls or buildings. Beyond this, at about half-way on the march, we passed the Baggat collection of huts, occupied by Popalzais. I struck off the road here down to the river, and was surprised to find it much wider and deeper than in any part of its upper course as far as we had seen of it. The Helmand here appears quite navigable, and flows in a broad stream, in which are several small islands, covered with a dense jangal of tamarisk.

On the opposite or right bank, the desert cliffs, hitherto abutting direct on the river in its course from Hazárjuft, now recede from it, and leave a gradually expanding alluvium, on which are seen corn-fields, villages, and huts, and extensive ruins. In a northerly direction, beyond this alluvium, extending as far as the eye can reach east and west, is a vast undulating desert waste. It is called Shand, or "the barren," and is continuous with the deserts of Khásh and Kaddah. The whole tract is described as without water, and but scantily dotted with jangal patches. It is drained by a great ravine (mostly dry except in the rainy season) called Shandú, which empties into the Helmand opposite Khanishín. Vast herds of wild asses, it is said, are always found on this waste, which in the hot season is unbearable to any other animal.

Immense numbers of wild duck, geese, cranes, herons, and pelicans were feeding on the river and in the pools along its course. I stalked close up to a large flock of the last, and fired into the crowd. Several hundreds rose heavily and flew off, but two were observed to flag behind, and presently alight lower down the river. Borrowing the rifle of one of my attendant troopers, I followed these, and shortly after found them in a pool with necks craned on the alert. Covering the nearest

at about eighty yards, I pulled an uncommonly hard trigger, and, to my disgust, saw the mud splash at least sixteen feet on one side of the mark. The weapon was a double-grooved rifle, manufactured at Kabul on the pattern of those formerly used by the Panjab Frontier Force, and had an ill-adjusted sight. It is to be hoped, now that the Afghans are our friends, that this was an exceptional specimen of their armoury.

Returning from the river, we joined the main party near a dismantled castle called Sultan Khan. It had been neatly and strongly built, and was destroyed, we were told, many years ago by the Barechis in some intestine feuds with their partners in the soil of Garmsel. It is a pitiful fact that the ruins in this country, from their extent, and superior construction, and frequency, constantly impress upon the traveller the former existence here of a more numerous population, a greater prosperity, and better-established security than is anywhere seen in the country; whilst the wretched hovels that have succeeded them as strongly represent the poverty, lawlessness, and insecurity that characterise the normal condition of the country under the existing regime.

Near the castle is a *ziarat*, and round it an extensive graveyard, which attracted attention on account of the blocks of white quartz, yellow gypsum, and red sandstone covering the tombs—all entirely foreign to the vicinity. They had been brought, we learned, from the Karboh hill. As we rode along in front of the column, a startled hare dashed across our path ahead. My gun was at "the shoulder" at the time (for I generally carried it in hand for any game that might turn up on the route), but it was instinctively brought to "the present," and fired on the instant. "*Ajal!*" sighed the

Saggid, "who can resist fate?" "*Yarrah khkár dag-hah dai*" ("Verily, this is sport"), exclaimed Colonel Taj Muhammad, his eyes sparkling with delight. "*Bárak allah!*" ("God bless you!") cried a trooper as he urged forward to pick up the victim from the road. Poor puss was quite dead as he held her aloft, and many were the congratulations on the accident that averted an ill omen.

The Afghans are extremely superstitious, and blindly believe in all sorts of signs and omens. Amongst others, a hare crossing the path of a traveller is considered a prognostic of evil augury, and the wayfarer always turns back to whence he came, to start afresh under more auspicious conditions. On this occasion the sudden termination of the career of poor puss short of crossing the road was hailed as a happy event, and averted the misgivings of our scrupulous attendants as to what the future held in store for us.

Our camp was pitched close to Landi, a compact little square fort with a turret at each angle. Under the protection of its walls is a hut settlement of about one hundred and fifty wattle-and-dab cabins, occupied by Isháczai Afghans. The weather was dull and cloudy throughout the day, and at sunset a storm of wind and rain from the north-west swept over our camp.

From Landi Isháczai we marched twenty-two miles to the river bank, a little beyond Calá Sabz, on its opposite shore, our course being nearly due west. At the third mile we cleared the cultivation and entered on the undulating tract sloping up to the sandy ridges extending between the Koh Khanishín and the river. The young corn, we observed, was blighted yellow in great patches by the frosts and snows of last month. Snow seldom falls on this region, but this winter having been an unusually

severe one, it lay on the ground to the depth of a span for several days.

The land as it slopes up to Khanishín, which is fully twelve miles from Landi, is very broken, and stands out near the hill in long lines of vertical banks, that in the mirage assume the appearance of extensive fortifications. The hill itself is perfectly bare, and presents a succession of tall jagged peaks, that extend five or six miles from north to south. Between it and the river the country is entirely desert, sandhills and ravines succeeding each other for a stretch of twenty miles from east to west. The surface is mostly covered with a coarse gravel or grit of dark reddish-brown stones, but in some parts it is a loose sand of bright orange-red colour, and in others is caked into rocks of granular structure. Here and there are scattered thick jangal patches of desert plants similar to those seen on the route from Búst to Hazárjuft. They afford excellent camel forage, and a good supply of fuel. At about half-way we crossed a deep and wide hollow running down to the river on our right; and passing over a second ridge of sandhills, at sixteen miles crossed a very deep and narrow ravine of pure red sand, without a boulder or stone of any kind to be seen in it. Beyond this we halted on some heights overlooking the river for breakfast, the baggage meanwhile going ahead.

The weather was all that could be desired. A clear sky, mild sun, and pure fresh air proved the climate to be delightful at this season. A few gentle puffs of a north-west breeze, however, now and again raised clouds of sand, and showed us what it could do in that way at times.

The view from this elevated position is extensive, but it is dreary in the extreme. The sandhills, backed by the bare, scorched, black mass of Khanishín, are all that

the southern prospect presents, whilst to the north across the river lies the wide waste of the Khásh desert.

Below us winds the Helmand with its islets of tamarisk thickets, and beyond it spreads the alluvium, which here shifts from the left to the right bank, with its cornfields, villages, and ruins. The chief village is Khanishín to the eastward; the hut settlement of Núnábád lies to its north, and Dewalán to its west. Further westward, near the ruins of a large fort, is the Ghulámán hamlet, and then Calá Nan (Newcastle), beyond which is the Calá Sabz ruin, so named from the green colour of the mound on which it stands. The whole of this tract belongs to the Isháczai Afghans, amongst whom are settled a few Baloch families of the Mammassání or Muhammad Hassani tribe; and even now, in its best season, wears a poverty-stricken, parched, and neglected look.

Proceeding on our way, we reached the river bank in an hour and a half, and camped midway between Calá Sabz and Taghaz, both on its opposite bank. This march resembled that from Búst to Hazárjuft. Not a sign of habitation or water exists after clearing the Landi cultivation, nor did we meet a single traveller, nor see any sign of life in all the route.

There is another road along the river bank to the midway hollow above mentioned, but it is difficult on account of ravines and the broken nature of the ground. A third route goes round by the south of Koh Khanishín, but it is six or seven miles longer, and without water.

There is no habitation on our side of the river, nor cultivation, nor even a ruin; and what could be the use of the Calá Sabz, or Green Fort, on its commanding mound immediately on the river, it is difficult to

imagine. Our supplies were all brought from the villages on the opposite shore, and our people forded the river stirrup-deep, or up to the girths, in several places. The river here is about two hundred yards wide, and its banks are low and overgrown with tamarisk jangal.

The evening set in cloudy, and at nine o'clock a heavy thunderstorm with lightning and rain burst over our camp. It lasted an hour and a half, and then swept southwards to the sandy desert.

Hence we marched twenty-three miles to Mel Gudar, and camped on the river bank, near the ford of that name, just where the river makes a deep bend to the south. Our route generally was S.S.W., now and again striking the river at its successive turns or bends to the south.

For the first six or seven miles the ground was very deep in mud, owing to the rain last night. In some parts our cattle sunk up to the knee in it, and could with difficulty extricate themselves from the mire. The road from the south of Koh Khanishín here joins the main route, and as the land rises in that direction, it is dry and firm under foot.

At about half-way, we struck the river at one of its many bends, directly opposite the fort of Malakhan, which occupies a high mound overlooking its right bank. It is advantageously situated, and has a lofty citadel. During the British occupation of the country, it was held by a detachment from the Kandahar garrison. The citadel was destroyed and the fortifications demolished in 1863 by the Amir Dost Muhammad, because he found that every governor sent to this frontier post became rebellious on the strength of the fort. The place is now quite deserted, and offers another sad instance of the too

truthful saying, that everybody who comes here destroys something and goes his way.

A couple of miles or so beyond this, at another bend of the river, we came to the hut settlement and cultivation of Deshú, belonging to the Isháczais. It is the only habitation we have met with on this side the river since leaving Landi. A little farther on we passed through some widespread ruins of towers and houses, the ground between which was red with bits of broken pottery. In some parts it was perfectly flat, and gave out a hollow sound as our horses tramped over the surface, conveying the idea that we were riding over concealed vaults. At two miles on from this, we camped on the river bank, opposite a dense jangal of tamarisk and willow trees.

Our next stage was thirty-six miles to Landi Barechí, where we camped on the high bank of the river close to the fort. Our route, at first S.S.W., led through a wild uninhabited jangal tract for the whole distance. The road is a well-beaten track, and passes across a succession of deep bays or reaches of spongy saline alluvium, and for the most part follows the course of the river, the short bends of which now and again come close up to the road.

The reaches are separated from each other by promontories of the desert, which stretch forward up to the river bank. At about eight miles we came to a solitary mound on the Abdullahabad reach or bay. It is called *Sangar*, or "the breastwork," and is said to be the first place seized from the Núrzai by the celebrated Baloch freebooter, Abdullah Khan, after whom the country is now named. This notorious robber was the chief of a small party of Sanjaráni Baloch nomads, who

are said to have come here from the Kharán and Núshki districts in the troublous times following Nadir Shah's devastating march through the Garmsel in 1738. He pitched his tents here, and, with the aid of other Baloch mercenaries of different tribes, succeeded in ousting the Núrzai possessors after many encounters. During his lifetime he held all that portion of the left bank of the river extending from Mel Gudar to Rúdbár, as the summer pasture tract of his tribe, and annually, on the return from winter quarters in the desert, contested its possession with the Núrzai. Many tales are told of his prowess and lawlessness, but in a country where every man is a born robber, and acknowledges no other right but that maintained by might, his deeds of valour resolve themselves into petty successes against, and gradual encroachments on, the lands of individual nomad camps numerically weaker than his own, and distracted by intestine feuds that prevented a combination to expel the intruder. The plundering habits of these Baloch, and their constant hostilities with the neighbouring Afghan nomads, led to the abandonment of the Garmsel route from Kandahar to Sistan, and the country soon became a den of thieves, and the refuge of outlaws of all the surrounding provinces, who attached themselves to the Baloch chief as mercenaries and dependants.

From Sangar our path veered to the S.W., and, after a few miles, passed round the projecting desert cliffs by a narrow path between them and the river brink, and brought us into another bay or reach, called Khwájah 'Ali, from a mound and ruined tower in the midst of a sheet of broken pottery that covers its surface to redness. Whilst riding over this, we observed, as on a former occasion, that the ground gave a hollow sound under our horses' feet, as if it were vaulted. Excepting the tower

mentioned, not a wall nor vestige of any other building was discoverable above the flat surface.

Having come sixteen miles, we halted at this tower for breakfast; and took the opportunity to satisfy ourselves that there was really nothing to see here, except that the river bank on this side is high and vertical, and its wide bed full of tamarisk and willow forests, on the edge of which are the fresh prints of wild pig in the soft soil.

From this alluvial bay we passed into a similar one, by a very narrow path between the river brink and the abrupt cliffs of a promontory of the desert. It is called Dashti Hadera, or "the plain of the graveyard," and is about two miles across. Here, too, though no traces of walls or mounds were visible, the surface was coloured by the bits of red tile and glazed pottery thickly strewed over the level ground. Beyond this we rose on to the next promontory of the desert, and passed an extensive graveyard, from which the plain below derives its name.

From this elevation, the flat surface of which is a coarse gravelly sand bare of vegetation, we got a wide view of the desert, extending away to the south, as far as the eye could reach, in an unbroken waste of sandy undulations. We descended the farther side of this by a long sandy gully, and entered on the Pulálak alluvium, a reach similar to those already passed, but wider.

Here we passed the ruins of the Pulálak huts, destroyed in the spring of 1869 by the usurper Muhammad 'Azim Khan, when he took this route to Persia, after his defeat at Ghazni in January of that year by pre-Amir Sher 'Ali Khan. Pulálak is said to be an abbreviation of Pul 'Ali Khan (the bridge or boundary of 'Ali Khan); but who 'Ali Khan was we could not clearly learn.

The ex-Amir, Muhammad 'Azim Khan, halted here to

recruit his band of followers on the young growing crops and what supplies the place afforded. But meanwhile Sharíf Khan, the Nahroe Baloch of Sistan, being suspicious of 'Azim's designs, suddenly marched from Burj Alam, surprised 'Azim, and put his followers to flight. He then received the fallen Amir as a refugee, and assisted him as far as Mashhad on his way to the Persian capital. The unfortunate Barechi settlers, having been plundered by each in turn, left the country to join their clansmen in Shorawak, and their homesteads are now almost obliterated in a wilderness of jangal.

Beyond this, rounding some desert cliffs, we entered the alluvium of Landi Barechí, and camped on the high river bank close to the fort. There is a good deal of cultivation here, and the level ground is dotted all over with little sandheaps topped by clumps of tamarisk, or bushes of a species of caroxylon and other salsolaceæ, which have been the cause of their formation. We had not seen this appearance before, and the number and size of these mounds attracted our attention. They are formed by drift sand collecting about the roots of scattered bushes, and gradually, as its quantity increases by fresh additions, raising them above the general level of the plain. Some of these mounds are eight or ten feet high, and of a blunt conical form. Landi is a small square fort, with a turret at each angle, and around it are some two hundred wattle-and-dab huts of the Barechi Afghans. The river here flows in two or three streams between long island strips of tamarisk jangal.

I shot a large blue-backed and black-headed seamew here. The gull fell into the stream, and drifted to the opposite shore; but my servant, a native of Kandahar, retrieved it, fording the river with the water up to his neck. The stream was very still, and of clear blue colour. Here

also I got specimens of the black cormorant, a grebe, and a small diver much resembling it, and another bird with similar features, but with a serrated bill, hooked at the tip.

The weather was more or less cloudy all day. Towards sunset rain set in, and continued in a steady soaking drizzle far into the night. The evening temperature outside the tent was 54° Fah. By the aneroid, I calculated the elevation of this place at 1950 feet above the sea.

At the last stage, one hundred and fifty of our cavalry escort were sent back to Kandahar; and at this place we parted with our infantry escort and their commandant, Colonel Taj Muhammad, Ghilzai, as we are soon to enter Sistan territory, now in the possession of Persia.

I was sorry to lose the Colonel's society, for he generally accompanied me on my deviations from the beaten track, and proved himself a very agreeable and intelligent companion. He obtained his promotion for good service at the siege and capture of Herat in 1863 under the late Amir Dost Muhammad Khan. He is one of the most intelligent and least prejudiced Afghans of his class I have met with, and in our rambles together gave me a fund of information regarding his people and the portions of the country he had visited. Like all Afghans, he was a keen sportsman, and with a common smooth-bore military musket, of the now nearly extinct Brown Bess pattern, made some remarkably good "pot shots" at eighty yards, considering his ammunition was home-made gunpowder, and roughly-rolled pellets cut from pencils of lead.

He took leave of us with many sincere expressions of regret at our separation, and committed us to "the protection of God" with all sorts of good wishes for our

welfare and prosperity. Towards those he treats as his friends, the Afghan can make himself very agreeable, and in this phase his character is of the most winning kind. His straightforward friendliness, his independent bearing, and freedom from flattery and obsequiousness, coupled with unbounded hospitality and unceasing attention to the wants of his honoured guest, are sure to captivate the stranger, and blind him to the fact that he has a dark side to his character, and that a very trivial circumstance may serve to disclose it.

However, on this occasion, as the even tenor of our friendly relations was happily unmarred by a single *contretemps*, it is not for me in this place to enlarge on the proverbial fickleness of their character, nor to disclose the wolf that lurks in the Afghan heart. It is enough to speak of our friends as we find them; and in this light it is but fair to say, nothing could have excelled the genuineness of the cordiality that marked our conduct towards each other during our association on this march through the province of Kandahar.

28*th February.*—Landi Barechí to Rúdbár, seventeen miles; route, W.S.W. After clearing the Landi cultivation, our path led under some projecting desert cliffs, on the most prominent of which are the ruins of a small fort, which, from its elevation, must command a wide prospect of the country on the east and west.

Beyond this, crossing the Rúdbár canal, we entered a wide gulf or reach of level land. It is now a perfect wilderness; and in its centre, on a low mound, are the ruins of Lát Calá, of the history of which nobody could tell us anything. The surface around is strewed to redness with bits of broken pottery, bricks, and glazed ware. Farther on, our path still skirting the desert cliffs on our left, we passed the ruins of Karbásak or Garshásap,

and then veering towards the river on our right, crossed a bare pebbly tract down to Rúdbár, where we camped.

The pebbles on this tract, which is formed by the sinking of the desert in low undulations towards the river, are smooth, and close-set in the clay soil. They are of a dark brown colour, and in the morning sunlight shone with the lustre of frosted silver. Not a particle of vegetation was seen in this tract, though beyond it, in the vicinity of Rúdbár, there is a considerable extent of corn-fields, and a scattered growth of tamarisk and other trees.

CHAPTER VII.

29*th February* 1872.—Rúdbár consists of two small forts, about half-a-mile apart, on the left bank of the Helmand, which here flows in a full deep stream nearly two hundred yards wide. The channel, which is about a mile wide, is fringed with a dense jangal of tamarisk and willow trees bordered by belts of tall reeds.

Each of the forts is surrounded by its own collection of hut settlements and corn-fields. One of them belongs to Imám Khan, who resides at Chárburjak, on the right bank of the river, lower down its course; and the other to Kamál Khan, who resides at Bandar, still farther west, on its left bank. Both these Baloch chiefs are brothers of the late Khan, Jahán Khan of Chakansúr. Their father was the late Ján Beg, son of the celebrated Abdullah Khan, Sanjaráni, whose history I have already referred to. Their permanent location in this country only dates from the early years of the present century, when, about the year 1810, they were settled here by the Barakzai king-maker, Fata Khan, as a makeweight against his rival neighbours the Núrzais. This remarkable man, there is little doubt, aimed at supplanting the tottering Saddozai dynasty on the throne of Kabul in his own person. As Wazir of Shah Mahmúd, he not only brought in these Baloch colonists as a military element in support of his cause on this frontier of the kingdom, and on the border of his own patrimonial estate at Nadali near Girishk, but appointed his own

brothers to the charge of the most important provincial governments of the country.

His cruel death in 1818, after his successful repulse of the Persians from Herat, though it cut short his own career, precipitated the downfall of the Saddozais, and hastened the transfer of the government to his own family; and thus was matured the scheme of his life, which the Fates had decreed he himself should not accomplish.

Rúdbár is reckoned the limit of Garmsel to the west. Farther on in that direction, the desert wastes on either side bounding the valley of the Helmand gradually diverge from each other, and the country opens on to the plain of Sistan. That portion of the Helmand valley called Garmsel, or "the hot tract," extends from Hazár-juft to Rúdbár, a distance of one hundred and sixty miles from east to west. It is bounded on the north and south by vast desert wastes, noted for their aridity and destructive heat during six months of year. Towards the river they form high coast-lines of sand-cliffs and bluffs of shingle, that confine its valley within well-defined limits.

Owing to the peculiar arrangement of these lateral barriers, it is difficult to assign a general width to the valley, nor is it easy to describe it as a whole. The most notable features of the valley are its division into two nearly equal parts by the Koh Khanishín, and the transference of the alluvium from one bank to the other on either side of it. Koh Khanishín itself stands an isolated mass of sharp, bare, black, jagged peaks about five miles south of the river; but between it and the stream, on which it abuts in tall cliffs, is interposed an elevated strip of the sandy desert some sixteen or eighteen miles across, as already described.

To the eastward of this point the alluvium is all on the left or south bank, and presents a succession of wide bays or reaches, bounded in that direction by corresponding sweeps or curves of the desert coast-line. On the opposite side there is no alluvium whatever, the desert cliffs rising straight from the river bank.

To the westward of Khanishín the alluvium is mostly on the right or north bank for some fifty miles. It then shifts to the opposite bank for about the same distance, and beyond Rúdbár lies on both sides of the river. The width of the alluvium varies considerably between one and six miles in the different successive reaches or bays.

The valley everywhere bears the marks of former prosperity and population. Its soil is extremely fertile, and the command of water is unlimited. It only requires a strong and just government to quickly recover its lost prosperity, and to render it a fruitful garden, crowded with towns and villages in unbroken succession all the way from Sistan to Kandahar.

The present desolation and waste of this naturally fertile tract intensify the aridity and heat of its climate. But with the increase of cultivation and the growth of trees these defects of the climate would be reduced to a minimum, and the Garmsel would then become habitable, which in its present state it can hardly be considered to be.

Under a civilised government there is not a doubt the Garmsel would soon recover its pristine prosperity, and then this part of the Helmand valley would rival in the salubrity of its climate that of the Tigris at Baghdad. It has been, as history records, and as its own silent memorials abundantly testify, the seat of a thriving and populous people, and it still possesses all but the main requisite for their restoration. When the curse of

anarchy and lawlessness is replaced in this region by the blessings of peace and order; then Garmsel will once more become the seat of prosperity and plenty. But when can one hope to see such a revolution effected in this home of robbers and outlaws? The advancing civilisation of the West must some day penetrate to this neglected corner, and the children's children of its present inhabitants may live to hear the railway whistle echoing over their now desert wastes.

From Rúdbár we marched twenty-eight miles to Calá Ján Beg, and camped in a tamarisk forest on the river bank. Our route was nearly due west along the course of the river, and for the whole distance passed through a quick succession of ruins, the remains of ancient forts, cities, and canals.

The first ruins are those of Pushtí Gáo, close to Rúdbár. Amongst them is traced the course of a great canal called Júe Garshasp. It is said in ancient times to have irrigated the southern half of the Sistan plain, but the accuracy of this statement is doubtful, for we failed to trace it in our onward progress. The main channel is said to have run from Rúdbár to Fákú under the name of Balbákhan, and to have given off numerous branches on either side.

Between these ruins and the river bank a long strip of corn-fields extends for seven or eight miles, and amongst them are scattered numerous sand-drift hillocks, topped by clumps of tamarisk trees. Beyond this cultivation the country between the desert cliffs and the river bank presents a bare undulating surface closely set with smooth brown pebbles. Here and there between the successive ruins are low ridges dotted with tamarisk trees, now budding into foliage.

At about the sixteenth mile we came to the ruins sur-

rounding Calá Mádari Pádsháh, or "the foot of the king's mother." The fort itself is in fair preservation, and appears to be of much more recent date than the ruins that surround it. It is said to have been the residence of the mother of Kai Khusran. At about eight or ten miles beyond it are the extensive ruins of Kaikobad, a city named after its founder, the first of the Káyání sovereigns, and subsequently said to have been the capital of Kai Khusran. Two tall dilapidated towers, at some three hundred yards apart, are pointed out as the site of his palace, and the fenestered curtain walls projecting from them towards each other give an outline of the palatial court. These ruins are all of raw brick, and wear a very ancient look, and prove the astonishing durability of the material.

I diverged from the route to explore the ruins, and on the uneven surface covering decayed walls and the foundations of houses found fragments of red brick, but saw none of the arched roofs so common in the more modern ruins, or those of the Arab period. The palace extended quite to the river bank, and across it on the opposite shore are the ruins of a compact town round a central fort raised on a low artificial mound.

The ground about these ruins, which extend for five or six miles along the river bank, is very uneven, being thrown into irregular ridges and mounds by accumulations of sand upon the débris and foundations of walls, &c. Owing to this superficial covering we saw no broken pottery or glazed ware, as in the other ruins previously passed.

A few miles farther on we came to our camping-ground, an open strip of sand in the midst of a belt of tamarisk forest, close to the river and the Calá Ján Beg. This last is a ruined fort of much more recent date than

the ruins of Kaikobad, and derives its present name from the fact of the Baloch chief, Ján Beg, having been on one occasion driven to seek shelter within its protecting walls from the attacks of the Núrzais, whose lands he had invaded. He seems to have made good his stand in this country, for his family now occupy all the river tract from Rúdbár to Chakansúr.

Ján Beg was the son of the Abdullah Khan, Sanjarání Baloch, previously mentioned, and appears to have rivalled his father, whom he succeeded, in the violence and lawlessness of his character, and the obstinacy with which he contested the Núrzais for the possession of the pasture tracts on this part of the Helmand course. He left three sons, named Khan Jahán, Nunwáb, and Islám, who at the commencement of the present century had spread themselves over the alluvium on the right bank of the river from Ishkinak and Husenábád up to the vicinity of Chakansúr, as *palás-nishín*, or "dwellers in booths." The *palás*, or booth, is a movable cabin formed of wickerwork walls, and thatched with reeds. Each of these chiefs had a number of dependants or subjects, consisting of various Baloch tribes. Their number amounted to several hundred families, and they were collectively styled *tawcí*, or bondsmen. They cultivated sufficient land for the supply of their immediate wants, and for the rest, were mainly occupied in tending their herds of camels and flocks of sheep, in plundering their neighbours, and in protecting themselves from reprisals.

Their permanent location in fixed abodes in this country dates from the time (1810) that the Wazir Fata Khan, Bárakzai, settled the three brothers in their respective possessions, namely Khán Jahán at Chakansúr, Nunwáb at Bandar Fákú, and Islám at Rúdbár. These places are now held severally by their respective sons,

Ibrahim, Kamál, and Imám, and they constitute an important party in the political divisions of Sistan. They hold all the lower course of the Helmand from Rúdbár to its termination in the Hámún, and the country on its right bank up to Kaddah and Khásh, formerly possessed by the Núrzais. They are a very turbulent and predatory people, and habitually plunder their neighbours, and often organise raids across the Persian frontier. The best commentary on the life these people lead was afforded by the reply of a native to some inquiries I made regarding the perilous adventure of M. Ferrier in Garmsel with Assad Khan in 1845, so graphically described in the twenty-seventh chapter of his "Caravan Journeys." "Who cares to know," said he, "what befell a wandering Farangi in this country a century ago? Adventures such as you describe are of daily occurrence here, and nobody takes note of them except the actual participators."

1*st March.*—Calá Ján Beg to Chárburjak—fourteen miles; route, west by north, over a bare gravelly desert, dotted here and there by the ruins of forts and towns for the first half of the distance. Beyond this the surface is undulating, and covered with brown pebbles that glistened with a silver lustre in the morning sunlight. On the alluvium on the opposite side of the river we observed the ruins of a large fortified town called Ishkinak. Around it are the huts and fields of the Zabardast Balochi. Westward of this are the cultivation and settlements of Hasenábád, belonging to Imám Khan of Chárburjak. They extend in a long narrow strip of cornfields and huts between the river and the desert cliffs bounding the alluvium to the northward.

At about half-way we were met by Sher Muhammad, son of Imám Khan. He was attended by three or four

horsemen, and came to excuse his father's meeting us on the plea of ill-health, but invited us on his part to camp at his fort. We acquiesced in the arrangement, and he consequently hurried back with the intelligence. Meanwhile we dismounted at a roadside mound to breakfast and let the baggage get on ahead. From this elevation we got a view of the top of the Sarhadd mountains, three days' journey across the desert due south. These mountains are described as well watered from numerous springs, and the valleys as covered with groves of the date-palm. To the west of them is the Baloch district of Ishpí, in which rice is largely cultivated. Away to the distant west we saw, but indistinctly, the Nihbandán range, running north and south, and closing the Sistan basin in that direction.

From this we went on along the river bank, and camped on a sandy spot in its wide channel, directly opposite Chárburjak, on its farther bank. This is a square fort, with towers at each angle, and is a recent construction, dating only from the time of Muhammad Razá, the Sarbandi chief of Sihkoha. The river is here easily forded stirrup-deep at this season. Soon after our arrival in camp Imám Khan sent us a feast cooked in Baloch fashion, but as we had but recently breakfasted, we were not yet prepared to appreciate the merits of the savoury-smelling *corma* and *kabáb*, nor to test the digestibility of the three different kinds of bread loading the trays, viz., fritter, pancake, and muffin.

We here learned that Sir F. Goldsmid's party had been in this vicinity some days ago, and an Afghan priest describing their doings to the Saggid, not knowing that his Pushto speech was understood by us, said in a ludicrously plaintive voice, "Yes! the Farangis have been here, and they have gone. They mounted

to the top of every high mound, and put telescopes to their eyes. They have seen all our country inside and out, and made a map of it. God only knows what will become of us now!" A quiet hint from his friends warned him, and he took care not to commit himself further, and presently retired to the Saggid's tent.

Later in the afternoon the Saggid came to our tent to consult with the General as to the advisability of removing the couriers we had left behind at the several stages through Garmsel, for the transmission of our posts to and from India, as he had received reliable information that our reception in Sistan would not be an agreeable one. He considered that the safety of these men, in their isolated posts on the Sistan border, would be jeopardised, and thought it best that they should be removed to the more direct and safer route from Kandahar by Girishk to Farrah. A messenger was consequently despatched with orders for the several troopers to return to Kandahar, and by the same opportunity a letter was sent to the governor of that city, instructing him of the new arrangement made for our posts. Of the correctness of the Saggid's views, and the wisdom of his action in this matter, we later on had proof, as will be mentioned in its proper place.

From Chárburjak letters were sent off to Mír Alam Khan, Persian governor of Sistan, and to Mirza Másúm Khan, Persian commissioner, announcing our arrival, and intimating our proposed route to Burj Alam. At the same time, owing to the disquieting reports we had received, it was decided to send on our spare tents to the next stage at Bandar.

We ourselves followed next morning, but we had hardly cleared out of camp, when one of our men returned to say that the Kárwánbáshí, Sálih Muhammad,

in charge of our *peshkhájurd*, or advanced camp, had been stopped by an armed party from the Bandar fort, and ordered to return, but the Kárwánbáshí refusing, the camels were halted till he could hear from us. The messenger was sent back with orders for him to remain where he was, and we proceeded. Presently after, another horseman was seen approaching us in hot haste. He turned out to be a Persian, and came on the part of Kamál Khan of Bandar, to apologise for the *contre-temps* regarding our baggage, and to assure us of a welcome reception. With the national volubility and hyperbole, he almost persuaded us that we would be treated as honoured guests, and be furnished freely with all our camp required. It was not long, however, before our doubts were settled; for though camped close under the fort, the chief neither came to see us, nor showed us the smallest attention, whilst, on the contrary, supplies were withheld on one pretence and another till late in the evening, and then doled out sparely at their own price.

Our route from Chárburjak was nearly due west, and for the first few miles crossed a sandy tract covered with dwarf mimosa and tamarisk. The caked sand and clay on this tract was evidently a deposit from the river floods. Between this and the desert cliffs is a strip of bare pebbly ground. We followed this for some miles along the course of a very ancient canal, which formerly, it is said, irrigated Trákú, and all the country to the town of Zirrah. It is called Júe Karshasp or Garshasp, but appears to be quite distinct from the canal of that name met at Rúdbár. It is said to have been excavated by Garshasp, the grandson of Jamshed, and ancestor of Rustam. It is of considerable size, and is furnished with numerous cross-cuts opening into the main channel

at a certain height, and meant to carry off the overflow in seasons of the river flood.

Beyond this we passed the ruins of a small town, and then came to the Bandar or Trákú canal, a recent cutting dating from the time of Muhammad Razá, Sarbandi. We crossed it by a rustic bridge, and turning to the left through some tamarisk jangal, rose on to the desert, which here projects towards the river in a succession of tall cliffs.

From this high ground we got an extensive view of the Sistan plain and the alluvium on the right bank of the river, which gradually widens to the northward into the proportions of a plain. The Helmand is seen to make a sudden turn at Bandar, and to flow north-west in a very tortuous course. A drearier prospect one could not wish to see. To the south is the great sandy desert, whose bare surface cuts the horizon as does the ocean. To the west lies the wide plain of Sistan, a flat, bare, pebbly tract, the uniformity of which is only broken by the ruins that here and there stud the surface. To the northward winds the Helmand, in a wide channel crowded with tamarisk forest. Beyond the river stretches a widening strip of alluvium, the characteristic features of which are its conspicuous ruins, backed by desert cliffs, which here too cut the horizon in one vast line of unbroken waste. Descending from this elevated strip of desert, we entered on the Sistan plain, and at a mile or so came to Bandar Fort, where we camped. Bandar, for this country, is a strong place. It consists of a fort within fortified walls, which are loopholed, and furnished with bastions for a flank fire. The whole place is very neatly built, and appears to be of recent construction, the outer walls particularly.

From this we marched fourteen miles, and camped in

tamarisk jangal on the river bank near a clay bridge called Daki Dela. After clearing the corn-fields round the fort, our route was northerly along the river course, by a beaten track on the verge of a wide, level, bare pebbly plain, that extends many miles to the westward, without any sign of habitation or cultivation.

On the opposite side of the river, the alluvium up to the desert cliffs appears entirely deserted, and for some miles is covered with the ruins of an extensive city called Mír. At our camp the river flows in two streams, divided by a long island strip of tamarisk jangal. Both streams were forded by our horsemen to collect the *kerta* (a species of cyperus) grass as fodder for our cattle. It grows here in abundance, and is the principal fodder of the cattle in this country.

During the afternoon, Shamsuddín Khan, the son of Sardar Ahmad Khan of Lásh, arrived in camp. He is a fine young man, and, as one result of his visit to India in 1869 (he was in attendance on the Amir Sher Ali Khan when he went to Amballah for his conference with Lord Mayo), has adopted the European style of dress. The Saggid, alluding to documents, &c., for the business on hand, asked him if he had come fully prepared. "Oh, yes," said the young chief eagerly, his eyes brightening at the query; "we are all ready." "How do you mean?" inquired the Saggid, doubtful from his manner as to whether he had been properly understood. "We have sharp swords, and keep our powder dry," was the unexpected reply. The several different tribes occupying this country have been so long at enmity against each other, that they never think of moving across their respective borders unless provided to meet all contingencies, and consequently, in the present state of excitement amongst them, his question elicited the most natural reply.

Whilst our visitors were with us, the Saggid's servant reported the arrival of a messenger from Kamál Khan at Bandar. The Saggid went out to see him, and presently returned with the packet of letters we had despatched for India by courier from Calá Ján Beg, and the following story :—Our courier had been attacked and plundered by robbers beyond Rúdbár. They took his horse and arms from him, but did him no personal injury. He walked back with the packet committed to his charge tied round his waist under the clothes, and on arrival at Bandar, was so foot-sore and fatigued that he could not come on. Under these circumstances he revealed himself to Kamál Khan, and made the packet over to him for transmission to us. Such was the story, and we considered ourselves fortunate in the restoration of the packet; for at Chárburjak we were informed that Sir F. Goldsmid had left letters to await General Pollock's arrival, but that the Persian official there had sent them to the Persian Governor at Nasirábád. That the letters had been left we subsequently satisfied ourselves, but as to what became of them we could never learn.

From Daki Dela we marched twelve miles, and camped on the river bank at a place called Ghabri Háji, from the tomb of some pilgrim in the vicinity. Our route was nearly due north, across a continuation of the plain traversed yesterday. At about half-way we came abreast of the ruins of Calá Fath or Calá Pat, on the opposite side of the river, and a little farther on we crossed the track of a very ancient canal, called Yakháb. It starts from the river below the ruins, and strikes across the plain in a westerly direction. The ruins of Calá Fath are very extensive, and present some very large buildings, besides the lofty citadel which occupies the sum-

mit of an artificial mound in their midst. The ruins extend over several miles of country, and are backed by the cliffs of the Khásh desert. They are mostly of clay and raw brick, but red bricks of a large size are also said to be found amongst them. The city was the capital of the last of the Kayáni kings, and is said to have been finally sacked and dismantled by Nadir Shah about a century and a half ago. The citadel has been recently repaired, and is now garrisoned by a party of Persian troops, but there is no cultivation, nor other habitation in the vicinity. It is merely held as a military outpost, and its occupation as such only dates from the last month.

A little beyond this, emerging from a belt of tamarisk bordering the river, a party of fifty or sixty horsemen, all gaily dressed, and bristling with armour of sorts, came across the plain towards us. The Saggid forestalled our inquiry by the intimation that they were some Afghan chiefs who were come to welcome us. With this satisfactory assurance we proceeded, and presently, arrived at a few paces from each other, all by common consent dismounted simultaneously. Then followed a very confused and promiscuous greeting, with an amount of cordiality and friendship quite unlooked for, considering we were perfect strangers. Our friends seemed to act on the principle of "shaking a hand wherever they saw one," and, doubtless, under opposite conditions, would be equally ready as the proverbial Irishman to "hit a head wherever they saw one." At all events, from their martial array, they were quite prepared to act on a contingency rendering such a measure necessary.

We were no sooner dismounted than we were enveloped in a crowd of Afghans and Balochi, welcoming

anybody and everybody in their own rough and homely fashion. One seized my hand with a "*Jor hastí?*" ("Are you well?" or, "How d'ye do?"), but before I could reply it was grabbed by another with a similar interrogative; from him it was snatched by a third, who was quickly deprived of its possession, and cut short in his "*Kúsh ámadíd*" ("You are welcome," or, "Glad to see you") by a burly fellow elbowing his way through the crowd with great bustle and roughness. He merely gave a tug and a toss, with "*Saggid kúm dai?*" ("Which is the Saggid?"), and passed on; and I hurried after him, glad to escape from my surroundings—a true case of "save me from my friends."

The Saggid presently restored order, and introduced us to Sardar Ahmad Khan, Isháczai Afghan, the lord of Lásh; and Sardar Ibráhím Khan, Sanjaráni Baloch, the lord of Chakansur or Chaknásúr; and Mardán Khan, Núrzai Afghan of Farrah, formerly Yar Muhammad's agent in Sistan. The usual compliments were then quickly exchanged, and mounting, we proceeded on our way together. Presently we struck the river bank, and following its course opposite a long island strip for a mile or two, camped on the verge of the hard gravelly desert plain, close to a belt of tamarisk jangal.

In the afternoon Sardar Ibráhím Khan called on the General, and took his leave of us, as he crosses the river to be amongst his own people at night. He is a thorough barbarian, slovenly in dress, loud in voice, and rough in manner. He has coarse repulsive features, and a very unhealthy sallow complexion, the results of a long life of dissipation and debauchery. His coming out to meet us is, we are told, a great compliment, for he is very proud of his independence, and has never done as much honour to any Afghan king or other potentate.

He is very popular amongst his people on account of his liberality and courage, but is said to be subject to fits of insanity, brought on by the excessive abuse of *charras*, or the resin of Indian hemp, an intoxicating drug which is a very fruitful source of madness in India.

On these occasions he shuts himself up in a tower of his fort with one of his wives and a couple of African slave boys for a week at a time, his only guards being a number of savage dogs he keeps for hunting the wild boar. His son, Khan Jahán Khan, now has the management of his affairs, as the father's fits of dissipation quite unfit him for the conduct of his business. The immense quantities of snuff he uses quite muddle his brains in the intervals when they are not deprived of intelligence by drugs. We did not discover until after he had left us that he was the actual murderer of the unfortunate Dr Forbes when he was his guest in 1842.

I learned from an eye-witness, now in the service of the chief of Lásh (whose mother is the murderer's sister), that the murder was quite unpremeditated, and was committed in a freak of intoxication. It appears that on the eve of the melancholy occurrence a party had been arranged for shooting wild-fowl on the lake in the morning. The host and murderer, with a party of attendants, accompanied their guest to the lake, and all appeared in very good spirits and on the best terms. The wild-fowl were found too far from the shore, and the *túțin*, or bulrush float used by the fowlers, was brought forward to carry Dr Forbes nearer to the game. Gun in hand, says my informant, the confiding stranger took his seat on this raft, and was being poled out into the clear water by one of the attendants. When only a few yards from the shore, the murderer and his victim were conversing merrily; and the latter, laughing, observed that

the unsteady motion of his little bark did not promise him a successful bag. The former, now suddenly changing his tone, took his loaded rifle from an attendant, and pointing it at Dr Forbes, laughingly exclaimed he would make a very good target. The doctor, not expecting any foul play, laughed, and said no doubt he would. At this moment the fatal trigger was pulled, and the unfortunate gentleman rolled into the water, shot through the heart. Seeing what he had done, the murderer, Ibráhím Khan, is described as having burst into a paroxysm of insane laughter at this tragic conclusion of the stranger's career. His body was soon after recovered from the water, and the valuables removed from it. The corpse was then decently interred on the river bank, and no indignity was perpetrated upon it, as has been stated by some parties.

The murderer, it appears, had been in a more or less intoxicated state for some days previously, and, at the time he committed the crime, was under the influence of *charras* or *bhang*. Such is the account I received; and though it in no way exculpates the criminal, it divests the tragedy of much of the horrors the commonly current accounts had coloured it with.

The weather at this stage was altogether different from any we previously or subsequently experienced in this country. During the day the sky was overcast with clouds, and the air was still and oppressive. Towards sunset a strong south wind set in, and at nightfall increased to a gale for an hour or so. On its subsidence the atmosphere became close, warm, and oppressive, and a host of musquitoes and midges invaded our tents. In the flood season they are said to be a perfect plague in the vicinity of the river and the shores of the lake.

Our next stage from this was nineteen miles to Burj

'Alam. The route, at first northerly along the river course, gradually diverged from it to north-west by a beaten track across a bare pebbly tract. The country presents nothing worthy of note, except the wide extent of ruins on the opposite side of the river during the first few miles out from camp. Beyond them to the east the prospect is intercepted by the high coast of desert cliffs, and in the opposite direction, across the wide plain to the west, is bounded by the Nihbandan range of hills, which to the south are connected with the Sarhadd mountains, and to the north with those of Farrah.

Our new friends, Sardar Ahmad Khan and Mardán Khan, with their respective followers, accompanied us on the march. The former was handsomely dressed in the Afghan costume, and mounted on a richly caparisoned Persian horse. He joined us shortly after we had started, and galloping up from the rear, saluted the General with a very well pronounced "Good morning," and merrily observed that he had learned the expression from Conolly more than thirty years ago. He spoke in high terms of that officer's merits, and said their friendship, when he was here, was like that of brothers.

He recounted various excursions he had made in Sistan with Captain Conolly and Sergeant Cameron, and expressed his pleasure in again making the acquaintance of Englishmen after so long an interval. He said he viewed us in the light of brothers, and hoped we would consider him in the same relation, and in token of this new bond of brotherhood, he stretched out his arm and shook hands with us. His manner is very quiet, and with somewhat of the polish of the Persian about it, and was strangely in contrast with that of his countryman, Mardán Khan, who, with the characteristic roughness of the Afghan soldier, was loud and blustering in his manner,

and, though thoroughly well disposed, never hesitated to "call a spade a spade," regardless of time and place.

This latter character was in the service of Prince Kamran at Herat at the time that Major Todd was political officer there. He was subsequently Yár Muhammad's revenue collector for Sistan, and had his headquarters at Kimak, where he married a Sistani lady, who now resides at his home near Farrah. Later, he took service with the Amir Dost Muhammad, and was appointed commandant of a party of Farrah irregular horse, a post he still holds under the Amir Sher 'Ali. He bears the character of being a brave and successful soldier, and is said to have been engaged in most of the fights on this frontier during the past half-century, and carries the scars of some of them on his body. Though now an old man, he is remarkably active, and rules his men with a well-dreaded sternness.

We found both our companions incredibly ignorant of everything outside their own country and its immediate politics, and even with these they were not so well acquainted as one would expect them to be. Their knowledge of geography was of the scantiest; of history they knew simply nothing; whilst of European politics their ideas were of the haziest kind. "Who are these Prúss who have defeated the French?" said Mardán Khan. "Outside Islam we only know of three nations to the west—the English, French, and Russians. But now people talk of the Prúss: who are they?—where do they come from? They must be a great nation if it is true they have defeated the French."

Having been enlightened on these points as much as he was capable of being enlightened, he exclaimed with provoking simplicity, "I see! they are neighbours of the Rúss. Of course they are the same nation."—"Not at all,"

said I in explanation. "Then they are brothers, for their names are evidently of one stock." It was useless arguing the point, for any further explanation would only have been received with suspicious incredulity, so the conversation was turned. "But tell me," said my companion confidingly, still hankering after the old topic, "is it true that there is such a country as *Yangi dunyá?*" (the New World). "There is no doubt about it; we call it America," said I. "And is it true that they have rebelled against your government, and set up an independent government of their own?"—"That's an old story now," I replied. "Then it is true. Where do they live? Is their country near Farangistan?"—"You would not understand if I told you," said I, tiring of the interrogation; "their country is straight under our feet on the other side of the world." "*Lá hanla!*" ("No!") exclaimed my astonished friend, opening his eyes to the widest with a stare of disbelief. Here, glad of the opportunity, I galloped off to the General's party, which had reined up a little in advance to look around for a site to breakfast on.

Some water-worn banks a little to the right of our route were selected. From them we looked down on a beautifully clear blue sheet of water in a deserted channel of the Helmand delta. It was evidently very shallow, for cranes found a footing far from the shore, and pelicans along its edge moodily watched the approach of unwary fish. This channel is upwards of a mile wide, and its banks, which consist of firm clay some sixty feet high, are marked by successive rows of water-lines, at no great height above the present pool, thus indicating that the channel carries a flood at certain seasons. The banks on both sides are bare of vegetation, and are much furrowed and worn by surface drainage.

We had come twelve miles before we halted, and proceeded four more before we descended by a gently sloping gully into a wide circular basin, which formerly had formed a back-water in connection with the deserted channel above mentioned, but which now presented a dry, fissured, and caked suface of bare clay, set around by water-marks rising in lines one above the other to a height of some twenty feet.

We went across this basin towards a clay bluff projecting on to it. As we approached near it a large party of horsemen, much to our surprise, suddenly shot out from behind its cover towards us, and reined up to await our arrival. They formed the *isticbal* party sent out by Sharíf Khan, Nahroe Baloch, to meet and conduct us to his fort of Burj 'Alam.

The party was headed by his son 'Ali Muhammad, a handsome youth dressed and shaved in the Persian fashion, and consisted of about sixty horsemen, all armed with rifles slung at their backs. It was the first we had seen of the Persians, for most of the party belonged to that nation, and they certainly looked a fine body of men, and were well mounted. The ceremony was very well arranged, and the sudden dash forward from their concealment was managed with good effect, as it was meant to do.

As we came up, 'Ali Muhammad moved his horse forward, and, with a slight inclination of the body said, "*Ahwál shuma?*" ("How do you do?"). The greeting was responded to in the same manner and language, and then both parties, mingling into one, proceeded without further ceremony or delay.

Passing over a ridge of bare pebbly ground, from which Kimak Fort was seen four miles to the north-east, we descended into a great hollow, level with that just left

behind. It extends for many miles to the south-west as a low-lying plain, or lacustrine hollow, bordered to the south by a coast-line of high clay banks. This is the Hámún of Sistan: the name in Persian signifies a level desert plain. We crossed it in a northerly direction, and passing an extensive graveyard, a little farther on came to our camp, pitched close under the walls of Burj 'Alam.

The graveyard occupies the base and slopes of a clay ridge on the left of our path, and dates only from the commencement of the present century. A couple of domed mausolea on the crest of the ridge mark the tombs of 'Alam Khan, the founder of the Nahroe colony in Sistan, and of his son, Dost Muhammad, the brother of the present chief, Sharíf Khan. The other graves are different from any we have hitherto seen. Over each grave is built an oblong platform or block, lying north and south. The material is raw brick neatly plastered with clay, and on the upper surface is the figure of a coffin. The dimensions of these structures are apparently uniformly six feet by three high, and two and a half wide. They appeared carefully kept, and gave the cemetery a neat look.

This is the first village we have come to in Sistan proper, which it seems is limited to a very small area. We were much surprised, on leaving camp this morning, to hear our companions say that we should enter Sistan by-and-by, being under the impression that we had already done so on passing beyond Rúdbár. In reality however—so we are told—we only entered Sistan to-day where the *isticbal* of Sharíf Khan met us; the country beyond to the south being called, on the east Trákú, and on the west Zirrah, which sinks rapidly to the south. In this restricted sense Sistan is a very small country, and only comprises the low-lying lacustrine basin, or Hámún,

that lies between the Naizar on the north and the cliffs of the Zirrah desert on the south, the delta of the Helmand on the east, and the Sarshela ravine on the west.

During the afternoon, Sharíf Khan, the chief of the Nahroe Baloch settled in Sistan, paid us a visit. He is a tall, well-built, handsome man, and was richly dressed in the Afghan fashion. His manners are polished for Baloch, the result evidently of his residence at Tehran, where he has spent several years as a political prisoner or *détenu*. He is now, under the rule of the Persians, the most important, though by no means the most influential, chief in the country. In deference to his Persian masters he has adopted the Shia doctrine, and most of the tribe have in this particular followed the lead of their chief. He has also married his daughter to Ali Akbar, the eldest son of Hashmat-ul-Mulk Mír 'Alam Khan, the Persian governor of Sistan. The Nahroe Baloch, of whom Sharíf Khan is the present representative, are comparatively modern settlers in Sistan. About the beginning of the present century, the Kayáni chief Bahrám Khan, being pressed by the Sanjaráni Baloch on the one side, and the Sarbandi and Shahrki on the other, called in the aid of the Nahroe Baloch under their chief 'Alam Khan, and settled them on the south borders of Sistan as a check upon the encroachments of the others.

'Alam Khan was the son of Mirza Khan, chief of a shepherd tribe dwelling in the Nahroe hills north of Bampúr. He came into Sistan with no great gathering, and was granted the lands of Gód, Calá Nan, Burj 'Alam (restored from ruins and named after himself), and two or three other villages, as military fiefs. 'Alam Khan, on the subsequent decline of the Kayáni family, declared his independence, and on his death was succeeded by his son, Dost Muhammad. This latter died in 1857, and

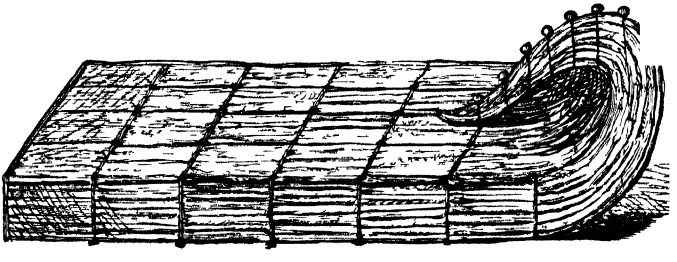
was succeeded by his brother, Sharíf, the present chief. They were all Sunni Muhammadans, and exercised a subordinate influence on the politics of the country till the arrival of the Persians. But now, since their occupation of the country, they have become Shia Muhammadans, and attained to the foremost importance in the country, though numerically they are the weakest party.

Burj 'Alam is a walled town built on the slope of a high clay bank that here bounds the hollow to the northward. The walls are crenated and loopholed, but, from the situation of the town, the houses in the upper part are commanded over the walls from the low ground to the east. The houses are crowded together in a confused jumble of domed huts, and are overlooked by the citadel, built on an eminence at the north-west angle. The town is said to shelter four hundred families.

6th March.—Burj 'Alam to Wásilán, six miles. After clearing the walled vineyards and corn-fields about our camp, we came to a great canal flowing westward, and in parts overflowing, between raised banks at twelve or fourteen feet above the level of the plain. We followed it a short distance, and then turned to the north-east, over a promontory of high clay banks covered with pebbles similar to those seen in the desert, and again descending to the low land, picked our way amongst bogs and pools to the banks of the canal at Kimak, halfway on the march. The pools, formed by overflowings from the canal, were swarming with all sorts of wildfowl. Disturbed at their busy morning meal by our approach, they rose in dense clouds that darkened the sky, and, whirling overhead in rapid flights, filled the air with an uproar of discordant sounds, heard far above the shouts, curses, and imprecations of our camp-followers,

as they floundered and struggled in the passage of the canal.

We ourselves were ferried across on the native *túṭín*, to a narrow landing directly under the walls of the Kimak fort, at a spot where, for a short distance, the stream flows flush with the plain, though both above and below it it flows between raised banks considerably higher than the general level of the surface. The *túṭín* is a very clumsy raft or float, constructed of bulrushes bound together in bundles, and strengthened by tamarisk stakes. It derives its name from the *túṭ*, or rush, of which it is made, and is about eight feet long by three wide, and one and a half deep. The ends of the bundles of rushes are at one end coiled over and pegged to the upper surface by long wooden pins, and the body of the raft is strengthened by cross ribs of tamarisk above and below, fastened together through its substance by cords passing between the bundles, which are arranged lengthways, whilst the form is secured by long tamarisk staves fastened at the sides, as is shown in the annexed sketch.



There were only two of these rafts at the ferry. Ourselves and boxes were ferried across on them on successive trips, and the rest of our camp and escort forded the stream a little lower down, where the water reached to the necks of the men. Each raft could only accommodate two passengers and two small boxes, with one man to

pole it across the stream. We each sat upon a box, and the weight of all sunk the raft to the level of the water. We were obliged to sit perfectly still in the centre to prevent a capsize, a catastrophe that was more than once threatened in our short transit by the clumsy movements of the wherryman with his pole. After landing on the other side, we passed round the walls of Kimak, and through some small orchards and vineyards to the banks of the canal a little farther up, where we halted to watch the passage of our baggage and escort.

The whole of our party comprised about a hundred and thirty horsemen, sixty or seventy camels, more than half that number of mules and baggage-ponies, and about thirty footmen. The camp equipage was more or less wetted, and several mishaps occurred, but no serious loss or accident; and in three hours and a half the whole of our party were safely across the Kohak canal, or, as it is here called, Mádariáb (mother of the water). Where we crossed, the canal is between thirty and forty yards wide; it is said to have an average depth of nine feet here, and is only fordable in two or three places. The ford at Kimak was very narrow, and most of the mishaps that occurred were owing to the cattle getting off the direct line into deep water.

The Kohak canal, as its name implies, is taken off the Helmand above a weir thrown across the river at that place. In reality it drains the river into its own channel to the extent of diverting its stream, for very little, at this season, escapes over the river, and the river bed beyond it is a mere succession of stagnant pools, that cease far short of reaching the pool, or lake marsh, into which the Helmand in its ordinary course disembogues. The canal traverses the plain westward, and gives off some large branches, which are unfordable.

From these an intricate network of smaller canals branch off, and ramify the whole country south of the Naizar, fertilising it to an extraordinary degree.

Kimak is a small village enclosed within crenated and loopholed walls, and protected by a citadel at the south-west corner. It is the residence of Sherdil Khan, the brother of Sharíf Khan of Burj 'Alam, and is now held by a party of Persian soldiers. They certainly seem to have established themselves here pretty strongly, for I observed that they thrashed the people very freely right and left, with an amount of submission on their part I was not prepared to see. The fact is, Persian rule is so stern, and their punishments so severe and so horribly cruel, that an unusual amount of oppression and violence are endured by the serfs before they are goaded into resistance.

From Kimak, leaving the ridge of clay mounds called Atashgah half a mile to our left, we proceeded north-eastwards, and at three miles camped at Wásilán, a small village, around which are some Baloch huts. Our route all the way led over corn-fields flooded with water, and we had to pick a path to avoid the deep mud.

Due north of our route the Koh Khojah hill appeared on the horizon, an isolated block of black rock of no great height. The general aspect of the country is a vast gently undulating plain, diversified here and there by low sandhills, and bounded towards the east by high desert cliffs, that now and again come into view.

The authorities at Wásilán made themselves as disagreeable to us as they could short of actual violence. They not only would not provide our camp with supplies themselves, but prohibited the people from selling to us, and went so far as to turn back some loads of fodder already purchased and being brought to camp by some

of our camp-followers. The Saggid's Afghans could not brook this conduct on the part of those who stood in the position of hosts towards us, and a scuffle ensued between them and some of the village people. The occurrence was at once seized upon by the opposite party as a subject of complaint; but the Saggid, to cut the matter short, had his four followers soundly flogged on the spot, and returned the loads of straw purchased in the village. Our cattle for the day were put on short rations, eked out with what they could pick up on the plain. This is our disagreeable recollection of Wásilán. A more agreeable remembrance is kept alive by the appropriate name of the place, which signifies in Arabic "the meeters." It was here we had the pleasure of meeting Major Ewan Bean Smith, who arrived towards the close of the day from Sir F. Goldsmid's camp at Banjár, and learning of the safety and welfare of their party; for though letters had been passing between our camps, we had on more than one occasion heard disquieting rumours concerning the security of our friends. So we met at last, notwithstanding the "rude bar" in our progress through the Garmsel; and, to turn from the serious to the frivolous, gained full credit for what had been unanimously conceded as the most telling of the riddles exchanged between the two camps, the one in question having been propounded to explain the cause of delay in our arrival in Sistan.*

Next day we marched twelve miles to Nasírabad, and camped on the plain north-west of the fort. Our route was northerly, over a level country, more or less extensively cultivated, and freely irrigated by numerous water-cuts. The soil is light and sandy, and is described as extremely

* *Riddle.* What is the cause of delay in our joining you in Sistan?
Reply. There is a Rúdbár in the way.

fertile in the production of cereals and melons. In some parts the land seemed to have received a deposit from river floods.

At about midway on the march we crossed a strip of waste land, the surface of which presented a very remarkable appearance from the action of a high wind that prevails here at certain seasons. The soil, which was a compact sand, had been scooped into long wind-swept refts, all from north-west to south-east. The edges of these were as clean and sharp as if they had been dressed with a chisel, and on passing the hand across them, left the conviction that they could inflict an ugly wound on the shins of the unwary traveller stumbling against them. A few tamarisk bushes dotted the surface here and there, with small patches of camel-thorn and saltwort, and by their bend and direction of branches evidenced the violence and persistence of the wind that had so cut the surface into striæ.

Beyond this we passed some ruins of villages and a miserable hamlet called Kandúrak. It is only interesting in a historical point of view as being the scene of a desperate fight and terrible slaughter of the Shahrki rebels in the time of Shah Tymúr, Durrani. Towards the close of Shah Ahmad's reign, the Shahrki tribe, in the perpetual revolutions characterising the normal condition of this province during centuries past, had, by continual encroachments on the lands of their neighbours the Kayáni, contrived to gain the ascendancy in the politics of the country, and Shah Tymúr, on succeeding to the throne of Afghanistan, just a century ago, appointed their chief, Mír Beg, governor of the province. Mír Beg, Shahrki, was killed about the year 1777 in a petty fight against the Núrzais at Rúdbár, and the government of Sistan was then restored to the hereditary

chief, Malik Bahrám, in subordination to Tymúr's governor of Lásh, an Afghan noble named Zamán Khan, Popalzai. This joint authority failed in its purpose, and the Shahrki, rebelling against the Kayáni, defied the authority of the king. Tymúr consequently sent a force of Afghans under Barkhurdár Khan, Achakzai, to reduce them to subjection. This he did by the victories of Kandúrak and Mykhána, the ferocity and slaughter attending which are commemorated in the popular songs of the country to the present day.

Farther on from Kandúrak, at about a mile from Nasírabad, we were met by an *isticbal* party of sixty horsemen, headed by Haji Asad Khan, before whom were led a couple of *yadak*, or fully caparisoned horses. He holds the rank of *yúzbáshí* or captain in the service of the Prince-Governor of Khorassan, by whom he has been deputed to this country expressly for the purpose of carrying back a reliable account of the real state of affairs here. Major Smith introduced us successively, and the Yúzbáshí on each occasion nearly bowed himself over the horse's side. There was a momentary pause, and then the Persian, with the national facility, freed himself of some choicely-expressed commonplaces, which, under the circumstances, would have been better unsaid, for they sounded so much like irony. He hoped we had made a pleasant journey and found all we required, when he well knew we had not. He hoped we should find everything to our comfort and satisfaction, when he was certain we should not; and so on. The ceremony of introduction over, we went on together in a mixed crowd to the south face of the fort, and then along the side of its ditch up the west face to our camp, pitched on the plain a few hundred yards beyond the north-west corner of the citadel.

In the course of the afternoon, Khan Baba Khan, Hazárah of Herat, now in the service of the Amir of Ghazn, the Persian governor of this country, called for *hálpursí* (a ceremonial visit to inquire of our health and welfare). He is a stout middle-aged man, with decided Tatar cast of features, but, contrary to the type, has a long bushy beard and mustaches. His manner was cold and impassible, and he performed his part of the ceremony in a thoroughly perfunctory manner.

Aware, probably, that we were unprepared to receive his visit with the requisites demanded by Persian etiquette, he was accompanied by some attendants bearing his *calyán* or smoking apparatus, and the essentials for brewing tea. A slight hint paved the way to their introduction, and our visitor puffed and coughed, and coughed and puffed, until it was time for him to depart. From his stoutness of body, the effort appeared more laborious than any pleasure the habit could afford him, for he seemed sometimes almost to lose his breath, whilst beads of perspiration stood upon his forehead. I had never before nor since seen the *calyán* produce such marked effects.

His visit was followed by that of the son of the Persian Commissioner, Sartipiaurval Mirzá Máetúm Khan, on a similar errand. He was a pale-faced, beardless youth, of timid and reserved manner, but intelligent conversation. With him again we sipped tea according to rule, and in due course he took his leave, and, following his predecessor, went from our tent to visit the Afghan Commissioner. After their departure, a servant of the Amir of Ghazn arrived with a few oranges and some lumps of sugar on the part of his master, and he was followed by another bringing back our requisition for supplies on payment for the same, with a verbal re-

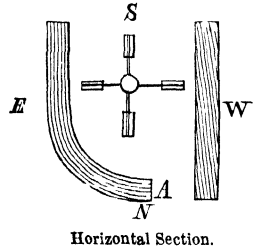
quest that a detailed list of our party and each item required might be submitted. This was done, and meanwhile our cattle and followers remained without food all day. Late in the evening, after we had retired to rest, another messenger arrived with an intimation that the supplies were ready for issue inside the fort; but it was too late to get more than a modicum of fodder for the cattle.

Nasírabad, under the Persian rule, has been established as the capital of Sistan. It is the residence of Mír Alam Khan, chief of Ghazn, who has been appointed the Persian governor, with the title of Hushmat-ul-Mulk, and is the headquarters of the Persian authority in this country. Its garrison is stated at eight hundred *sarbáz* or Persian infantry, two hundred horse, and eight guns. The town or *shahr* (city), as it is here called, is merely the original village of Nasírabad enclosed within fortified walls surrounded by a ditch. They have evidently been very recently constructed, and are meant more for show than for real defence. Adjoining the north-west corner of the town, but distinct from it, is the citadel, which is a strongly-built mud structure, with eight turret bastions on each face, and a covered way between the ditch and glacis. The curtains between the bastions are high, loopholed, and crenated.

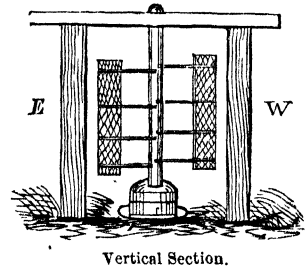
Near the north-west angle of the citadel, on the verge of the ditch, and at no distance from our camp, is one of these windmills so common in and so peculiar to this country. It was evidently out of repair, and the mournful creaking of its flanges, as they were revolved by the midnight breeze, effectually deprived us of sleep during the hours of darkness. This sort of windmill, or *ásyáe bád*, as it is called, is scientifically though very roughly

constructed, in adaptation to the prevalent wind in this region.

It consists of two parallel mud walls, running north and south; one of these, usually the eastern wall, is curved round so as to nearly close the northern face, leaving only a gap three or four feet wide between it and the opposite wall; the southern face, on the contrary, is left completely open. In the centre, on the ground between these walls, are placed the millstones; the upper one working on a pivot fixed in the centre of the lower one by means of an upright pole fixed in its upper surface, and playing above through a hole in a great beam that rests transversely on the tops of the side walls. This upright pole or mast is furnished with wings or paddles, made of light frames of wood fixed perpendicularly, and along their outer halves covered with bands of reed matting or wickerwork, which form flanges to catch the wind and turn the mill. The following horizontal and vertical sections will illustrate the plan of these mills.



Horizontal Section.



Vertical Section.

The wind enters at A, marked in the horizontal section, and turning the flange opposite, brings round the next, and so on, and escapes at the wide southern opening. In some parts of the country these mills are adapted to work horizontally for the raising of water, but we did not see any of these.

The weather had been cloudy throughout the day, and at night a cold north-west wind set in, and the thermometer sunk from 78° Fah. at three P.M. to 40° Fah. at daybreak. The elevation of Nasírabad is about 1520 feet above the sea.

CHAPTER VII.

8th March.—Nasírabad to Banjár, six miles, and halt two days. After passing along the north face of the fort, our route went north-east across a jangal of tamarisk, more or less flooded by overflowings from a great canal, which we crossed twice by rustic bridges thrown across projecting piers formed of alternate layers of clay and fagots. The pools between which we picked our path were swarming with wild-fowl of all sorts. The ground of the road was so soft and deep in mud that it was impossible to get within range of them, and we thus lost several specimens that were quite unknown to us.

Beyond this strip of flooded jangal we turned eastward across an open plain towards Sir F. Goldsmid's camp, pitched close to the south of the village of Banjár, and at half a mile or so from the tents were met by an *isticbal* sent out *more Persico* from the camp. It was headed by Major E. B. Smith (who came on yesterday from Nasírabad), preceded by two led horses, or *yadak*, and comprised the several members of Sir F. Goldsmid's party, namely, Major Lovett, R.E., and Messrs Thomas, Bowyer, and Rozario, supported by a party of thirty or forty of the Mission servants mounted for the occasion. With them we proceeded to the camp, and, pending the arrival of our tents, alighted under the Union Jack flying from a movable flagstaff, guarded by a few Persian sentries, in front of the principal tent, where we were received by Sir F. Goldsmid.

Bordering the west of our camp is a great sheet of water, crowded with vast numbers of water-fowl of all sorts. It is formed by the overflow of a great canal that branches off from the Kohak Rúd, or Mádariáb (which we crossed at Kimak), and passing Banjár, goes on to Jalalabad, and irrigates the country north of the Atashgáh ridge near Kimak.

Due west of our camp, standing out very distinctly on the plain, at twenty miles off, is the Koh Khojah. It is an isolated black block with a flattened summit. Major Lovett, who has visited it, tells me it is about four hundred feet above the level of the plain, and of a hard crystalline black rock resembling basalt. The rock is divided into two main portions by a central gorge, and there are many ruins of mud and stone on its summit, and also a large reservoir excavated in the rock. The lower slopes are covered with banks of hard compact clay. Until four years ago this hill was surrounded by a reed-grown swamp of muddy and saline water, two or three feet deep, and was approached from the shore by passages cut through the reeds, either on foot or on the native *túfín* propelled by a pole. It now stands in the midst of a desiccated marsh many miles from the nearest water. This is owing to the droughts that have prevailed in this country during the past three or four years, and the consequent drying up of the marshes formed by the overflowings of the two lagoons formed by the commingling of the waters of the several rivers that converge to this point, as will be more fully described further on.

Koh Khojah is also called Kohi Zál or Zor and Kohi Rustam, and from ancient times has afforded an asylum for retreat to the princes of the country when pressed by an enemy. Malik Fata, Kayáni, when pressed by Nadír, is said to have abandoned his capital, Calá Fata, and to

have taken refuge in this stronghold, where he held out seven years against his troops, who were ultimately obliged to retire through pressure of famine.

Banjár is a flourishing village of about four hundred houses. It originally belonged to the Kayáni tribe, but during the past half century has been in the possession of the Sarbandi, and now only contains four or five families of the original tribe. In the possession of one of these families, we were informed, there is a very ancient scroll or *tumár*, in a language not now known in the country It is supposed to be a record of the ancient history of the people at the time when they were fire-worshippers. It is said to be held in great estimation, and is not to be purchased for gold; its existence indeed is denied by the reputed owners for fear of their being deprived of it, as they were of some valuable records in this unknown language by Prince Kamran of Herat, when he invaded the country in the early part of the present century. He is said also to have carried off some illuminated tablets, and an ancient copy of the Curán and other Arabic manuscripts.

During our stay here the weather was more or less cloudy, and a strong north-west wind blew with unabated force. It is the most prevalent wind in this region, and during the hot season blows without intermission for four months, and is, from this circumstance, called *bádi sado biat*, or "wind of a hundred and twenty (days)." It usually commences about the *nan roz*, or vernal equinox, and continues to the end of the harvest, or about the 20th July. To the prevalence of this wind is attributed the absence of trees from the plain country, and this is easily understood, unless, as in the gardens about some of the villages, the trees be protected by walls or other means of shelter, for the violence of the wind is of itself

sufficient to wither the blossoms and destroy fructification.

In our experience of it the wind was a cold cutting blast, with the force of a moderate gale. It commenced on the day of our arrival at Nasírabad, on the 7th instant, and continued daily till we crossed the Sistan border into Lásh territory, six days later. It generally commenced soon after sunrise, subsided somewhat at midday, and gradually recovered its force after sunset. It owes its cause, apparently, to the rarefaction of the atmosphere by the rays of a hot sun playing upon the vast sandy region to the south, and its coldness at this season is derived from the snowy mountains of Ghor, whence it proceeds. In the hot season it raises clouds of sand, that obscure the sky and prove extremely injurious to the eyes.

From Banjár we got a very good view of the Nihbandán range of hills bounding Sistan on the west. It is marked about midway by a deep valley or glen, which conveys its drainage after rains into the lake north-west of Koh Khojah. Towards the north the range appears continuous with the Farrah mountains, and towards the south with those of Sarhadd. The elevation of Banjár is about 1580 feet above the sea.

11*th March.*—Banjár to Bolay, seven miles, and halt a day. These villages are hardly five miles apart by the direct route, but our path turned from north to east and then due north again, in order to avoid the deep mud of the flooded fields, which are here irrigated by a number of considerable canals. Within the first three miles from Banjár we forded two, with the water up to the saddle-flaps, and crossed three others by rustic bridges. Beyond these we crossed, in an easterly direction, a strip of wind-scooped sand, similar to that already described on

the march to Nasírabad, and a little farther on passed the village of Dih Afghan to our right. It is a strong little fort, surrounded by hut settlements of the Tokhi Ghilzais and other Afghans. The fort itself is now garrisoned by Persian *sarbáz.* Across the plain, at about three miles to its west, is the fortified village of Shytávak. It formerly belonged to the Káyánís, but has for the past half century been in the possession of the Sarbandis. In the opposite direction, away to the east and south-east, is seen a vast mass of ruins, that cover several square miles of country. We could learn nothing more regarding them than that they are in the vicinity of Casimabad and Iskil.

From Dih Afghan our route turned north, and at a couple of miles brought us to Bolay, which consists of two open villages close to each other. We passed these, and camped on a bit of hard, flat, wind-swept, and bare ground, a few hundred yards farther on. At a few miles across the plain to the eastward are the extensive ruins of Záhidán. They extend as far as the eye can reach towards the north-east, and are said to be continuous with those of Doshák, about nine miles from the Helmand.

These ruins, with those of Pulkí, Nádálí, and Peshá-warán, are the most extensive in Sistan, and mark the sites of populous cities, the like of which are not to be found at this present day in all this region between the Indus and the Tigris. Their melancholy solitudes now merely exist as the silent memorials of the destruction wrought by that "Scourge of God" Tamerlane. This Tatar invader, whose real name was Tymúr, is said to have been wounded in the ankle by an arrow at the siege of Doshák, from the effects of which he became permanently lame. Hence the epithet *lang* added to his

name—*Tymúr lang*, or "Tymúr the lame," our Tamerlane.

According to local tradition, the Tatar was so enraged at the opposition he experienced here, that he destroyed every city in the province, massacred its people wholesale, and reduced the whole country to a desolate waste; and it has never since regained its former prosperity.

Kinneir, in his "Memoir of the Persian Empire," supposes the ancient Zarany of Ptolemy to be the same as Doshák, or more properly Dahshák, as I was informed by a native, from the ten branches of the canal which were at this spot taken from off the Helmand.

Zarany, or Doshák, was the residence of Yácúb bin Leth, the founder of the Sufari dynasty of Sistan, who made it the capital of his kingdom about 868 A.D. It was ultimately sacked and destroyed by Tamerlane in 1384 A.D., and has ever since remained a desolate waste of ruins, amongst which stands the modern town of Jalalabad, which at the commencement of the present century was the seat of the Kayáni chief Bahrám Khan. It is now in the possession of the Sarbandi, Bahrám's son and successor, Jaláluddín, having been finally driven out of Sistan in 1839 by Muhammad Kezá Khan, their chief, whose seat was Sihkoha.

We halted a day at Bolay, owing to some difficulty and delay on the part of the Persian governor of Sistan in providing camels for our party. During our stay here the north wind blew with unabated force, and swept the ground around our camp as clean as a board. I observed that the hard clay soil was striated in long lines from north to south by the persistent action of this wind, and we found some plants curiously affected in their growth by the same cause.

Some wormwood, saltworts, and a species of zizy-

phus, here called *kuvár*, were all growing prostrate on the ground, with their stems and twigs projecting only in the direction of the wind. The thorny branches of the zizyphus formed long slender trails recumbent on the ground, and here and there formed fresh attachments by little shoots striking root into the soil. These plants are very sparsely scattered, and only rise six inches or so above the surface, whilst not a single bush or tree is to be seen on the plain.

Koh Khojah and the Nihbandán range are seen very distinctly to the west of our position. The first stands out boldly on the open plain, and the other bounds the prospect beyond it. The horizon towards the north is marked for many miles east and west by a continuous line of black columns of smoke curling up into the air, and forming a vast stratum of dense obscurity. The explanation of this great conflagration is that the natives at this season annually set fire to the reeds and rushes belting the borders of the pools or lagoons, in order to make way for the fresh shoots on which their cattle pasture.

From Bolay we marched twenty-eight miles in a northerly direction, and camped amidst the ruins of Silyán, which form but a small portion of the vast extent of ruins collectively styled Pesháwarán.

Our route, at first across a bare, hard, wind-swept flat, afterwards led across a rough, wind-scourged, sandy tract, evidently a deposit from floods, on which was a thin jangal of tamarisk and saltworts. Farther on, passing the ruins of a village called Kohak, we came to a thick belt of tall tamarisk jangal, and following it for half-an-hour, at about the tenth mile turned to the left into it to a large canal, now dry, where we halted for breakfast. The bushes in this jangal are marked at about

eighteen inches from the ground by a line of drift and shreds of dry scum of confervæ and similar water-weeds caught in the branches, and all directed from north to south, and indicating a rush of waters draining in that course.

The canal, which we were told had been dry for four years past, is called Rúdi Jahánábád, or "the river of Jahanabad." It runs from Jahanabad on the Helmand midway between Kohak and Jalalabad, to the Koh Khojah. We found some pits of yellow putrid water in its bed. They were apparently used for watering cattle, as there were drinking troughs formed of loosely laid bricks attached to each. In the dry mud of the canal we found some large mussel shells, and its banks were overgrown with tall reeds.

Proceeding from this, and leaving behind us the village of Rindan to the right and that of Calá Nan to the left, the last habitations on this border of Sistan, we at four miles came to the Naizár, which forms the boundary between Sistan and Hokát.

The Naizár, as the name implies, is a belt of reeds and rushes. It extends for many miles east and west, and connects the pool or lagoon of the Helmand with that of the Farrah Rúd by a strip of swamp. During the past four years this swamp has been dry. Where we crossed it the belt is about six miles wide; its reeds had been cut and burnt to the stumps, and its soil was desiccated, and marked by beaten tracks over the stubble.

Previous to its desiccation this swampy tract used to be crossed by the natives on foot or on horseback, or on the *túfín* rafts already described, by passages cut through the dense growth of reeds. Usually the swamp was covered to the depth of a foot or so with a thick muddy water, undrinkably saline; but in flood seasons its height

rose to three or four feet and inundated the country to the south. In some parts where we crossed the Naizár the reeds had not been cut or burnt, and they rose to a height of ten or twelve feet in impenetrable patches. Away to the right of our path tall pillars of smoke rising from the burning reeds filled the sky with dense clouds of obscurity. Vast herds of horned cattle, described as of a superior breed, are fed on the young shoots that sprout from the burnt-down reeds.

Beyond the Naizár we entered on a wide waste of solitude, a very embodiment of desolation and despair. The surface was everywhere thrown into small tumuli of soft spongy soil, here and there white as snow with saline efflorescence, and strewed all over with red bricks belonging to old graves, many of which were sufficiently preserved to be readily traceable. Going across this weird tract in a north-westerly direction, we presently came to the wilderness of ruins known as Pesháwarán, and marching amongst them for five or six miles, camped near a cluster called Silyán, with the fort of Pesháwarán bearing due west at about three miles. Beyond the fort is seen a solitary, low, round-backed hill called Kohi Ghúch, in which sulphur is said to be found. To the south of this hill is the lake or lagoon of the Farrah Rúd, which empties into it on the east side of the hill, whilst the Harút Rúd empties into it on the west side of it. The Naizár, which we crossed midway on this day's march, extends up to this lake along the southern border of the Pesháwarán ruins. In the opposite direction, towards the east, it extends up to the lake or lagoon of the Helmand, which is described as much larger than that of the Farrah Rúd, being about twenty miles long by twelve broad. It is formed by the convergence at one spot of the rivers Helmand, Khosh, and Khuspás. In flood

seasons this lake overflows and joins that of the Farrah Rúd, over the Naizár belt we crossed, and fills the whole of the reed-grown swamp down to Koh Khojah. If in excessive flood, the waters then flow into the Sarshela, which is a channel along the western border of the ancient lacustrine basin, and thus find a passage to the Zirrah marsh, a deep hollow away to the south of Sistan. Such floods rarely occur now-a-days, and all this southern tract has been dry as long as the memory of man goes back.

We halted a day at this place, and took the opportunity to visit the fort of Pesháwarán and the other principal ruins around. It is quite beyond my power to describe these ruins, which cover many square miles of country, and are known by different names for the different groups, such as Silyán, Dih Malán, Kol Márút, &c. Suffice it to say, that the readily distinguishable mosques and colleges, and the Arabic inscriptions traceable on the façades of some of the principal buildings, clearly refer their date to the period of the Arab conquest, and further, as is evidenced by the domes and arches forming the roofs of the houses, that then as now the country was devoid of timber fit for building purposes. The most remarkable characteristic of these ruins is their vast extent and excellent preservation. The material and style of architecture are both equally good, and in some parts are so little damaged that they could be easily restored with an ordinary outlay of capital and labour. Passing amongst the ruins are the traces of several canals, and one of these, which has recently been restored by the chief of Hokát, now brings a stream of good water up to the Silyán ruins for the irrigation of some land in the vicinity, which it is proposed to cultivate so soon as the country recovers from its present state of anarchy and discord.

The great extent of these ruins, which cover an area of about six miles by eight, leads to the suspicion that they are not the remains of one and the same city existing in its entirety throughout their extent, but rather the outgrowths of successive cities rising on the ruins of their predecessors upon the same spot. We were unable, however, to trace any differences in the appearances of the several groups to bear out such a suspicion. On the contrary, they so exactly resemble each other that any one group may be taken as representative of the others. In this view these ruins do certainly represent a most flourishing period in the history of this country.

The ruins of Pesháwarán resemble in point of architecture those of Zahidán and Calá Fata, but differ from those of Kaikobád, which are evidently of much older date, though amongst them are found some structures dating from the Arab period.

On crossing the Naizár we passed out of Sistan, or the district known by that name, in the restricted application of the term current at the present day. Its limits have been already mentioned, and I may here state that it is about sixty miles broad from north to south, and about one hundred long from east to west. Within this area the general aspect of the country is a wide undulating plain of a light sandy soil, singularly bare of trees, except on the borders of the two lagoons, which are fringed with forests of the tamarisk, whilst the swamp connecting them is crowded with a dense growth of tall reeds.

Surrounded as it is by desert wastes, this district of Sistan presents a very populous and highly cultivated area. Its territory is divided between four distinct tribes, who are now under the rule of the Persian possessors of the country since their occupation of it seven years ago.

Previous to 1865, when this district formed an integral portion of the Afghan kingdom, these several tribes were constantly warring against each other, and encroaching upon the lands of the weaker party.

The tribes above alluded to are the Sistani, Sarbandi, Shahrki, and Baloch. They are distributed very unequally over about sixty villages, averaging 250 houses each, and their dates of settlement in the country also differ very considerably.

The most ancient inhabitants, and apparently the original possessors of the country, are included in the Sistani tribe, which at the present day consists of aboriginals and representatives of various tribes, who have been thrown together and incorporated here by successive waves of conquest and revolution during many centuries. Much obscurity hangs over the original Sistani; but their ruling family have long been known, under the appellation of Kayáni, as the hereditary princes of the country, and are supposed to trace their descent to the ancient kings of the period when the seat of government of the Persian empire was in Sistan. Tradition is at variance on this point, as I was informed by an intelligent native of the country. According to the commonly accepted account, the Kayáni family are the lineal descendants of Kaikobad, the founder of the Kayáni dynasty in the romantic age of Zál and his son Rustam, of whose birth and principal exploits Sistan was the theatre. Other accounts assign their descent to Yácúb bin Leth, the potter of Sistan, who, turning the times to his own advantage, usurped the government of Sistan, and in 868 A.D. founded the Sufari dynasty, which was finally extinguished in the person of Kulif, when Mahmúd of Ghazni conquered the country towards the close of the tenth century. Be this as it may, the Kayánis were the

dominant family in Sistan up to the commencement of the present century, and their chiefs figure prominently in the history of Khorassan during the first half of the preceding century, memorable for the decline and fall of the Persian empire of the Suffairs, the invasion and devastation of their country by the Afghans under Mír Mahmúd, the son of Mír Wais, Ghilzai, and the rise of the conqueror, Nadir Shah, whose death in 1747 was followed by a redistribution of the map of Central Asia between the Cajars in Persia, the Uzbaks in Bukhara, and the Afghans in Khorassan.

It was during the revolution attending the revolt of the Ghilzais and Abdalis, and the establishment of Kandahar as an independent principality, under their leader Mír Wais, Ghilzai, in 1810, that the Kayáni chiefs of Sistan, who had heretofore held their lands and titles under firmans from the Persian kings, first threw off their allegiance to the throne of Persia. During the successive invasions of Persia through Sistan in 1720–21, under Mír Mahmúd, the son and successor of Mír Wais, the Kayáni chief Malik Asadullah was the independent ruler of Sistan, and he accorded the invading Afghans an unopposed passage through his territory.

About this period a cousin of the Sistan chief above named, one Malik Mahmúd, profiting by the confusion of the times, issued from his desert-girt home, and quickly seized the adjoining district of Khorassan. Having secured Ghayn and Tabbas and Herat, the successful adventurer next captured Mashhad and subdued Nishabor and Sabzwár, at the very time that his Afghan namesake and rival was prosecuting his successes against the Persian capital.

The unprecedented success of the Afghans now roused the jealousy of the Kayáni, who, fearful of their ascen-

dancy, hurried to Ispahan to support his lawful sovereign against the invader. His loyalty, however, was not proof against the ready concessions of the Afghan; and Malik Mahmúd being acknowledged by Mír Mahmúd in the independent possession of his conquests, hastened back to Mashhad and assumed the crown and title of the Kayáni. His enjoyment of the purple was neither long continued nor peaceful; for he was presently opposed by the rising soldier Nadir Culi, and, after successive contests, was finally captured by him and executed, together with a younger brother named Muhammad Ali, at Nishabor in 1727. On this, Nadir reinstated the former chief, Malik Asadullah, in the government of Sistan, and with him sent back Mahmúd's family and belongings to their homes.

Asadullah shortly after died, and was succeeded by his son Malik Husen. He soon followed the example of his neighbours, and revolted. Nadir then appointed his own nephew, Ali Culi, governor of Sistan, and he proceeded with a strong force to subdue the refractory chief. On his approach, Malik Husen and his brothers, Fath Ali and Lutf Ali, took refuge in the island-fort of Koh Khojah, and there held out against Nadir's troops for several years. They were finally conciliated, and took service under Nadir, but not until their country had been devastated, and their own power thoroughly broken by the importation from Persia of the Sarbandi and Shahrki tribes as feudal colonists.

On the death of Husen, his son, Malik Sulemán, succeeded to the chiefship of the Kayáni family, but his authority was of a doubtful nature, and limited to the north-eastern portion only of the district. On the partition of the empire following on Nadir's death in 1747, Sistan was incorporated in the Durrani monarchy founded

by Shah Ahmad, and Malik Sulemán was recognised as its hereditary chief, and his position strengthened by a matrimonial alliance with the new king, the Afghan sovereign taking his daughter to wife.

The alliance does not appear to have brought any material advantage to the position or authority of the Kayáni family, and in the intestine struggles constantly waged between them and the new settlers they gradually succumbed to their superior force. Sulemán was succeeded by his son, Malik Bahrám, at Jalalabad. He was so pressed by the Sarbandi and Shahrki, that he called in the aid of 'Alam Khan, Nahroe Baloch, whom with his following he settled at Kimak, Burj 'Alam, &c., as a check upon the encroachments of his enemies. This measure appears to have given offence to Shah Tymúr, the son and successor of Shah Ahmad; for on his accession to the throne of Afghanistan in 1773, he deposed the Kayáni, Malik Bahrám, and in his place appointed the Shahrki chief, Mír Bey, governor of Sistan. This chief was killed four years later in one of the many faction fights that seemingly form a part of ordinary life in Sistan, and Bahrám was then restored to the chiefship and government of Sistan, in subordination to the Afghan governor of the adjoining district of Lásh or Hokát.

This arrangement did not work well, and the Shahrki soon rose in revolt against Bahrám's authority, and Tymúr in consequence sent a force of Afghans under Barkhurdar Khan, Achakzai, to reduce them, a task he performed very effectually, as has been before mentioned, by the victories of Kandúrak and Mykhána. After this, weakened as they already were by the encroachments of their enemies, the Kayáni influence rapidly declined, and was at length reduced to a nullity by the family dissensions that led to the estrangement of Bahrám from his son

and successor, Jaláluddín. Malik Jaláluddín was the last of the Kayáni family who exercised any authority in Sistan. He appears to have been a very dissolute character, and was in 1838 expelled the country by the Sarbandi chief Muhammad Raza. Kamran, the Herat prince, reinstated him in the following year, but he was again driven out, and for a while found an asylum with the chief of Ghazn. Hence he returned some years later to Sistan in beggared circumstances, and died in obscurity, leaving a son named Násir Khan, and his son Azim Khan is now in the service of the Persian governor of the country. Malik Jaláluddín had a brother named Hamza Khan. He left three sons—namely, Abbás now residing in Jalalabad, Gulzár in Bahrámabad, and Malik Khan in some other village. These are the representatives of the ancient Kayáni family, and, viewing their present condition, one may truly exclaim, "How the great have fallen!" Their immediate relations hardly number twenty families, and the whole tribe does not exceed a hundred families, who are scattered about the district, mostly in very poor circumstances.

The rest of the Sistan tribe were formerly the serfs or subjects of the Kayáni, and they now hold the same position under the other dominant tribes of the country. They are styled generally *dihcán*, or peasant, and comprise representatives of various tribes, such as Tatars, Mughals, Turks, Uzbaks, Kurds, Tájíks, converted Gabars, and Persians. They are principally employed in agriculture, cattle-herding, fishing and fowling, and the various handicrafts, and are a very poor and simple people. They are said to be deficient in courage and energy, and in respect to their military qualities, are held in little estimation by the other tribes amongst whom they are distributed as vassals. Those of them

we saw in our progress through the country appeared an inferior race physically, and had sallow unhealthy complexions.

The Sarbandi and Shahrki are described as divisions of the Nahnai tribe, and their settlement in Sistan dates only from the time of Nadir Shah, by whose orders they were transported hither from Burujurd near Hamadán. The Sarbandi are reckoned at ten thousand families in Sistan, and the Shahrki at an equal number, scattered over Sistan, Gházn, Kirmán, and Lár.

The Sarbandi were at first settled at Sihkoha, Warmál, Chiling, and other villages on the south of the *hámún*, under their chief Mír Cambar. He was succeeded by his son Mír Kochak, and he by his son Muhammad Razá, in whose time the tribe doubled their possessions by encroachments upon the lands of the Kayáni. Mír Khan succeeded his father, Muhammad Razá, and was in turn succeeded by his eldest son, of the same name, about the year 1836. This Muhammad Razá drove Malik Jaláluddín, Kayáni, out of Sistan, and becoming independent at Sihkoha, was recognised as the most influential of the local chiefs in the country.

These were Ali Khan of Chakansúr, son of Khan Jahan Khan, Sanjaráni Baloch, a dependant of Kandahar, Háshim Khan, Shahrki, at Dashtak, and Dost Muhammad Khan, Nahroe Baloch, at Burj 'Alam, both dependants of Herat.

In the beginning of 1844, after the evacuation of Afghanistan by the British, Kuhndil Khan, the chief of Kandahar, returned to his principality from his retreat at Tehran, and on his way through Sistan received the submission of the Sarbandi, Shahrki, and Nahroe chiefs above mentioned. In the following year he annexed the Garmsel as far as Rúdbár to Kandahar,

and was in treaty with Muhammad Razá for a more perfect establishment of relations. The negotiations were prolonged for a couple of years, and then fell through owing to the death of that chief in 1848.

Kuhndil was at this time diverted from his projects against Sistan by the menacing attitude of Yar Muhammad at Herat, and in the meantime Muhammad Razá was succeeded at Sihkoha by his son Lutf Ali as a dependent of Yar Muhammad, who supported him with a contingent of Herat troops and Afghan officers posted at Sihkoha, Dashtak, Burj 'Alam, Kimak, and other places.

The deceased chief's brother Ali Khan, who was in the service of Kuhndil at Kandahar, in the following year set out for Sistan to oust his nephew, and furnished by Kuhndil with an army of six thousand men under the command of his brother Muhrdil for the purpose. The army was joined by the Nahroe and Sanjaráni Baloch chiefs with their respective contingents at the Rúdbár frontier; Sihkoha was captured, Lutf Ali seized and deprived of sight, and his uncle, Ali Khan, established in the government of Sistan on the part of Kuhndil Khan, who then deputed his son Sultan Ali to the Persian court to secure the Shah's approval and support.

Yar Muhammad, finding the country thus taken from him, set out from Herat to attack Ali Khan; but on arrival at Lásh was suddenly taken seriously ill, and died on the way back to his capital in 1851.

In the confusion following on this event, Ali Khan threw off his dependence on Kandahar, and sent an envoy to the court of Persia with a tender of allegiance. His messenger was well received, and returned with presents and the Persian flags as an emblem of his allegiance. Ali Khan hoisted the flag on his fort at Sihkoha, and

then sent his sons as hostages to Mashhad in 1853. A few years later, after the siege of Herat by the Persians, Ali Khan proceeded to Tehran, where he met with a distinguished reception, and his loyalty was further secured by a matrimonial alliance with the royal family, a daughter of the Prince Bahrám, the Shah's cousin, being given to him in marriage.

In the spring of 1858, he returned to Sistan with his Persian bride and a military escort; but the new regime introduced by him, and the interference of his Persian companions in the internal affairs of the country, soon led to a general revulsion of feeling against him and his foreign supporters; and a plot, headed by Taj Muhammad, the brother of the deposed Lutf Ali, was formed to get rid of him and his myrmidons. The Sistani were raised in revolt, and, in a night attack upon Sihkoha, Ali Khan was surprised and slain by his nephew Taj Muhammad. His Persian supporters were then driven out of the country, and Taj Muhammad assumed the government as an independent chief in 1858. The Persian Government was restrained by treaty engagements from carrying out their purposed measures of retribution; and Taj Muhammad on his part expressing regret for the mishap that befell the Persian princess (she was slightly wounded in the head in her attempts to protect her husband), and pleading excuses in justification of his conduct against his uncle, was pardoned. Subsequently, through the medium of Mír Alam Khan, the Persian governor of Ghazn, he was conciliated and won over to the Persian interest; and in 1862, when the late Amir Dost Muhammad Khan advanced against Herat, he, fearful of losing his independence, and preferring allegiance to a distant master than to one close at hand, appealed to the Persian Government for protection, as a

Persian subject, against the Afghan, and deputed his brother Kuhndil to the Persian court in earnest of his professions.

In the following, year Dost Muhammad, having restored Herat to his kingdom, died there on the 9th of June in a ripe old age, and was succeeded by the appointed heir, the present Amir Sher Ali Khan. He hastened to Kabul to take up the reins of government; but ere he reached the capital commenced those plots and divisions that presently involved the country in a long-foreseen anarchy and bloodshed.

At this juncture Taj Muhammad's envoy to Tehran returned to Sistan, accompanied by some of the principal Persian officers who, on a former occasion, had come to the country with the late Ali Khan. The chief of these, Sartip Salih Muhammad, not finding the Sistani quite so amenable as he had wished for, suddenly broke off his relations with them, and hastily retired from the country to Ghazn, vowing condign vengeance on the part of the Persian Government.

The Sarbandi chiefs, now fearful of the consequences, deputed one Sohráb Bey, a trusty agent, to the Kandahar governor, deprecating his neglect of Sistan affairs, and, as a part of Afghanistan, seeking protection against the encroachments of Persia. This was in 1864, at a time when the new Amir had his hands full of more important and more pressing troubles that threatened the very existence of his throne, and the affairs of Sistan were consequently left to adjust themselves as best they could; but an envoy, Ahmad Khan, Kákar, was sent with the returning agent to reassure the people and learn the true state of affairs.

Taj Muhammad, now finding that there was no hope of support from Kandahar, again deputed his brother

Kuhudil to Tehran. He was here detained as a hostage; and a Persian army invaded Sistan, and took possession of the country in the name of the Shah in 1865. In the spring of 1867 Taj Muhammad was deposed and sent prisoner to Tehran, and Mír 'Alam Khan of Ghayn was appointed Persian governor of the district, with the title of Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

With the deportation of Taj Muhammad ended the influence of the Sarbandi in Sistan. Under the Persian rule the power of the local chiefs has become centred in Sharíf Khan, the Nahroe Baloch, who has risen from an insignificant position entirely by his Persian connection.

The Shahrki tribe, who were brought into Sistan at the same time as the Sarbandi, were first settled under their chief, Mír Chákar, at Dashtak, Pulkí, Wásilán, and other villages on the Hámun. Mír Chákar was succeeded by his son Mír Beg, and he by his son Mír Háshim, in whose time their possessions were considerably increased by encroachments on the lands of the rapidly declining Kayáni. Mír Háshim was succeeded by his son Mír Mahdi, and he by his brother Mír Muhammad 'Ali, who is now a hostage at Tehran. The tribe occupy twelve or fourteen villages, and number about three thousand families in Sistan.

By some accounts, the Shahrki are said to be a section of the Muhammad Hassani or Mammassani division of the Brahoe tribe; and according to local tradition, they were driven out of Sistan by the invasion of Tymúr, and sought refuge in the adjoining province of Kirman. Tymúr's son and successor, Shah Rúkh, collected their scattered families, and located them at Búrújard, near Rúm, in Persia, where they were known by the name of Shah Rukhi or Shahrki. From this they were re-settled

in Sistan and the adjoining districts of Kirman and Lár by Nadir Shah, at the same time that he transported the Sarbandi from the same locality near Hamadan to Sistan. The Sarbandi are supposed to be the descendants of the ancient Persians or Gabars (or Guebres), and in Persia occupied the lands adjoining those given to the Shahrki. Their name is said to be derived from that of the locality occupied by them.

Such, in brief, is a history of the several tribes now occupying Sistan. Their rival interests, and their constant struggles for ascendancy one over the other, sufficiently account for the anarchy and confusion that have characterised the normal condition of this country during the past century, or, in other words, since the death of Shah Ahmad, Durrani. The decline of the government, commencing in the reign of his successor, Shah Tymúr, and ending in its overthrow in the succeeding reign of Shah Zaman, and the subsequent transference of the rule from the Saddozais to the Barakzais in the time of Shah Mahmúd, was not without its influence on the political condition of Sistan; and we find that the province, which was incorporated as an integral part of the empire established by the founder of the Durrani monarchy, gradually, on the decline of the paramount power, lapsed from its allegiance, and, perforce of the local circumstances at the time determining, became divided into more or less independent chiefships, which, for the furtherance of their individual interests, attached themselves as dependencies of the nearest provincial governments, of Kandahar on the one side and Herat on the other. And such continued to be the political relations of the country until the Persian occupation of Herat in 1856. After the ensuing Persian war, and the evacuation of Herat territory by the Persians, the Sistan chiefs

continued more or less under the influence of Persian intrigue, a course in which they were encouraged by M. Khanikoff's mission in the spring of 1859; and the result of their dealings with the Persian court, as already detailed, ended in their invasion and annexation of the country in 1865.

Of the ancient history of Sistan we have no connected record. Such notices of the country as are met with in the pages of various authors are very few, scant in detail, and separated by wide intervals of time. Malcolm's "History of Persia" contains a full account of the early Persian dynasties, and the country of Sistan, or Zabulistan, as it was also called, is frequently mentioned as the theatre of their military exploits.

For the Persians the country has a peculiar interest, as being the birthplace and home of their legendary hero, the renowned Rustam, son of Zál, the fifth in descent from the Persian Jamshed by a princess of Sistan. Zál, says the authority above quoted, married Rúdábah, daughter of Mehráb, king of Kabul, and of the race of Zohák. Their offspring, Rustam, was cut out of her side when stupefied by drugs, according to the secret imparted to Zál by the Griffin of Elburz. The romance of this hero's life is as varied as it is improbable, and affords an untiring theme of delight to the Persian story-teller and his auditors. His fame is the subject of song in every village, and there is hardly a hill in the country that does not possess a spot sanctified by tradition as the scene of some of his many exploits and feats against dragons, demons, or genii, and other such figures of fancy.

Later mention of this country is found in the pages of the historians of Alexander's Asiatic conquests, under the name of Drangia, so designated from its principal

river, the Drangius, now called Helmand or Hermand, whose course Alexander followed in his progress eastward, probably through the Garmsel. On the return march of the Macedonian army from India in 325 B.C., this country was traversed by the force under the command of Craterus.

The Rev. J. Williams, in his "Life of Alexander the Great," following the account by Arrian, states that whilst Alexander himself took the route parallel to the littoral, and the fleet voyaging under command of Nearchus, which led across the desert of Gedrosia, the modern Makran, to Carmania or Kirman, Craterus had already proceeded "with the elephants, the heavy baggage, the feeble, the old, and the wounded, and with three brigades of the phalanx," towards the same destination, through the fertile countries of the Arachosi and Drangæ.

In this march it is probable that Craterus followed the ancient caravan route between India and Persia, which led from Dehra Gházi Khan on the Indus, to Kirman and the Persian Gulf by the Tall Chhotiyali road to Peshín and Kandahar, and thence by the valley of the Helmand to Sistan, and onwards by the Nihbandan road to Kirman. At this period the country must have been in a much more flourishing and populous condition than it is now.

The rule of the Greek satraps was followed, 226 A.D., by the dynasty of the house of Sassan, which commenced with the reign of Ardshir Bábakán. Under the Shapori sovereigns of this family, Sistan appears to have been a flourishing seat of the Zoroastrians, since most of the coins now found in the country belong to this period.

The Sassan dynasty fell before the rising power of the Arabs, and ended with the death of Yezdijird, the last

sovereign of that house, who, fleeing to Sistan before the conquering Arabs, ultimately escaped to Marv, where he was murdered, 651 A.D., by a miller with whom he had taken refuge. During the two centuries of Arab rule, Sistan appears to have attained to the highest state of prosperity, and to have enjoyed a stable and just government, as is evidenced by the character and vast extent of the ruins pertaining to that period.

About the middle of the ninth century the Arab rule in Sistan was replaced by that of the Sufári dynasty, of native origin. According to Malcolm, to whose excellent History I am indebted for most of my information on this interesting country, the founder of this dynasty, Yácub bin Leth or Lais, belonged to a family of potters of Sistan. In youth he abandoned the peaceful calling of his ancestors for the more exciting life of a robber, and in 851 A.D. took service with one Salih bin Nasr, who had usurped the government of Sistan. Proving a man of parts, he was appointed by Salih's successor, Dirham bin Nasr, to the command of his army, and soon made use of his position to usurp the government for himself, establishing his capital at Doshak. In 868 he added Herat, Kirman, and Shiraz to his possessions, and a couple of years later extended them to Kabul in one direction, and Nishabor in the other. He was succeeded by his brother, Amir bin Leth, who was made prisoner by the Tatar Ismail Samani, and sent to Baghdad, where he was executed in 901. With him fell the Sufári dynasty, but his descendants continued to hold Sistan till it was taken from Kulif, the last prince of the Leth family, by Mahmúd of Ghazni, towards the close of the century.

In Mahmúd's time, Sistan, as described by Ibn Hauḳal, was a most flourishing country, and the lower course

of the Helmand as far as Búst presented an uninterrupted succession of populous cities, whilst the country as far as Zirrah was intersected by numerous great canals that rendered the land proverbially fertile. At this period, too, Sistan was noted for the existence of a gold-mine, which, after yielding a rich store of the precious metal for many years, was suddenly swallowed up and its site obliterated by an earthquake. Tradition points to no particular spot as the locality of this mine, and at this distance of time, with our scant knowledge of the country, it is useless to speculate on the subject, particularly if we bear in mind the fact that the limits of Sistan in the time of Mahmúd, were far more extensive than they are at the present day.

At that period, now eight centuries ago, Sistan comprised all that extensive region drained by the several rivers that converged and emptied their waters into the *hámún* or "lake basin" of Sistan and its accessory the marsh of Zirrah. According to Ibn Haukal, who wrote in the reign of Mahmúd, this extensive region was known under the names of Zábulistan and Sijistan or Sistan, and comprised the whole of the southern portion of the present kingdom of Afghanistan, or all that portion not included within the limits of Kabulistan. It included the districts of Ghazni, Sibi, Shál, Mastung, and Peshín to the east and south, and those of Zamíndawar, Ghor, Ghayn, and Nih on the north and west.

The term Sijistan or Sistan applied commonly to the whole of the region thus bounded, and Zabulistan was restricted to its northern parts, whilst the southern were also known by the name of Nímroz, and included the modern Sistan, which represents but a trivial portion of the area included in the Sakistan of the Greeks and the Sagestan or Sijistan of the Arabs. Further, the whole

Sijistan country is included in the more extensive region of Khorassan, which comprises all that elevated mountain tract bounded by the valley of the Indus on the east, and that of the Oxus on the north, the salt desert of Kirmán and Yazd on the west, and the sea of Omán on the south.

At the present day it is difficult to define the precise limits of Sistan. The old name of Sagestan or Sijistan it appears applied to the great basin of the hydrographic system that centred in the ancient lakes, and which is represented by the plains of Kandahar and the valleys connected with it through their drainage. It extends eastward to the vicinity of Ghazni, and southward to the plain of Shorawak; whilst to the northward it includes the valleys of the Argandáb and Upper Helmand, called Zamíndáwar, and farther westward those of the Farrah river and the Harút Rúd or Adraskand, which drains the Sabzavár, or, as it is commonly written, Ispzár district.

The modern name of Sistan is applied only to the actual bed of the former lake that at some remote prehistoric period occupied the south-west portion of Afghanistan, and is besides limited *par excellence* only to a small portion of its area in the immediate vicinity of the present lakes or lagoons formed by the disemboguement of the several rivers converging to this point.

Of this limited area, called *hámún*, the boundaries have already been described. The more extended area of the great lacustrine basin is clearly marked by a bold coast-line of desert cliffs. Those on the north and east borders are formed by the prolongation westward of the Kandahar steppes, and on the south and south-east by the cliffs and bluffs of the great sandy desert of Balochistan, whilst to the south and west its borders are formed by the hill-

skirts of the Sarhadd and Bandan mountains respectively.

The coasts thus indicated present a very irregular outline, ranging from two hundred to four hundred feet above the level of the lacustrine basin, and towards the west and north form long estuaries represented by the valleys of the Helmand, Khásh, Farrah, and Harút rivers. The basin itself extends upwards of two hundred miles from north to south, that is, from the Farrah mountains to those of Sarhadd, and presents a remarkable variation in the level of its surface. Its northern portion, occupied by the two lagoons formed by the convergence in it of the several rivers draining thereto and the intervening and surrounding swamps, is separated from the southern and much lower portion by a tract of elevated waste land, which presents a coast-line similar to that bounding the whole basin, but of much inferior elevation.

Where we saw this coast-line, in the vicinity of Burj Alam, it evidently formed the boundary of a long-deserted delta of the Helmand, the present *hámún*, and stretched across the plain from east to west, presenting an irregular front of clay banks and bluffs from sixty to eighty feet high. Towards the west the land sinks to a wide channel called Sarshela, or "head ravine." It runs north and south from the *hámún* near Koh Khojah to the *Godi Zirrah*, or "Zirrah hollow," which occupies the southern portion of the lacustrine district.

In seasons of excessive flood, when the lagoons and surrounding swamps are overfilled, the superfluous waters find a passage through the Sarshela to the Godi Zirrah, the lowest hollow of which is, except in seasons of drought, occupied by a swamp similar to that of the Koh Khojah. We did not visit the Zirrah hollow, and consequently did not see the swamp said to exist there. We were informed,

however, that, like the swamps in the northern portion of the basin, it had been dried up owing to the drought of the last four years.

The desiccation of these swamps and the reduced size of the existing lagoons may point to the manner in which the original lake diminished in size and gradually dried up, the main cause in both cases being a diminished volume in the streams terminating at this point. In the general aspect of the country we observed no indications of any cataclysm by which the waters were drained off from this basin. The deposits brought down by the Helmand and other rivers entering at the north of the lake raised its bed in this direction, and displaced the waters farther south ; and it is not difficult to understand how they might have been entirely dissipated by the process of evaporation, for they appear to have been spread over the surface in a shallow sea, without the aid of other causes that have obtained during the historic period.

Were the Helmand and other rivers allowed to empty into the *hámún* the full volume of their floods, they would again cover the whole basin with an uninterrupted sheet of water bordered by swamps, as is now the case in a small portion only of its northern part, but subject to variation in extent and depth by the effects of evaporation and other causes.

It is probable that the basin has never been thus submerged during the period that the region draining into it has been an inhabited country. The ruins now existing on the surface of the lacustrine bed are evidence in support, whilst the enormous quantities withdrawn for purposes of irrigation, and the vastly increased surface thus exposed to evaporation, aided by the drying effects of the north-west wind, which prevails here for nearly half the year, are of themselves sufficient causes to explain

the limited area of the present lagoons and marshes. These owe their continued existence to the hot-weather floods, otherwise the rivers are mostly exhausted by evaporation and diversions for irrigation before they reach the *hámún*, which, after all, can only be viewed as the receptacle for the hot-weather floods, for during several months of the year the rivers, with the exception of the Helmand, are completely exhausted by the causes indicated long before they reach the *hámún*. Even the Helmand, since the Persian occupation of the country, has been diverted from its course at Kohak, and carried off in the Mádariáb channel to irrigate the country south of the Koh Khojah, as has been before mentioned.

To return, however, to the history of the country. On the downfall of the dynasty of Mahmúd of Ghazni, Sistan, in common with the rest of Khorassan, fell under the sway of the Afghan princes of Ghor, and under their empire maintained its former prosperity, until the Mughal invasion under Janghiz Khan in 1222, when it was laid waste by his destructive hordes of Tátárs. The country had scarcely recovered from the shock of this invasion, when (A.D. 1383) Tymúr the Tátár swept over it with his ruthless hosts, and reduced it to a state of utter ruin and desolation. His son, Shah Rukh, attempted to restore its prosperity, but effected no more than the settlement of a few thousand Persian colonists on its devastated lands. About eighty-five years after Tymúr's invasion, Sistan fell under the power of his descendant, Sultan Husen, Bykara, whose capital was at Herat; but it appears to have been still a neglected country, abandoned to the robber tribes thrown together here by the convulsions of the age.

On the establishment of the Saffavi dynasty in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Sistan became settled,

and to some extent recovered its prosperity and population gradually under native chiefs descended from the ancient ruling family, and holding their patents from the Persian kings of the Saffavi dynasty. But on the destruction of this dynasty at the hands of the Afghans of Kandahar, it once more became the sport of the conqueror; and in 1737 was reduced to its present state of ruin and desolation by Nadir Shah, the Afshár robber, the usurper of the Persian throne, the invader of India, and the author of the massacre and plunder of Delhi in 1739.

After the death of this great conqueror in 1747, the vast empire he had brought together under his sovereignty, from the Jumna to the Tigris, rapidly fell asunder, and, after many vicissitudes of fortune under the conflicting aspirations and interests of a host of claimants, was ultimately partitioned between the Cajars in Persia, the Uzbaks in Bukhara, and the Durranis in Khorassan, The division was a natural one, geographically, politically, and ethnologically; the elevated plateaux and desert wastes of Persia for the Irani, the fertile plains and wide steppes of Turkistan for the Uzbak Tátár, and the mountain fastnesses and tablelands of Khorassan for the Afghan. Each in his own limits was the rightful lord of the soil, and each was separated from the other by natural geographical boundaries, which came to be recognised also as the political limits of the three new nationalities of Central Asia.

Thus Persia, with its Shia population and organised form of government, was separated from Afghanistan and its Sunni population, with their patriarchal form of government, by the long strip of desert extending from Kirman in the south to Mashhad in the north, and forming a belt of division between the highlands of Irani

Khorassan and the more extensive region of that name known by the national appellations of Afghanistan and Balochistan, whilst each was separated respectively from the slave-hunting Turkmans of Khiva and the priest-ridden Sunni bigots of Bukhara by the saline deserts of Sarrakhs and Marv on the one side, and the Afghan states of Bulkh and the river Oxus on the other.

In this division of Nadir's empire, Sistan, as much from natural geographical position as from political necessity, became incorporated with the new kingdom of Afghanistan, and it has since continued to form an integral part of the Durrani monarchy until its recent annexation and occupation by the Persians.

The climate of Sistan is decidedly insalubrious, and unfavourable alike to the healthy growth and comfort of both man and beast. The seasons are characterised by extremes of heat and cold in the summer and winter. Sand-storms, extremely injurious to the eyesight, are of frequent occurrence in the spring months; whilst in the autumn a hot steamy vapour, rising from the evaporation of the summer floods, pervades the atmosphere, and to the plague of gnats and mosquitoes adds the pestilence of malarious fevers.

Sheep and cows thrive upon the rank pastures bordering the marshes; but horses and buffaloes cannot live in the country for several months of the year, owing to the worry of myriads of gnats and stinging flies.

The natives of the country are of inferior physical development, and the common people remarkable for their repulsive features and personal untidiness. Most of the people we saw about the villages had unhealthy sallow complexions; and I observed a marked prevalence of chlorotic anœmia from chronic disease of the spleen. The common diseases of the country are fevers, ophthalmic

affections, rheumatism, and small-pox. The principal employments of the people are agriculture and breeding cattle. Some families are occupied solely as hunters, fowlers, and fishermen, and others live exclusively by handicrafts, as weavers, cobblers, potters, &c. During the cold season immense numbers of wild-fowl, swans (here called *cú* or *ghú*), and pelicans are trapped and shot for their feathers and fat, which fetch a high price in the Kandahar market.

The language current in Sistan is a mixed dialect of Persian, in which are found many Pushto, Baloch, and Turki words; but amongst themselves the several tribes speak their own mother tongues, as the Afghans Pushto, the Baloch Balockki, the Sarbandi and Persians Persian, and so on. Our short stay in this country and the unfavourable conditions of our relations with the people, prevented our learning much concerning their manners and customs or their language and its affinities.

Some native words applied to localities from some distinguishing characteristic appear to belong to an ancient stock, and afford a field for speculation to the philologist. Such are Biring Hissar, or "the fort on a mound" (Arabic, *hissár* = fort, and Sistani, *biring* = mound); Biring Kaftar, or "the mound of hyænas" (Persian, *kaftar* = hyæna); Daki Tír, or "the arrow (straight) ridge" (Sistan, *dak* = ridge, and Persian, *tír* = arrow, and, metaphorically, straight); Daki Dela, or "the cyperus reed-ridge," (Pushto, *dela* = cyperus grass); Chakná Súr, or "the fort of birds" (Brahoe, *chak* = bird; *ná*, sign of genitive; and Arabic *súr* = a fort), so named probably from its situation at the spot where wild-fowls and swans have from time immemorial been yearly snared and hunted; Sih Koha, or "the three hills" (Persian, *sih* = three, and *koh* = hill); Chilling or Shilling, (the place of) "bursting" or

"overflowing," probably from its situation where the *hámún* or lake overflows and bursts its barriers (Brahoe, *chilling* = bursting, and *shilling* = overflowing); Gódor "the hollow" (Persian, *god* = lap or hollow), &c. Other suggestive words, the names of villages in Sistan, are Bolay, Warmál, Banjár, Iskil, Khadang, Kechyán, Laff, Kimak, Shitak, Pulkí, Jazínak, Tiflak, Ishkinak, Sadkí, &c. Many villages are named after their founders, and generally they are found to occupy the sites of more ancient towns. These modern names in many cases serve to fix the dates of the new settlements or the restoration of old ruins.

For example, the present Jahánabad, built on the site of Biring Hissar, is named after Khan Jahán, Sanjaráni Baloch, who restored the ruins of the old fort and repeopled the town at the commencement of the present century. Similarly Burj 'Alam, the "tower" or "citadel" built by 'Alam Khan, Nahroe Baloch, also about the commencement of the present century; Jalálabad, amongst the ruins of Doshak, named after Jaláluddin, Kayáni; Bahrámabad, named after Malik Bahrám, the Kayáni chief during the last quarter of the preceding century; Sharif Khan, the village built by Sharif Khan, Nahroe Baloch; Nasírabad, the town of Nasír Khan, Kayáni; Burj Sarband, the citadel or castle of the Sárbandi; Burj Afghan, the castle of the Afghans. Záhidán retains the name of the ruins amongst which it is situated. The name means "monks," and is the Persian plural of the Arabic *zahid*, a monk; perhaps in the Arab period it contained a monastery or Muhammadan college, and hence the name.

The study of these local names is full of interest, and not without advantageous results. I believe if the inquiry were fully followed up, it would confirm the

statements of history, and prove that the present population are, with the exception of the Kayáni and their Sistani subjects, only immigrants since the period of Nadir's usurpation of the throne of Persia; and further, the inquiry, by tracing the genealogy and traditionary accounts of the chiefs after whom the villages are named, would enable us to form a tolerably correct idea of the progress of the population of the country since the period of its devastation by the Tatars under Tymúr, and serve as a guide to the illustration of its local history and politics.

CHAPTER IX.

15*th March.*—Silyán to Lásh, eighteen miles; and halt two days. Our baggage proceeded by the direct route northward across the ruin-covered plain. The road is three or four miles shorter than that followed by ourselves, and passes the shrine of Saggid Icbál, the lofty dome of which overtops the surrounding ruins, and is a prominent object in the midst of their desolation.

We ourselves made a detour to the westward, and visited the ruins of Kol Márút, where we were told we should find an inscription to the following effect, viz.—

"Kol Márút khúshá ba sari ráh o guzar.
'Abash zamzam o khákhash hama zar.
Agar khwáhí jamáli Kába daryábi biram be masjidi Kol Márút ba wacti sahar.
Chaf chaf chafri chafúr, chapi dasti chop haft khumi zar."

Which, translated into English, runs thus—"Welcome Kol Márút on the very high road and passage. Its water is that of Zamzam (a celebrated well at Mecca), and its earth is all gold. If you desire to enjoy the beauty of the Kába (the square temple at Mecca), go to the mosque of Kol Márút at day-dawn. Chaf chaf chafri chafúr (cant words), on the left of the left hand are seven jars of gold." On arrival at the ruins, however, nobody could point out the inscription; and after wandering amongst the buildings for some time in a fruitless search of it, we proceeded on our way rather disappointed at our failure,

and confirmed in a suspicion that the inscription and the wealth enigmatically alluded to were alike mere myths.

The mosque of Kol Márút is a large building, and still retains some very fairly preserved plaster moulding on the façades of its portal. The designs are in Arabesque, and worked into sentences from the Curán in the ancient Cufic character. Adjoining the mosque are some quadrangular buildings, said to be the remains of colleges. The cloisters were easily traceable; and in one of the vaulted chambers we found, in a recess of the wall, imprinted on the plaster, a masonic design of crossed triangles and stars.

After clearing the ruins we struck on the high road between Hokát and Sistan, and following it in a north-east direction for four or five miles, at half-way came to Khyrabad, were we alighted for breakfast in some ruins hard by.

Khyrabad—the abode of welfare and goodness—is a sad contradiction to the import of its name, for a more dreary, poor, and unhappy place we have not seen in this country. It is the first inhabited spot we have come to since crossing the Sistan boundary at Naizár, and is merely a dilapidated castle containing twenty or thirty houses of Popalzai Afghans. Outside the walls, within gunshot range, are a few fields of corn, irrigated from the small water-cut from the Farrah river, which flows a couple of miles to the north-west of the fort. Around it the plain is thickly dotted with tall ruins, which, on the opposite side of the river, are massed together in the form of a considerable town. These ruins are called Koghâh, and are situated at the foot of a low hill called Koh Ghûch, on which we were told there are the ruins of numberless smelting furnaces and heaps of iron slag. The hill over-

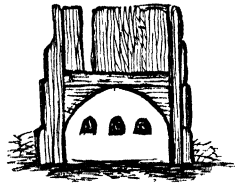
looks the pool or *hâmún* of the Farrah river from the north.

The ruins around Khyrabad have a very peculiar appearance. Each house is detached from the others, and stands apart by itself, and all are built on exactly the same model. We examined several of them, and finally took refuge in one of them for breakfast from the keen blasts of the north wind, which swept over the plain with considerable force. Each house consists of two lofty walls strengthened by buttresses, and running north and south parallel to each other at a width of about twenty feet. The front faces the south, and is open; the rear faces the north, and is closed by a high wall connecting the parallel side ones. In its upper half, towards the western side, this rear wall presents a vertical gap two feet wide and about eight feet deep from above downwards.

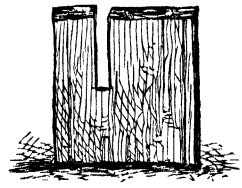
The open front facing the south presents two stories, formed by a vaulted arch thrown across between the two side walls for their whole length, about thirty feet from north to south. The interior below the arch formed the dwelling-house of the occupants, and was furnished with several little recesses in the sides of the walls. These evidently served the purpose of cupboards and shelves for domestic utensils and stores. The lower surface of the arch was generally found stained with soot, indicating that the fires were burnt on the floor. No means of ventilation or light were traceable except through the open front.

The stage above the arch was unroofed, and, when these buildings were peopled, was occupied by the windmill peculiar to this country, and which has already been described. This explains the reason of the narrow gap in the upper part of the rear wall. These buildings are all built of raw brick, and are in many instances remarkably well preserved, apparently in the actual state of

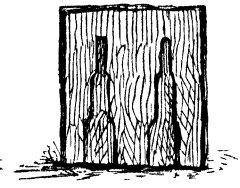
demolition in which they were originally left. The following diagrams represent the front, rear, and side view of these curious buildings.



Front S.



Rear N.



Sides E. and W.

Beyond Khyrabad we struck the Farrah river, near the ruins of Sumúr, on its opposite bank, where it sweeps round the high desert cliffs to the south-west. We followed up the stream in an opposite direction, and passing through the ruins of Luftán, amidst which are the remains of two forts of evidently different dates, came to a wide basin formed by the talus of the river, and camped on its left bank, directly opposite the fort of Lásh, which occupies a remarkable position on the verge of a sheer cliff about four hundred and fifty feet high. It rises straight up from the river bed, and in the flood season its base is washed by the swollen stream of the Farrah river. The name is derived from the situation, for in Pushto *lásh* or *lákh* signifies a cliff or precipice.

During our stay here we visited the fort, and were very hospitably received by its chief, Sardar Ahmad Khan, Isháczai, the lord of Hokát. His family have only been settled here since the beginning of the present century. In the time of Shah Ahmad, Durrani, an ancestor named Kamál Khan separated from the tribal chief, Madad Khan, at Kandahar, and took service as a soldier with Tymúr Mirza at Herat. He left a son named Rahmdil, who was a man of no parts or influ-

ence; but his son, Salih Muhammad, became the favourite and confidant of Tymúr's son, Muhammad, and followed him in his varied fortunes for many years.

When Mahmúd succeeded to the throne of Kabul in 1810, he gave this district of Hokát in military fief to his faithful servant, on whom he had bestowed the title of Shah Pasand Khan. At this period the district had hardly recovered from the state of desolation to which it had been reduced by the invasion of Tymúr Lang, and was merely the winter resort of Afghan nomads of the Isháczai and Núrzai tribes. The new owner quickly rebuilt the fort of Lásh on the site of it former ruins, and also founded the fortress of Júwen on the plain, three miles off, on the opposite side of the river. He also restored the ruins of Calá Koh and some other important forts.

Later, when Mahmúd's misfortunes, crowding fast on each other, drove him from Kabul, and afterwards lost him the sovereignty in Herat, he found a refuge here with his former trusty adherent, and lived in quiet obscurity for some years, till, on the invitation of his rebellious son, Kamran, he returned to Herat in 1829, and shortly after died there, under suspicious symptoms, called cholera.

Salih Muhammad died, at the age of seventy years, in 1850, having taken an active part in the political revolutions that mark the history of the Herat frontier during the half century. His son Abdurrasúl died during his own lifetime, at Farrah, where he had found an asylum with the governor against the hostility of Yar Muhammad; and his son Ahmad Khan, the present Sardar, who resided at Calá Koh, succeeded his grandfather in the chiefship; and after Yar Muhammad's death, in the

following year, moved his headquarters to Lásh, his brother, Samad Khan, holding the fortress of Júwen.

Lásh is a strongly situated little fort, and commands an extensive view of the surrounding country, and a more desolate prospect it is difficult to imagine. On either side are vast arid deserts abutting upon the valley of the Farrah river and the Hokát basin in high cliffs of bare clay, whilst the low lands between, as far south as the eye can reach, present a dreary waste of ruined towns, dilapidated forts, and obliterated water-courses. The only objects varying the monotony of the dismal scene are the hills closing the view towards the north.

Formerly this district contained twelve flourishing villages, and in the winter months was crowded with the camps of nomad Afghans, but since the Persian occupation of Sistan, and the hostilities waged against the invaders during the past six or seven years, the country has suffered great loss, and is, in fact, almost depopulated. Seven of its villages have been abandoned, and their inhabitants, to the number of four thousand families, been forced to emigrate to Sistan as Persian subjects, in order to avoid the raids made from that quarter, whilst the Afghan nomads have entirely deserted the country, owing to the losses suffered by the forays upon their cattle from the same direction.

Júwen is a strong little fortress, built on the wide talus formed by the alluvium on the left bank of the river. Its walls are solid and substantial, and are surrounded by a deep ditch. These two forts and Calá Koh are the chief strongholds of the Hokát district, which in former times was evidently very populous and highly cultivated, as is testified by the ruins of towns and castles that meet the eye in every direction. They are of far superior construction to the wretched mud hovels

of the villages now existing in the country, and, in their state of demolition and desolation, are reproachful memorials of the invasions and revolutions that have, during successive centuries, reduced a fertile and populous country to a thinly-peopled waste. The ruins in their character resemble those of Pesháwarán and Zahidan, and are evidently of Arab origin; but amidst them here and there are found less artistic and every way inferior structures, plainly of more recent date.

The ancient road between Kandahar and Herat passed through Sistan and Hokát to Farrah and Sabzár or Ispzár, and was the route always followed by invading armies, on account of the abundant supplies it furnished, as well as from the necessity of securing the subjection of its people before the direct route by Girishk could be safely adopted. The incursion of Tymúr completed the destruction commenced by the irruption of Changhiz, and the subsequent invasions of Bábar and Nadir again destroyed the partial restorations that time had effected.

The former, in 1522, captured and dismantled the important fortress of Hok or Ók, from which the district takes its name; Hokát being the Arabic plural of *hok*, and applying to the district of which it was the capital, just as Ghaynát applies to the territory of which Ghayn is the capital. The latter, more than two centuries later, when marching against Kandahar, destroyed all the principal forts on his route from Farrah through Sistan and Garmsel up to Búst; and from this period, about 1737, up to the present time, this country has remained in much the same state of ruin that it was left by Nadir. Hokát possesses all the requisites for a very prosperous little chiefship, so far as the natural conditions of the country are concerned, for its soil is

fertile, and water abundantly at command; but it pines under the curse of anarchy, and groans under the load of its oppressions. The district is about sixty miles from east to west, and about fifty from north to south. Its boundaries are Harút or Adraskand river on the west, the Calá Koh and Farrah hills on the north, the Khash desert on the east, and the Naizár on the south.

From its position on the frontier between the Mughal and Persian empires, this district has suffered the full force of the revolutions and political vicissitudes marking the history of those rival sovereignties, and consequently has never thoroughly recovered from the havoc wrought by the Tatars; and its present state of desolation is only the consequence of the long period of anarchy and misrule that have characterised the history of this region since the downfall of the Arab dominion. Of the capabilities of the soil, and the command of water, the existing memorials of former populous cities are sufficient evidence; and, under a strong government and enlightened rule, there appears no reason why it should not once more become the fertile and prosperous country it is known to have been.

18*th March.*—Lásh to Panjdih, six miles. This was a sorrowful day for us all. We had sent our baggage across the river during the forenoon, and were about to follow at midday, when a courier arrived from Kandahar *viâ* Farrah, bringing our post from Peshawar with dates up to the 16th February. The joy produced by the receipt of these eagerly-looked for budgets, containing as they did letters from those we hold near and dear, and news of the world we had left behind us, was on this occasion sadly shocked by the mournful intelligence of the assassination of the Viceroy of India on the 8th February, at the hands of a convict in the Anda-

mans. The news of Lord Mayo's death cast a gloom over our party for many days, and for some of us the calamity was invested with a peculiarly painful interest, from the fact of our having known the perpetrator of the tragedy for many years as a well-conducted and loyal servant of the British Government. He was an Afridi Pathan, and had during several years done good service as personal orderly to successive Commissioners of Peshawar, and, through the inflexible administration of our law, was condemned to transportation for life for the murder, within British territory, of a fellow clansman in satisfaction of a blood-feud; both being natives of independent territory.

His name was Sher 'Ali, and, like all Pathans with a grievance, he was deterred by the fear of neither God nor man in seizing an opportunity for revenge; and thus it happened that, by an extraordinary accident, the head of the Government fell a victim to his sense of injury, India plunged into mourning, and the country deprived of one of its most popular and able governors.

Leaving our camping-ground, we forded the river a little below the Lásh fort. It flowed in a clear quiet stream, about sixty yards wide, over a firm pebbly bottom; the water reaching half-way up the saddle-flaps. Beyond the river we passed through a wide pebbly gully round the western face of the fort, and gradually rose on to a strip of the desert, which here projects up to the river bed in a promontory half a mile wide. From this elevation we got a good view of the Júwen fort and the ruin-covered basin of the Farrah river; and descending from it, passed north-west over its alluvium, and camped in the midst of the ruins of a considerable town close to the little castle of Panjdih, on the right bank of the river.

In the cliffs of the desert bounding the alluvium on

our left we passed a couple of caves said to have been originally inhabited by fire-worshippers. I dismounted to explore them, and found that they extended for a considerable distance under the cliff. They are very low roofed, and divided into numerous passages by thick pillars formed of the clay soil. The ceiling is very roughly cut out in the shape of a vault, and the hard clay is charred with soot. The floor is covered with human footprints, but farther in is marked by the pads of the hyænas or wolves. The caves could accommodate thirty or forty people according to the estimate of my native attendants.

From Panjdih we marched sixteen miles to Khúshkrodak, or "the dry rivulet," and camped in its wide bed a little off the high road, and on the edge of a thready stream trickling down its centre, amidst an abundant growth of a tall coarse pasture grass called *kerta*.

For the first half of our march the road crossed a wide sweep of alluvium, and then, at a bend of the river called *'Kárwán rez*, rose on to the desert, which here abuts upon it in high bluffs. The river flows in a brisk stream, that winds tortuously over a wide channel full of thick jangal, in which the tamarisk, willow, poplar, and acacia are the most prominent trees.

The desert stretches away towards the south-west in a great undulating waste of firm gravelly soil, thickly covered with pasture plants, now sprouting into leaf, and here and there dotted with shallow pools in the hollows of the surface. It supports great herds of wild asses and gazelles, and swarms with lizards, snakes, and scorpions. Hares, foxes, and wild cats abound in its coverts, and in our passage over it we found numbers of bustard, sand-grouse, and plover of sorts.

Formerly this desert waste used to be frequented by

nomad Afghans, but they have abandoned its pastures owing to the anarchy and insecurity that has prevailed here during the last ten years or so. As we found it, the whole surface is covered with pasture herbs and bushes suited for camels, horned cattle, and sheep. The principal plants are a dwarf mimosa called *chughak*, the wormwood, spiny astragalus, caroxylon, and other saltworts, called here *lána*, *shorai*, and *zmai*, a species of ephedra called *hom*, two or three kinds of caryophyllæ, and a woody shrub bearing yellow flowers and thick fleshy leaves, and having a three-winged fruit. It is called *mákoi* in Pushto, and *ghích* in Persian, and is considered excellent food for camels and sheep. Its wood also furnishes good fuel.

Khúshkrodak is a wide and deep ravine with high banks of stiff clay. It drains the Calá Koh hills, and running across the desert plain in a southerly direction, joins the Farrah river some way below Lásh. Where the high road crosses it the banks are shelving, and present loose blocks of conglomerate rock, but the bed is a stiff clay charged with salines.

Our next stage was fifteen miles across the plain, first north-west and then north, to Calá Koh, or Káh, as it is usually pronounced, at the foot of a range of hills running east and west, and connecting those of Farrah on the north-east with those of Bandan on the south-west.

Calá Koh is the principal of a collection of fortified villages that extend for many miles along the foot of the hills. The others, from east to west, are Shúsh, Fareb, Calá Payín, and Júrg. Interspersed amongst them are the ruins of several villages and forts that have been demolished by different invaders. Calá Koh, which was the residence of the present chief of Lásh up to 1851,

was dismantled in 1863 by orders of the late Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, as a punishment for the contempt of his authority shown by its chief, Sardar Ahmad Khan, Isháczai, the present lord of Hokát.

Since the fall of the Saddozai family this chief had always maintained an independent attitude towards the Barakzai rulers of Kabul and Kandahar, and was favoured by the isolation of his position in resisting their attempts to reduce him to submission. He was, moreover, estranged from them by reason of a blood feud existing between the families, Ahmad Khan's grandfather, Salih Muhammad, having taken part in the cruel butchery of the Wazir Fata Khan, the brother of the Amir Dost Muhammad Khan. On the occasion of Dost Muhammad's move upon Herat he summoned Ahmad Khan to his camp at Farrah, but this Afghan noble, mistrustful of the Amir's designs, and fearful of losing his independence, hastily left his domain and took refuge with the Persians at Mashhad. Consequently the Amir detached a force under his son Sardar Muhammad Sharíf Khan to destroy Calá Koh and plunder the district. The fort has remained in a dismantled state ever since.

The land about Calá Koh is irrigated from streams brought off from the Farrah river, and produces wheat and barley abundantly. The soil is very highly charged with salines, and in wet weather the roads are almost impassable by reason of the depth of mud. We had to cross a small patch of land that had been flooded by a break in the bank of an irrigation canal, and found the mud knee-deep and very tenacious. Many of our baggage cattle fell in it, and were extricated with considerable trouble.

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We found the midday sun here had unusual force. The thermometer in our tents rose to 92° Fah. at three

P.M., and sunk to 52° Fah. at daylight. The height of this place above the sea is about 2100 feet. Along the water-courses grows in abundance a strong thorny bush, much resembling the barberry, but different from it. Its local name is *sag angúrak*, or "dog's grape."

From Calá Koh we marched fifteen miles in a westerly direction, and camped on the bank of the Harút Rúd, the bed of which we found quite dry, though water in sufficiency was found by digging a few feet into its gravelly soil. Our route skirted the hills to the right, and passing through a gap in them, opened on the wide basin of the Harút river, which is a dismal wilderness without a trace of habitation or cultivation. The surface is covered with a thick growth of tamarisk bushes, caroxylon, and other saltworts, carthamus, wild almond, *ghich*, and a profuse variety of other plants, but the hills about are perfectly bare.

At the castle of Jurg we took leave of Sardar Ahmad Khan, who had accompanied our party since we first met on the march from Daki Dela to Cabri Haji. He and his party then went on to pay their devoirs at the shrine of Imám Záhid, at the foot of a hill a couple of miles ahead. It is called *Reg Rawán*, from the "moving sand" on its slope.

A little later we ourselves were obliged to follow their path, owing to the land in our front being impassably deep in mud from the overflow of an irrigation stream. Imám Záhid we found to be a collection of fifteen or sixteen wretched huts round the shrine of that saint, and hard by are a few date-palms of stunted growth. Overlooking all, at a few yards to the north, is the *reg rawán* hill with its covering of loose red sand, which exactly resembles that we met with in the desert bounding the Garmsel on the south, and from which locality it has

probably been drifted here at some remote period, for there is no similar sand anywhere in the vicinity.

The sand fills a wide concavity on the southern slope of a bare rocky ridge detached from the Calá Koh range, and forms an isolated mass, as remarkable from its position as from the sounds it emits when set in motion. As we passed on, our late companions on the march toilfully plodded their way up the sandy slope to the summit of the hill. Their steps set the loose particles of sand in motion, and their friction, by some mysterious acoustic arrangement, produced a sound as of distant drums and music, which we heard distinctly at the distance of a mile. The sounds were not continuous, but were only now and again caught by the ear, and much resembled those produced by the Æolian harp, or the wind playing on telegraph wires. These sounds are often emitted by the action of the wind on the surface of the sand, and at other times without any assignable cause. The phenomenon has invested the locality with a sacred character, and visitors to the shrine consider their devotions incomplete till they have toiled up the sands and repeated their prayers on the hill-top. There are similar collections of sand on other hills of this range some miles farther on, as we observed in the next march, but they are divested of interest to the natives since they produce no sound.

At the Harút river we found the sun hot, and a south wind blowing all day produced a sensible change in the climate. The bed of the river where we camped presented a shallow pebbly bed with low shelving banks, and the soil on either side was covered with great patches of white saline efflorescence. This river, after leaving the Anárdarrah valley, forms the western boundary of Hokát, and the hills bounding its basin to the west, joining the Nih Bandán range farther south, form the

western boundary of Sistan. Beyond this range, to the west, is a long strip of desert, called Dashti Náummed, which extends north and south, and forms the limit between Afghanistan and Persia,

22*d March.*—Harút Rúd or river to Cháhi Sagak, twenty-four miles. Our route was westward, by a well-trodden path, across a wide basin covered with thick jangal of two kinds of tamarisk, called *gaz* and *tághaz*, interspersed amongst a profuse growth of caroxylon, salicornia, spiny astragalus, wild almond, carthamus, mimosa, artemisia, Syrian rue, blue iris, tulips, and other bulbous plants, and various species of herbs.

Beyond this we passed through an interrupted chain of hills trending north and south, and entered on an undulating surface covered with a profusion of pasture plants, of which the asafœtida is prominent from its abundance. This plain is called Arwita, and extends northwards up to the Cháhi Shor, or "saline well" hills, beyond which, through the valley of the Harút river, it joins the Anárdarrah glen.

Crossing this, we passed through a gap in the Regoh hills, so named from an isolated drift of sand on the southern slope of its principal ridge, similar to that of the Reg Rawán already described, and entered on another pasture plain called Damdam. The Regoh hill is of red granite, and the soil of the plain is a firm gravel strewed with bits of cellular lava, with here and there some remarkable outcrops of white quartz resembling cairns.

Near one of these, on the roadside, we found a number of burrows or trenches, roofed over with the branches of bushes growing around, and covered over with soil. Each was only large enough to contain a man lying full length, and must have been entered feet foremost, as there was but one opening, and it only admitted of this

mode of entry. They were formerly used as shelter from the weather by the shepherds tending their flocks here; but these pastures have been abandoned by the Afghan nomads for many years, owing to the insecurity of the country, although the whole tract up to Cháhi Sagak is their recognised pasture limit.

This, road too, which from remote times has been the caravan route between India and Persia, by Kandahar and the Bolan on the one side, and Lásh and Birjand on the other, has long been abandoned as a trade route, owing to its unsafety, and the risks from plundering bands of Sistanis and Baloch on the one hand, and Afghans and Ghâynís on the other.

At about midway on the march we halted at the Cháhi Damdam for breakfast. It is a wide-mouthed well or pit at the foot of a low hill, the southern slope of which is covered with a mass of loose red sand like Regoh and Reg Rawán, but of smaller size, and contains some coffee-coloured water of most uninviting appearance, but it was free from smell, and not bad tasted.

Beyond this we passed through an interrupted ridge of hills, the highest of which, away to the south, is called Tagi Atashkhana, and is said to produce flint stones, and then sloped gently down to the Dashti Náummed, or "desert of despair," which is the great boundary between Afghanistan and Persia. It is here about six miles wide, and runs north and south between parallel ranges of hills. The surface is covered with a profusion of excellent pasture plants and asafœtida in great abundance. In former times it used to be the common grazing-ground for the cattle of the Afghan tribes in the vicinity, from Sistan, Hokát and Farrah; but owing to the border disputes between the Persian and Afghan governments it has been deserted for several years, and its pastures

are now the hunting-ground of marauding Baloch and Afghans, who harry the country from all sides.

Though hardly six miles wide where we crossed it, this belt of desert is said to expand considerably towards the north and south, and in the former direction extends up to the limits of Mashhad. On its farther side we camped at the outlet of a gully draining the range of hills dividing Afghanistan from Persia, near a well called Cháhi Sagak, or "dog's well." It is the farthest point claimed as Afghan territory in this direction, and is a mere camping-stage, without a vestige of habitation or cultivation; in fact, there are no signs of such in all this tract west of Imám Záhid. The name of the well is applied in a disparaging sense, and very appropriately too, for its water was the worst we had anywhere met with on the whole of our long march. The liquid hardly deserved the name of water, for it was a thick, muddy, putrid brine, which it was impossible to drink disguised in any way. We tried it with tea and coffee and brandy, but neither lessened its salt taste, nor concealed its smell of sulphureted hydrogen, and we were content to do without. Our cattle one and all refused it, and the only ones who used it were some of our baggage-servants, with stomachs stronger and instincts weaker than those of the brutes they drove.

The land rises gently all the way in this march, and at Cháhi Sagak is about 1100 feet higher than at Harút Rúd. The weather was mild and cloudy all day, with occasional north-westerly breezes. We saw a number of gazelles on the line of march, and fresh signs of wild asses, a herd of which had been startled out of sight by our baggagers ahead.

23*d March.*—Cháhi Sagak to Duroh, twenty-eight miles. At first our route was westerly up the course of

a winding drainage gully, flanked on each side by low hills of friable slate, in the clefts and hollows of which were scattered a few pistacia trees (the *khinjak* of the Afghans), here called *bannah*, and shrubs of the wild almond and barberry.

At about the sixth mile we reached the watershed, and ascended an adjoining eminence for a view of the country. Towards the north and west the prospect was obstructed by hills, but to the south and east we obtained an extensive view of the great desert of Ghayn and Kirman, called Dashti Lút, and the wide plan of Sistan, on either side of the range we were crossing. Each bore a striking resemblance to the other in the vast extent of level surface unrelieved by any more attractive objects than great patches of saline encrustation on the one side, and long silvery streaks of water on the other.

By the indications of the aneroid barometer, I estimated the height of this watershed at 3870 feet above the sea. Beyond this we crossed a hilly country drained by a number of wide pebbly channels that converge towards the south. The principal of these are the *Rúdi ushtur ran*, or "the camel-track river," and the *Rúdi míl*, and both, though now quite dry, bear traces of the action of considerable floods at certain seasons. Their beds and banks supported a thin growth of tamarisk and other bushes, and here and there their channels were obstructed by huge blocks of granite rock.

On the west of the Rúdi Míl rises a high hill called Calá Koh, from the resemblance of its summit to a fort, and its name is applied to the whole range, the different peaks of which are distinguished by their several distinctive appellations. The scenery amongst these hills is very wild and rugged. Great ridges of bare rock close the view in every direction, whilst the hollows between the

lesser heights present a very broken surface, dotted here and there with thorny bushes, as rough and hardy looking as the rocks amongst which they grow.

Beyond Rúdi Míl we passed through a gap in the Calá Koh range, and entered a circular basin enclosed by low hills of grey granite. Its soil is a firm gravel, and the surface abounded in tulips, orchids, lilies, and other bulbous herbs. From this we passed into another similar basin, in which we found some cattle at graze, the first we have seen since leaving Sistan; and beyond it emerged on to the Duroh *júlga*, where we camped at the foot of the hills, close to the village of that name, the first we have come to in Persia.

The climate here is notably different from that of the country we have left behind. During the day the air was delightfully mild and balmy, and at night fresh and bracing. In crossing the Calá Koh range, we have in fact entered a different country. The change too is observable no less in the characteristics of its people than of its climate. The people here are much fairer skinned than the Afghans, are differently clothed, and appear a more orderly community.

Duroh is a flourishing little village surrounded by cornfields and walled gardens. It is supplied with water from a spring in the hills hard by, and is protected by a couple of fortified towers on some rocky heights overlooking the village. Below it is a wide sandy ravine, and beyond lies a long level valley extending north and south between hills, and covered with a profusion of pasture herbs, on which we found some large herds of cattle at graze.

From Duroh we marched twenty-seven miles in a north-westerly direction to Husenabad, where we camped. For the first sixteen miles our path led diagonally across

the valley, and then followed up the course of a drainage gully bounded by hills of chlorite slate, through which at intervals projected masses of a dark close-grained granite. The soil of the valley is a firm gravel, thickly carpeted with plants in great variety. The *ghîch*, wormwood, wild rue, and asafœtida were remarkably abundant, but the caroxylon and other saltworts found to the eastward were here altogether absent.

We halted for breakfast at the mouth of the gully, where is an artificial cistern called Cháhi Bannah, from a few *bannáh* trees (Pistacia sp.) growing close by, and on the glistening chlorite mounds around found the wild rhubarb in some quantity. The gully winds a good deal, and narrows as it ascends, but the slope is gradual and the road not difficult. On the skirts of the hills on either side are a number of small heaps of clay produced by the disintegration of the rock; they are of different colours, as ash grey, bluish, fawn colour, and white, and from their bright hues form an attractive feature in the general scene.

At about three miles we came to a watershed called Gudari Mesham. Its elevation is about 4900 feet, and the ridge is composed of white magnesian limestone, which is almost entirely bare of vegetation.

On our way up this pass we met the first travellers it had been our lot to see or pass on all the road from Kandahar westward. They formed a small party of about twenty men, with double the number of asses and bullocks, and were on their way from Birjand to Sistan for grain, like Israel of old from Canaan to Egypt, for the famine was sore in the land. They were very poor and submissive-looking people, and, to our surprise, bowed respectfully as we passed. We had been so accustomed to the independent bearing of the Afghans, and their haughty indifference towards strangers, that we were unprepared

for this voluntary mark of deference. One of their party, who lagged in the rear, appeared from his patchwork frock and dissolute looks to be a member of some order of religious mendicants, and, on seeing us, at once assumed the air of impudent defiance it is the privilege of his class to exhibit. As we approached he still kept the road, and shouted with stentorian voice, "*Hacc! Hacc! Alláh! Gushnaam! Bakhshi Khudá!*" (or, "Just one! just one! God! I am hungry! the portion of God!"), the while stretching out his hands for contributions. Another noteworthy circumstance about these travellers was the fact of their being for the most part disarmed. None of them carried guns, and only two were armed with swords. I will not attempt to explain this custom of travelling unarmed, being insufficiently acquainted with the conditions under which the people live, and the internal state of the country. I may observe, however, that it explains the facility with which Afghan, Baloch, and Sistan marauders harry the country, and carry off its people into slavery in Afghanistan. I was informed on reliable authority, that most of the slave girls employed as domestics in the houses of the gentry at Kandahar were brought from the outlying districts of Ghayn.

Beyond the watershed, our path sloped down to a wide upland plain, similar to that of Duroh, and, like it, extending from north to south. We skirted the hills along its eastern border for some miles, and then turned off to the Husenabad fort in the centre of the plain.

The fort is a very neat little structure of apparently recent construction. At each of its four corners is a round bastion, and over the gateway is a turret; on each of two sides are neat rows of domed huts close under the walls, and around are some corn-fields, but no trees nor gardens. The water here is from a *kárez*, or, as

the subterranean conduits are here called, *canát*, and though clear and fresh to look at, is so briny as to be almost undrinkable; yet the people use no other. We halted here a day, and during our stay got our supplies of water from a sweet spring at the foot of the hills across the plain to the east. Its site is marked by the ruins of an ancient castle called Caláta Cáimáb.

The plain of Husenabad is a wide pasture tract of light gravelly soil, covered at this season with a bright green carpet of short grass, on which we found some large flocks of goats and sheep at graze. Standing on the open plain, a couple of miles to the north-east, is the old fort of Husenabad. It appears in very good preservation, though it has been abandoned for some years owing to the drying up of its water supply.

Since we crossed the Afghan border at Cháhi Sagak, the weather has been more or less cloudy, frequent showers have fallen, and occasional storms have burst over the hills, topping the higher ones with a coating of snow. The climate here at this season is very delightful. The air is mild, light, and fresh, and the sun shines with an agreeable warmth, very different from the oppressive heat of its rays in Sistan. The elevation of Husenabad is about 4480 feet above the sea. In winter its climate is described as very severe, owing to the cold blasts of the north wind that sweep across the plain.

26*th March.*—Husenabad to Sarbesha, twenty-nine miles. We set out under a cold and cloudy sky, and proceeding in a north-westerly direction across the plain, and over an upland pasture tract, at about seventeen miles came to the Abi Ghunda Koh, a large pool of fresh water fed by a strong spring situated at the entrance of a gully in the hills.

On our way over the plateau we passed a number of

Elyát tents, dotted in threes and fours over the surface, and saw large flocks of goats and sheep. Some of the women came out of their tents with platters of burning *sipand*, or Syrian rue, the *spelanai* of the Afghans, and *harmal* of the Indians, and raced across the mead, shouting in very unfeminine tones, "*Pul bidih, gushnaem!*" ("Give us money; we are starving!"), and a chorus of other complaints, which happily were easily appeased at the cost of a few *kráns*. These women, and some of the men who accompanied them, were neither young nor good-looking, but they had hardy features, and tough bronzed skins, and appeared to me physically inferior to the Afghan nomad, and certainly poorer.

Seeing these people scattered widely in their tents, and considering the nature of their country, overrun as it is by interrupted hill ranges affording concealment to the robber, one can easily understand how a dozen horsemen, suddenly dashing out from their shelter in the hills, could surprise one of the small camps, and carry off its women and children before succour could arrive. Formerly these frontier Elyáts used to be regularly hunted by the Afghan and Baloch, and sometimes even the Turkman, their cattle carried off, and themselves sold into slavery. Of late years, however, this miserable species of raid has been put a stop to. But the Elyát of Ghayn very seldom venture beyond the protection of the frontier forts, such as Husenabad. Their wealth principally consists in goats and sheep, the former particularly, and also camels.

Immense flocks of goats are reared on the rich pastures of this elevated region. They are almost all of a black colour, with long coarse hair that hangs in matted tangles. We noticed that most of the goats were shedding a very soft light-brown down that grows at the

roots of the hair. It adhered in flocks to the matted tresses of hair, and was easily picked off. Some flocks I gathered were extremely soft and fine and downy, and seemed to have been shed with the outer skin, for dry scales of cuticle were caught in its meshes.

This down is picked off and collected under the name of *kurk*, and is used in the manufacture of a soft, warm woollen stuff known by that name. This *kurk* is made up into the cloaks called *chogha*, *jubba*, &c., and the finer kinds fetch a high price. The camels and sheep shed a similar down, and the materials manufactured from them are called respectively *shuturi pashmína* and *barrak pashmína*. The coarser kinds of all three materials are called *pattú*, and somewhat resemble baize in texture.

We alighted at the Abi Ghunda Koh for breakfast. Its preparation proved as difficult a task as its discussion afterwards was a disagreeable duty. A steady rain had set in, and squally gusts of wind from the south whirled drifts of its drenching showers upon us with unmitigated persistence, in the poor shelter afforded by the lee of the rocks around. Our Persian servants were, however, quite equal to the occasion, and speedily produced a number of hot dishes from the stores concealed in the recesses of the capacious bags of their packhorses, with more facility than we experienced in their disposal.

The rain had washed the rocks, and brought out their bright colours with unusual distinctness, and the mounds of amygdaloid trap and speckled granite shone out handsomely. For three miles onwards from this pool our route followed the course of a drainage gully, the surface of which sparkled with bright-coloured stones; fragments of green, red, and brown trap, light blue and pink water agates, cellular lava of cream, orange, and chocolate hues, and masses of a striated and starred rock of rust colour,

resembling iron ore, with sharp angular fragments of "pepper and salt" trap, strewed the path everywhere.

At the top of the gully we rose suddenly by a narrow path over a great ridge of granite on to a small gap called Gudar Ghanda Koh. It forms the watershed boundary between the Husenabad and Sarbesha plateaux, and is about 6885 feet above the sea, the aneroid on its summit figuring 22·91. The descent on the other side is by a long slope, skirting some low hills to the left down to the great Sarbesha plateau, which we crossed at its southern extremity, and camped at the village from which it takes its name.

In our route over this pass we found a good deal of wild vegetation in the hollows of the hills. The principal plants were the wild almond and tamarisk, dwarf ephedra, camel-thorn, and the *ghîch*, also caroxylon, wild rue, artemisia, orchids, crocus, and other similar plants.

We halted a day at Sarbesha, owing to the inclemency of the weather, and saw enough to prove that its winter must be a rigorous season. Rain fell more or less continuously during our halt here; the air was cold, raw, and cheerless, and wintry blasts of a south wind howled over the wide plateau in dismal tones quite in keeping with the bleak and wild nature of the country. During our stay here two couriers overtook us with posts from Peshawar. They arrived within a few hours of each other, the one with Peshawar dates up to the 26th February from Jacobabad *viâ* Calât and Kandahar, and the other with dates from the same place up to the 1st March by the direct route of Kurram and Ghazni to Kandahar.

Sarbesha, or "wilderness head," is an open village of 350 domed huts at the foot of a high detached hill. It is named from its position at the head of a great wilderness or waste, that extends away to the north-west for

many miles as an open plateau bounded by bare hills. It is the residence of the *zábit* or governor of this frontier district, who came to meet us at Husenabad. His name is Saggid Mír Asadullah Beg, and he has the power to cut off noses and ears at discretion, and to mutilate in other forms, but not to deprive of life. He discharged his special duties towards us with no unnecessary grace, and left no more notable memorial of his character than his steady devotion to the *calyán*, which he kept going throughout the march, lighting and relighting its replenished bowl I am afraid to say how often, but much oftener than could be good for anybody.

The Sarbesha plateau, though yet dreary, bleak, and wild in the transition state from the snows of winter to the balmy airs of spring, is not always the waste it now looks.

In summer its wide surface is clothed with the richest pastures, on which vast flocks of goats and sheep find sustenance, and covered with the tents of Elyát tribes occupied with their care, whilst the numerous villages now barely discernible in the sheltered nooks along the hill skirts bursts into full view with the budding of the gardens amongst which they are nestled. The climate of this region is described as most delightful and salubrious, but the winter is rigorous. If the appearance alone of the people be taken as the test, they certainly speak well in its favour, for they are remarkably fair, robust, and healthy-looking as a whole. They appear to be a prosperous and peaceable community, being well clad and well conducted. They are principally employed in the manufacture of woollen carpets of the kind called *cálín*, but those produced here are of inferior quality.

Our next stage was twenty-two miles to Calá Múd, where we camped close to the village, under the ruins of

an old fort. Our route was in a north-west direction along a beaten track skirting the Sarbesha hill at first, and then across a small plain enclosed by hills. It is called Bayaban-i-Hanz, from a reservoir of water in its centre. After marching nine miles, we halted at this reservoir for breakfast. It is a masonry cistern covered by a dome, and flanked on each side by a couple of vaulted chambers for the shelter and refreshment of wayfarers. Similar reservoirs are common on all the highroads throughout this Persian province of Khorassan, and are found generally at intervals of four or eight miles. They are called *ábambár*, or "water store," and are all built on the same plan, though not always provided with the flanking chambers. The cistern is mostly stocked from the surface drainage after rains, and consequently some of them are often found dry. Many, however, are fed from natural springs, or from some adjoining subterranean conduit, called *kárez*, and contain a constant supply of generally sweet water. They are sometimes built as an act of charity by the piously disposed, but most owe their construction to the actual requirements of the country, and the interest of the local governors or chiefs. Without them, indeed, travelling would be almost impossible in this region, for the villages are so far apart, and the hill spring so far away from the beaten track, that neither man nor beast could support the privation conveniently.

Beyond the reservoir our path continued across the plain towards some broken country and low ridges of rock that separate the Sarbesha plateau from the valley of Múd. On our passage over this ground we saw several villages in the nooks of the hill range bounding the Sarbesha valley to the northward. The principal of these, Bedár and Shíka, are prosperous and populous-

looking places, surrounded by fruit gardens just now beginning to bud.

Múd or Mód is an open village of neatly-built domed houses, situated below a mound occupied by the ruins of a castle, and at a short distance to the south-east are the more recent ruins of a considerable square fort. The later was dismantled some fifteen years ago, when this district passed into the possession of the reigning dynasty of Persia. The ground around its walls is now occupied by *zirishk* or barberry plantations, the fruit of which is made into preserves, and largely exported into the interior in the dried state.

The village of Múd is only half-peopled; many of its houses are deserted, and others are fallen to decay. This is partly owing to the emigration during the past three years of famine, but principally to the insecurity of the country during the past century. It is only within recent years that the country has enjoyed immunity from the forays of Baloch, Afghan, and Turkman robbers, who used to harry their villages, and carry off their cattle and people.

Múd is situated at the top of a long and narrow valley, that slopes rapidly to the south-west down to Birjand. The valley to the northward is separated from the western prolongation of the Sarbesha plateau by a low ridge of sandy hills, and is bounded to the south by a high range of snow-covered hills called Bághrán. This range consists of chlorite and slate, and its base is studded by a close succession of villages, castles, and hamlets, surrounded by gardens and watered by springs, all the way down to Birjand.

During our stay here the weather was cloudy, cold, and wintry, and the scenery, singularly wild naturally, now bore an unusually inhospitable aspect. The valley

and lower heights have only lost their winter snows during the present month, and the highest elevations are said to keep a more or less scattered coating of snow throughout the year. For three months the whole country is covered deeply with snow, over all the more elevated region between this and Duroh, but on the lower level of Birjand it does not lie so long.

From Múd we marched twenty-five miles west by north down the slope of the valley to Birjand, where we camped outside the town under the walls of the castle occupied by the governor. The valley has an average width of less than four miles, and its surface slopes up to the Bághrán range of hills, forming its southern boundary. In the opposite direction its hollow is occupied by a drainage ravine. The soil is a firm gravel, from which were commencing to sprout a variety of herbs, such as wild rue, orchids, tulips, &c., and a thin grass in abundance. No trees are seen on the plain, but the hill skirt to its south is fringed with a close succession of fruit gardens and vineyards, amongst which are nestled numerous villages, castles, and country-houses. The principal villages are, from east to west, Cháhikan, Nanfiris, Banjar, and Bahuljird. Their gardens produce the jujube, barberry, apricot, peach, plum, apple, mulberry, &c., &c., and give the place a look of prosperity and plenty, strangely in contrast with the wild character of the country and the bare aspect of its hills. Those to the south, below the snow-streaked summit of the range, present a bare glistening surface, and are set at their bases by a succession of mounds, very prominent objects of attraction from their bright hues of green, blue, and orange, evidently formed by the disintegration of the chlorite and schistose slates of the range, which altogether wear a richly metalliferous look. There is said

to be a copper mine in this range, some ten or twelve miles south-west of Sarbesha. It was worked in the time of the late Mirzá Hamzá, governor of Mashhad, but was abandoned four or five years ago, owing to the expenses exceeding the yield of ore.

To the north the valley is bounded by a low ridge of bare sandy hills, scored in every direction by sheep-walks. Through a gap in the ridge, which gives passage to the Múd ravine, we got a good view of the Sarbesha plateau, which here stretches away in a wide upland to the hills closing the prospect towards the north, where is situated the district of Alghór.

Proceeding from the *ábambár* where we halted for breakfast, we marched down the valley in sight of Birjand, at its lower end, and at three miles came to the village of Bojd. In Yar Muhammad's time, it was the residence of the Afghan revenue collector for the district of Ghayn. It is now a decayed and nearly depopulated collection of some eighty houses, on the slope of a ridge, overlooking corn-fields and fruit gardens, that cover the here widening valley up to Hajiabad, a couple of miles farther on. This last is a neat country-house, standing in its own grounds, and is the residence of the mother of Mír Alam Khan, the present chief of Ghayn, and Persian governor of Sistan. She is said to be a very clever and wealthy old lady, and exercises considerable influence in the government of the province.

Away to the south, on the open plain, is another similar country-house, the summer residence of Mír Alam, the son. It stands in the midst of an ornamental garden, and commands a wide view of the surrounding country. At about a mile from Birjand we were met by an *isticbal* party, and conducted to our camp, pitched outside the town under the walls of the palace of the

governor. The party was headed by a little boy, Hydar Culi, the youngest son of the chief of Ghayn. He was preceded *en règle* by two led horses, and attended by eight horsemen. Though only eight years old, he rode a high horse both positively and figuratively with the composure and *savoir faire* of one of mature years. His eldest brother, Sarbang Ali Akbar, who, during his father's absence in Sistan, manages the government of the province, excused his absence on the plea of ill-health. We halted here three days.

In our march this day we have descended about 1200 feet, the elevation of Birjand being 4880 feet, and that of Múd 6100 feet above the sea. There is a sensible difference in the climate, the air here being delightfully pure, mild, and light, and the sun's rays agreeably warm. The nights, however, are yet cold, and keen gusty winds circle about the lower part of the valley, which forms a wide basin in the hills. The summer here is described as a temperate and salubrious season, and the winter mild in comparison with the more elevated regions of the district. Snow lies on the ground from one to two months, and during the past winter, which has been a severer one than any for the last fifteen years, fell in unusual quantity.

Birjand, the modern capital of the district of Ghayn or Cayn, is an open town of about two thousand houses, and is protected by a fort on some rising ground on the west side. On the south side is the palace of the governor, enclosed by fortified walls, and on some detached mounds to the north are three or four towers in a state of decay. The town has a very neat and prosperous look, and its people appear to have altogether escaped the pressure of the famine that has prevailed over other parts of the country. We saw no beggars here, and the

mass of the people were remarkably well dressed, and seemed comfortably off. The population is estimated at twelve thousand, which is, I think, considerably over the real number.

Birjand is the centre of a considerable trade with Kandahar and Herat on one side, and Kirmán, Yazd, and Tehran on the other. It is also the seat of the carpet manufactures, for which this district has been celebrated from of old. These carpets are called *cálín*, and are of very superior workmanship and of beautiful designs, in which the colours are blended with wonderful harmony and incomparable good effect. The best kinds fetch very high prices, and are all bespoke by agents for the nobles and chiefs of the country. The colours are of such delicate shades, and the patterns are so elaborate and tasteful, and the nap is so exquisitely smooth and soft, that the carpets are only fit for use in the divans of oriental houses, where shoes are left without the threshold. The best kinds are manufactured in the villages around, and those turned out from the looms of Duroshkt Nozád, enjoy a pre-eminent reputation for excellence.

The Ghayn district consists of nine *bulúk* or divisions, each of which contains from twenty to thirty villages and a great number of *mazrá* or hamlets. The *bulúk* are Nih, Zerkoh, Khusp, Nárjún (includes Sarbesha and Birjand), Sunnikhána, Alghór or Arghol, Ghayn, Nímbulúk and Shahwá. The population of the district was formerly reckoned at thirty thousand families, but what with losses by death and emigation during the famine, it does not now contain half that number.

The natural products of the country are very varied. The low-lying plains of Khusp produce wheat, barley, millet, beans and pulses, excellent melons, and all the common vegetables, such as carrots, turnips, beetroot, &c.

Cotton and tobacco are also grown, and fruit gardens and vineyards also flourish. In the higher plains of Birjand and Ghayn, saffron is extensively cultivated, and the silkworm is reared with success. Here too are found large barberry plantations, and almost all the orchard fruits common in Europe. At higher elevations in the little glens amongst the hills are extensive vineyards and fruit gardens, whilst rhubarb grows wild on the hill, and asafœtida on the plains almost everywhere.

The industrial products are carpets, woollen materials called *kurk*, *pashmina*, and *pattú*, silk raw and manufactured, and felts called *namad*. These with dried fruits, asafœtida, and wool are all exported in greater or less quantity. In return are imported corn from Sistan, *kirmiz* (scarlet dye) from Bukhára by Herat, indigo from India by Kandahar, sugar refined at Yazd from the Indian raw sugar, *postin* or fur coats (mostly sheepskin) from Herat, rice, spices, tobacco, and European hardware from Tehran, as also calicoes, prints and broadcloths.

The Ghayn district is an elevated mountain region, separating the waste area of western Afghanistan from the wide tract of similar and more perfect desert on the adjoining border of Persia. Towards the north-west it is continuous through the highlands of Tún and Tabbas with the rest of the mountain system of Persian Khorassan, as represented by the highlands of Záwah on the one hand and Turshíz on the other. Between its hill ranges it supports a number of wide plateaux and fertile valleys, that mostly trend from north-west to south-east, and range in elevation from four thousand to seven thousand feet above the sea.

To the south it is separated from Kirwan and Sistan by the Dashti Lút, or "Desert of Lot." To the east the

Dashti Náummed, or "desert of despair," intervenes between it and the districts of Hokát and Farráh. On the west it is separated from Yazd and Kashán by a vast salt desert called Daryái Kabír, or "the great ocean," or simply *kavír* or *kabír*. Towards the north, at Yunasi, a narrow arm of this salt desert cuts the mountain chain from west to east, and spreads out into the desert of Khaf, where it joins the Dashti Náummed on the south and the deserts of Herat and Sarrakhs on the north.

The inhabitants of Ghaynát, which is the name by which the district is known, are of various races and tribes, classed under the collective appellations of Arab and Ajam, or those of Arab descent and those of foreign descent. The former appear to have been settled here since the time of the Arab conquest, and have for several centuries furnished the ruling chiefs of the country. The present chief belongs to this tribe, and the rule of the country has descended in his family since the establishment of the Saffavi dynasty. Formerly the residence of the family was at Ghayn, but in the time of Nadir, the chief, Mír 'Ali, transferred his headquarters to Birjand. He was succeeded in the rule by his son Mír Alam, and he by his son Mír Asadullah, both of whom were subjects of the Durrani kings. On the break-up of this dynasty, Mír Asadullah became independent to all intents, and as such took his part in the political struggles between the Cajar and Afghan for supremacy on this contested frontier, that characterise its history since the commencement of the present century.

During the period that Aleahyár Khan, Asafuddaula, was governor of Khorassan on the part of Persia, the Cajar king, finding his designs against Herat frustrated by the action of the British Government, resolved on accomplishing piecemeal what he was prevented from effecting by a

coup de main; and his governor of Khorassan, during the thirteen years of his rule at Mashhad, brought under subjection all that portion of the province lying to the north of the latitude of Herat, viz., the districts of Turbatain, Turshíz, and Tabbas, as the fruits of his successive campaigns on this border. Asafuddaula twice marched a force for the subjugation of Ghayn, and each time unsuccessfully. On the first occasion, in 1835, shortly after his installation in the government of the province, the chief, Mír Asadullah, retired to Sistan, and, as an Afghan subject dependent on Herat, sought the aid of its ruler. The Prince Kamrán sent his wazír, Yar Muhammad, with a contingent of Herat troops to the aid of the fugitive chief. And these, joined by the Sistan army under Muhammad Razá, Sarbandi, defeated the Persians at Nih, and restored Mír Asadullah to his rule in Ghayn as a dependent of Herat. On the second occasion, a couple of years later, Mír Asadullah, on the approach of the Persian troops under Muhammad 'Ali, son of Asafuddaula, abandoning his province, repaired to Herat for aid in its recovery. Yar Muhammad furnished a contingent of Herat troops, who defeated the Persians in a battle fought at Sih Calá, and reinstated Asadullah in the government of Ghayn. In the succeeding siege of Herat, however, Ghayn was annexed to Persia, and the chief, Mír Asadullah, and his son, Mír Alam, the present chief, were taken prisoners to Mashhad. On the retreat of the Persian army from Herat, and the restoration of peace on this border, they were restored to Ghayn as Persian subjects; and the father dying shortly afterwards, was succeeded in the government by his son Mír Alam, who during his stay at Mashhad and Tehran was reconciled to the change of masters by conciliatory treatment and very advantageous terms of allegiance. Mír Alam, who is now

Persian governor of Sistan, with the title of Hashmat-ul-Mulk, is a very popular governor here, and has the character of being an energetic and liberal-minded man. He pays no revenue direct to the Persian Government, but is held responsible for the maintenance of the royal troops employed in his province, and, further, sends an annual tribute to the Shah. In other respects he is pretty much of an independent chief in his own limits.

He has taken advantage of the troubled state of politics in Afghanistan ever since the British occupation of the country, not only to extend his possessions up to their natural limits, but to cross the Perso-Afghan border, and take possession of Sistan on behalf of the Shah of Persia. Up to the death of Yar Muhammad in 1851, all the border districts of Ghayn, including Sunnikhana and Nárjun as far as Bojd, were held as dependencies of Herat, and Afghan revenue collectors were posted in the frontier villages, such as Gizik and Bojd, on the part of Yar Muhammad. On the death of that ruler, and during the succeeding changes and struggles that led to the occupation of Herat by the Persians in 1856, these border districts fell away from the control of the Herat Government, and lapsed to their rightful lord, the chief of Ghayn. The transgression of the border into Sistan was effected at a later period, during the anarchy that convulsed Afghanistan on the death of the Amir Dost Muhammad, and the accession of his son, Sher 'Ali, to the throne.

Mír Alam is now the most influential and wealthy chief on the Khorassan frontier of Persia. His power and independent action, it is said, have rendered him an object of jealousy and suspicion to the prince-governor of Mashhad, who is also governor of the whole province of Khorassan; and neither conceals his hatred and distrust of the other. The Ghayn chief, however, is strong in

his position, and the policy he is carrying out gains him the support of the court of Tehran. He has three sons, namely, 'Ali Akbar, aged eighteen years, who, with the title of Sarhang, resides at Birjand, and carries on the government during his father's absence in Sistan; Mír Ismáil, aged fourteen years, who is now on a pilgrimage to Karbalá; and Hydar Culi, the little boy who officiated in the honours of our reception at Birjand.

The other tribes included under the term *Ajam* are mostly Persians, with a few scattered families of Turks, Kurds, Mughals and Balochs. They constitute the rural population, and are employed in agriculture and the tending of cattle. Physically they are a fine people, with light complexions and hardy features.

CHAPTER X.

2*d April.*—Marched from Birjand to Ghíbk or Ghínk, eighteen miles. The weather, which during our stay at Birjand had been delightfully mild and balmy, now changed and became bleak and stormy. During the night, a strong east wind blew in eddying gusts that threatened the stability of our tents. In the forenoon it changed to the west, and towards sunset veered round to the north, and closed the evening with a storm and heavy rain.

We had been promised a relay of camels at this place, and up to the last were deceived by false assurances of their being ready at the time appointed for our departure. But as they were not produced at the time agreed, and we had seen enough to shake our faith in the ready promises of their immediate arrival, it was decided that we should leave our large tents and heavy baggage here, to be brought on after us so soon as the promised camels should be provided, and proceed ourselves with the small tents and mule carriage, according to the original intention.

At noon, therefore, we set out in light marching order, and after passing clear of the town, crossed a wide ravine that courses through it towards the west, and entered on a wide plateau that gently slopes up towards the east, in which direction it is continuous with the Sarbesha valley. Our route across this was in a north-easterly direction by a beaten track skirting the base of a high ridge of mountains that close the plateau towards the west. At about eight miles we rose over some low

mounds of fissile slate covered with red marl that project on to the plateau, and beyond them, crossing the deep boulder-strewn ravine of Ishkambár, followed the high-road between the villages of Bújdí on the right and Ishkambár on the left, and passing a roadside *ábambár*, at a couple of miles farther on reached the hamlet of Mahiabad, near the entrance of a deep gorge in the hills, and halted awhile to let the baggage get on ahead.

The rise from Birjand to this, though gradual, is considerable—850 feet as indicated by the aneroid—and from its elevation we got a good view of the Bagrán range of hills to the south, and the great tableland that forms the prospect on its north, in which direction it is bounded by the Múminabad range of hills, that separate it from the Sunnikhana and Alghor districts. This extensive tableland descends considerably towards the west, and is divided unequally into the valley of Múd and plateau of Sarbesha by a low ridge of rocks that run from east to west. The drainage of the whole surface is conveyed by the Fakhrábád ravine through the town of Birjand down to the Khusp river, which is lost in the great desert of the west. We crossed this ravine on leaving camp, and saw that it received the Múd and Ishkambár ravines as tributaries.

The general aspect of this tableland, bounded on all sides by hills, is singularly wild, and at this season its climate is bleak and inhospitable. A cold north wind swept down from the hills in numbing blasts, and howled over the wide waste dismally. Beyond the three little castellated hamlets in our vicinity, not a vestige of habitation or cultivation was anywhere to be seen. Yet in summer, we were assured, the now deserted pastures are covered with nomad tents, and swarm with teeming flocks of goats and sheep and camels.

Mahiabad, like Bújdí and Ishkambár, is a collection of eighteen or twenty miserable huts, protected by a small castle. Like them, too, it is almost depopulated by the effects of the famine, which still presses sorely, notwithstanding the imports of grain from Sistan. In Mahiabad, only four families are left out of its original population of fifteen families. The rest have either died of starvation, or emigrated in search of food. The remnant who still cling to the village are miserably poor, and carry starvation depicted on their features. Their lot now is undoubtedly a cruelly hard one, and in the best of times, could not have been a very favourable one, for the soil is sterile, and composed for the most part of the debris of trap and granite rocks, that strew the surface with sharp angular stones; whilst the water supply, which is from a pool fed by a *kárez*, is so bitter and saline that it is barely drinkable. We tried some tea prepared with it, and that was all, for it was impossible to drink it even thus disguised.

On the plain opposite Mahiabad, and a little distance from Bújdí, is a singular conical hill called *márkoh*, or "serpent hill." It looks like a volcanic crater, and stands out alone by itself. We could not learn that the name had any reference to the existence or not of snakes upon it. Beyond Mahiabad our path entered the hills, and followed the windings of a wildly picturesque defile, the general direction of which is northerly. On our way up the gorge, which widens and narrows alternately, we passed the castellated hamlets of Pisukh and Piranj, each occupying an eminence overlooking the road, and at about the fifth mile reached the watershed, at a narrow pass called Gudar Saman Sháhí. Its elevation is about 7020 feet above the sea, and 2140 feet above Birjand. The ascent is considerable all the way, and the road very

rough, with sharp angular blocks of trap strewing the surface. Here and there the hard rugged rocks approach and narrow the path, so as to render it difficult for the passage of laden cattle. In the pass we overtook our baggage, which had left camp at Birjand at ten A.M., and it did not all arrive in our camp at Ghibk till past nine P.M., the cattle being much exhausted by the march.

Beyond the watershed, the road slopes gently to a little dell full of vineyards, orchards, and fruit gardens; and farther on, crossing a deep boulder-strewn ravine, passes over a flat ridge of slaty rock down to the glen of Ghibk, in which we camped at a few hundred yards below the village, a strip of terraced corn-fields intervening. This is the roughest and most difficult pass we have seen in all our journey so far; and it was the more trying both to man and beast by the inclemency of the weather. A cold north wind blew down the pass in chilling gusts, and at six o'clock, just as we had alighted on our camping-ground, a heavy storm of rain broke over us and drenched everything, so that it was with difficulty we got a fire lighted to warm ourselves till the arrival of our baggage, which did not all come up till three hours later, owing to the men having lost the path in the dark.

We halted here the next day to rest our cattle, and were so fortunate as to have fine weather, with a delightfully clear and fresh atmosphere, which enabled us thoroughly to enjoy and appreciate the climate and scenery of this really charming little eyrie in the hills, of which our first experience was so unfavourable. Our camp is pitched at the bottom of a narrow dell half a mile due west of Ghibk, which is a romantic little village picturesquely perched on the summit and slopes of a mound at its top. From the midst of the huts, rising tier above tier, stands out their protecting castle, now in

a sad state of decay, as indeed is the whole village. Around it are crowded together vineyards and fruit gardens on the terraced slopes of the hills, whilst the dell itself is laid out in a succession of terraced corn-fields, freely watered by sprightly little streams.

The situation is a charming one in this wild region of barren hills and rugged rocks, and in summer must be as agreeable and salubrious a residence as in winter it is bleak and inhospitable. The elevation of our camp at the bottom of the dell is estimated at 6650 feet above the sea, and that of the village itself about a couple of hundred feet higher. In winter, snow falls here very heavily, and the people are shut up in their houses for fully two months. The main range of mountains rises several hundred feet above the elevation of Ghibk, and runs from north-west to south-east, throwing out spurs on either side, that enclose a succession of glens or narrow valleys draining east and west. The Ghibk valley is one of these, and is continuous towards the west, through the gully of the ravine we crossed on approaching it, with the glens of Arwí and Zarwí, the drainage of which ultimately reaches the Khusp river, to be lost on the sandy desert of Yazd. The main range has different names to distinguish its several portions; thus at Ghibk it is called Alghor or Arghol, to the north of this it is called Sághí, and to the south Saman Sháhí. The Alghor range gives its name to one of the principal divisions or *bulúk* of the Ghayn district.

The Alghor *bulúk* is said to contain upwards of three hundred villages and hamlets and farmsteads (*mazrá*), scattered about in nooks and dells amongst the hills. Arwí and Zarwí are amongst the largest of the villages. We visited these during our halt here. They are very picturesquely situated in adjoining dells only two

or three miles off, and each contains about two hundred houses. They have a neat and prosperous look, and are surrounded by vineyards and orchards and small patches of corn cultivation. Ghibk is a smaller village, and contains about seventy or eighty houses. Alghor is the chief town of the *bulúk*, and is said to contain three hundred houses. It is the residence of the agent of the governor of the district, Mír 'Alam Khan. All these villages have suffered more or less severely during the famine, and some have become entirely depopulated. The population of Ghibk was formerly nearly four hundred souls. It now only contains about two hundred and fifty. During last year fifty-three persons, we were told, had died of starvation, and the village has further lost thirty families who have emigrated to Sistan.

From Ghibk we marched eighteen miles, and camped at Sihdih. Our route was generally north by west, up the course of a drainage gully, winding amongst hills, and passing from dell to dell up to a watershed formed by a spur from the Sághí range on our right. It runs east and west, and is about 6750 feet above the sea. The hills are of disintegrated trap overlaid by a soft friable slate, the surface of which has crumbled into a marly soil. Vegetation, though there are no trees nor large bushes, except in the gardens, is more abundant than the wild and rugged look of the hills would lead one to expect. We noticed camel-thorn, ephedra, asafœtida, rhubarb, wormwood, tulip, crocus, bluebell, and other similar plants and grasses, along the line of march.

Beyond the watershed the road slopes gently along the course of a long drainage gully, which winds through a gradually widening country with hills on either side, and at about twelve miles enters the Sihdih valley, an open plateau extending east and west for thirty miles or so.

In the first few miles from the watershed we passed in succession the villages of Nokhán, Cháhikan, and Pista-khan on the left, and Sághí and Husenabad on the right. The country between the hills is much broken by low mounds, all more or less ploughed up and sown with corn. The extent of this cultivation indicates the existence of a much larger population than we see in our passage through the country. The fact is, they are concealed from view in the secluded nooks and glens of the hills around, each of which has its own farmsteads and hamlets, with their vineyards and fruit gardens. The fruits produced here are the plum, apricot, jujube, apple, peach, quince, almond, mulberry, &c. The chief crops are wheat and barley, and the common vegetables are the carrot, turnip, onion, cabbage, beet, &c. In summer the hill pastures are resorted to by nomads with their flocks of goats and sheep and herds of camels. Snow still lies on the higher ranges, and patches are found in the sheltered hollows lower down. The hills abound in game, such as the *márkhor* and *ibix* (both species of wild goat), and the wild sheep. The leopard, hyæna, and wolf are also found on them, but not the bear. The country generally is devoid of trees, but supports an abundant growth of pasture plants and bushes suitable for fuel. We here found the surface covered with the wormwood, and a dwarf yellow rose with a dark purple centre. It is called *khalora*, and affords a good pasture for cattle. I observed it all over the country as far west as Kirmánshaw, and generally in company with the wild liquorice.

Sihdih, as the name implies, is a collection of three villages on the plain to which they give their name. Only one of them is now inhabited, the other two being in ruins. Very superior carpets are manufactured here, and they

seem to fetch also very superior prices, to judge from those asked of us for some specimens we had selected. The fact is, the natural propensity of the merchants to overcharge the stranger, particularly the Britisher, who is always supposed to travel about with untold wealth, had been stimulated by the very liberal ideas of our Persian servants as to their own rights of perquisite or *mudákhil*, as it is termed; and prices were at once doubled or trebled, to the detriment of all parties, for we refrained from purchasing as freely as we would with fair dealing, the merchants lost an opportunity of ready profit, and our servants, the cause of the whole mischief, received but diminished returns, as the fruit of their greed and chicanery.

Our Afghan companions, who well knew the market price of these carpets, and had come prepared to lay in a stock of them for transport to Kandahar, were so disgusted at the *be-ímáni*, or want of conscience, on the part of the Persians, that they altogether refused to treat with them on the terms, and contented themselves by leaving an agent to purchase what they required after our departure, when prices would return to their normal rates. The evils of *dastúrí* in India are bad enough so far as they affect the foreigner, but here, under the name *mudákhil*, they are ten times worse. The *dastúrí* or customary perquisite taken by servants on all purchases made by their master through or with their cognisance, is usually limited to an anna in the rupee, or six and a quarter per cent., but the *mudákhil*, which may be rendered, "all that comes within grasp," has no recognised limit, and ranges high or low, according to the conscience of the exactor and the weakness of his victim. With us, as our subsequent experience proved, it ranged from ten to three hundred per cent., and was an imposi-

tion from which, under the circumstances of the case, we could not escape.

The Sihdih *júlagah* or plain is a fertile valley running east and west, and presents a number of castellated villages along the hill skirts on either side. Its soil is light and gravelly, and in the vicinity of the villages the surface is covered with long strips of corn cultivation. The general slope of the land is to the west, in which direction it drains by a wide ravine that ultimately joins the Khusp river. The water of the *kárez* on which our camp was pitched proved too brackish to drink, and we were obliged to send to another *kárez* beyond the village for a fresh supply. The weather here was very changeable. North-westerly gusts of wind raised clouds of dust, and drove it in eddying drifts across the plain, till a thunderstorm with a smart fall of rain cleared the atmosphere, and allowed the sun to shine out a while before setting for the day.

We heard different accounts here of recent raids by the Turkmans, but the accounts were so conflicting that we could make nothing of them, more than that these slave-hunting freebooters were really on the road and somewhere in the vicinity. The people have such a terror of them that they cannot speak of them without evincing fear, and running off into extravagances as to their ferocity and irresistible prowess.

From Sihdih we marched ten miles to Rúm, and camped on the sloping bank of a brisk little hill stream draining westward, at a short distance from the village. Our route was mostly northward across the plain, but for the last two miles, on entering the hills, was north-eastward. Rúm is a miserable little village of seventy or eighty huts, clustered around a crumbling castle on the very brink of a hill torrent of no depth or width. It now

only contains thirty families of wretchedly poor people, who have so far struggled through the great pressure of the famine. Last year, we were told, forty of the people died of starvation, and between twenty-five and thirty families emigrated in search of food. The remnant were so reduced and broken-hearted that they were unable to bury their dead decently, and merely deposited the bodies in shallow pits covered over with loose soil. I observed some broken skulls and human bones in the little stream washing the walls of the village, and noticed that the whole air of the locality was tainted with putrid odours from the insufficiently covered graves. From Rúm we marched twenty-two miles to Ghayn, and halted there two days. Our route for the first few miles was north-easterly up the course of the Rúm rivulet, and then northerly over a hilly tract, gradually rising up to a watershed at seven miles. The ridge runs east and west, and is about 6550 feet above the sea, and 964 feet above Sihdih. The rock is of friable brown slate, here and there crumbled into clay. The ascent up to the pass is very gradual, over a hillocky hollow between high hills. The surface is everywhere ploughed and sown with corn, and abounds in a variety of weeds, crocus, tulip, anemone, and other plants. We saw no villages, but the cultivation indicates their existence in the secluded nooks and dells around. The morning air was delightfully fresh, a hoar-frost whitened the ground, and our march was enlivened by the clear song of the nightingale and the familiar notes of the cuckoo.

The view from the watershed is very picturesque, and looks down in the distance upon the valley of Ghayn, which stretches east and west beyond a long vista of irregular hills of bare rock, flanked on either side by a high range streaked with snow at the summit.

The descent from the watershed is by a narrow stony path on the steep slope of the hill, down to a winding ravine at its foot. We followed this for some distance, passing three little hamlets with their orchards, saffron gardens, and mulberry plantations in successive little glens, and at about five miles from the watershed came to Kharwaj, a flourishing village of eighty or ninety houses, on the terminal slopes of a spur that causes the gully draining this hollow to make a considerable sweep. The people of this village are Saggids, and appear very comfortably off. They are well clad, and present no signs of suffering from the famine. Both the men and women have remarkably fair complexions and ruddy cheeks, and what surprised me more was the decidedly Tatar cast of their features.

From this we went on down a narrow glen, that, widening gradually, at last expands on to the valley of Ghayn by a long and gentle slope, half-way on which is a roadside *ábambár* fed by a *kárez* stream. Before us lay a crowded mass of fruit gardens and mulberry plantations, all in full foliage, and above them rose aloft the high-domed mosque of Ghayn. We passed amongst these walled gardens, and skirting the fortifications of the town, camped on a small rivulet a little way to its west. As we cleared the gardens we came upon a crowd of the townspeople, collected on the roadside to see us pass. They were remarkably well dressed, and conducted themselves with commendable propriety and decorum. Most of them bowed civilly as we rode past, and many raised the hand to the head in military style, whilst a venerable old priest with a flowing beard as white as the turban under the weight of whose capacious folds he was buried, standing apart on a slight eminence with half a dozen acolytes clad in white, offered up a prayer to avert any

evil that this first visit of Europeans to their town might entail. The plaintive trembling voice of the old man, echoed by the shrill tones of his young disciples, struck me as peculiarly impressive, but they were unheeded by the crowd, who were much too deeply absorbed in the novel spectacle presented by our party to their eyes for the first time. We were assured that we were the first Europeans who are known to have visited this town, and the statement is supported by the fact that all our maps of the country were wrong as to its proper location, Ghayn being placed to the south of Birjand, whereas the reverse is the case.

Ghayn has a very decayed look, and quite disappoints the expectations raised by the first sight of its gardens and lofty mosque. The town covers a considerable extent of ground enclosed within fortified walls, now everywhere in a state of decay. The area within the walls is capable of containing from eight to ten thousand houses, it is said, though at this time only about fifteen hundred are occupied, corn-fields and gardens occupying the intervals between the ruins of its former mansions. A prominent object of attraction in the town is its lofty domed mosque, which in outward appearance is in keeping with the general look of decay pervading the locality. Its walls, which are supported in their perpendicular by buttress arches built against them laterally, are dangerously cracked from top to bottom, either from original defect of architecture or from the effects of earthquakes. The population is estimated at about eight thousand, amongst whom are many Saggid families, and others of Arab origin. The mass of the people, however, appear to be of Tatar origin, as indicated by the very marked traces of that typical race in their features.

Silk and saffron are produced here in considerable

quantity, and a variety of fruits. The asafœtida grows wild in great abundance all over the plain, and rhubarb on the surrounding hills. The asafœtida is of two kinds—one called *kamá-i-gawí*, which is grazed by cattle and used as a potherb, and the other *kamá-i-angúza*, which yields the gum-resin of commerce. The silk is mostly sent to Kirmán in the raw state, but a good deal is consumed at home in the manufacture of some inferior fabrics for the local markets. The carpets known by the name of this town are not made here, but in the villages of the southern divisions of the district.

Ghayn is the name of a very ancient city, supposed to have been founded by a son of the blacksmith Káwáh of Ispahán, the hero of the Peshdádí kings, who slew the tyrant Záhák, and whose leather apron—afterwards captured by the Arab Sád bin Wacáss—became the standard of Persia, under the name of *darafshi Káwání*, or the "Káwání standard." It was studded with the most costly jewels by successive kings, to the last of the Pahlavi race, from whom it was wrested by the Arab conqueror, and sent as a trophy to the Khálif 'Umar.

The son of Káwáh was named Kárin. His city, the ruins of which are here known as *Shahri Gabri*, or "the Gabr (Guebre) city," was built on the slope and crest of a hill ridge overlooking the present town from the south-east. The hill is called "Koh Imám Jáfar, and is covered with the remains of ancient buildings, and large reservoirs excavated in the solid rock. The city, according to local tradition, was sacked and destroyed by Halákú Khan, the son of Changhiz, and the present town afterwards rose on the plain at the foot of the hill in its stead. In the days of its prosperity this new city must have been a very flourishing and populous centre of life. The environs for a considerable distance are covered with

extensive graveyards, in which are some handsome tombs of glazed tiles and slabs of white marble, elaborately carved and inscribed. The valley of Ghayn is a wide plain extending east and west between high mountains, the summits of which are still covered with snow. A high snow-streaked range closes the valley towards the west. It is called Koh Báras, and trending in a north-westerly direction, connects the elevated tablelands of Sarbesha and Alghor with those of Bijistan of the Tún and Tabbas district. Its eastern slopes drain into the Ghayn valley, where its several streams form a considerable rivulet (our camp is pitched on its shore), which flows past the town to the eastward. To the northward, the Ghayn valley is separated from the plains of Nímbulúk and Gúnábád by a low range of bare hills over which there are several easy passes.

The elevation of Ghayn is about 4860 feet above the sea, or much on the same level as that of Birjand, and a little higher than that of Bijistan, from both of which it is separated by tablelands of considerably higher elevation. The climate of Ghayn is described as temperate and salubrious during spring and summer, but bleak and rigorous during autumn and winter. During two or three months of winter the roads over the high land between this and Birjand on the one hand, and Bijistan on the other, are closed to all traffic by the depth of snow then covering the hills. Ghayn, like Birjand, appears to have escaped the horrors of the famine, for we saw no traces of its effects amongst the people, who appeared a fine healthy and robust race, of mixed types of physiognomy, in which the Tatar characters predominated. During our stay here, the weather, though fine and sunny, was decidedly cold, and a keen north-west wind swept down from the hills in stormy gusts. The temperature

of the air ranged from 35° Fah. to 75° Fah., and rendered warm clothing not only agreeable but necessary.

From this place, it had been arranged that we should proceed to Turbat Hydari by the direct road through Nímbulúk and Gúnábád, but a very fortunate accident determined us to follow a safer route, particularly as in our unprotected state—the Persian authorities having failed to furnish our party with any escort—we were unprepared to face any unnecessary risk.

On the day after our arrival here, the Afghan Commissioner, Saggid Núr Muhammad Shah, sought an interview with General Pollock, to consult about our onward journey, as he had received alarming accounts of the dangers on the road it was proposed we should follow. At the interview the Saggid introduced an old acquaintance of his, one Haji Mullah Abdul Wahid, a merchant of Gizík in the Sunnikhana district. Hearing of our arrival in this country, he had set out for Birjand to see the Saggid, but finding our camp had left the place, followed and overtook us here. The Haji was an asthmatic old gentleman of nearly seventy years of age, and had seen more prosperous times than fortune had now allotted to him. By way of preface he mentioned that he had cashed bills for Colonel Taylor's mission at Herat in 1857, and claimed acquaintance with me on the score of having met me at Kandahar with Major Lumsden's mission. He expressed great respect for the British, and assured us it was only his good-will towards us, and interest in the welfare of his countryman the Saggid, that had prompted him to dissuade us from pursuing the route he had heard we proposed taking. "This route," said he, "is beset with dangers, and God alone can extricate you from them. You may escape them in Nímbulúk and Gúnábád, but in the Reg Amráni beyond,

you must fall into the hands of the Turkmans. They are known to be on the road, and not a week passes without their raiding one or other of the *júlagah* between this and Turbat." He told us he knew them well, for he had himself been carried off prisoner by them at the time of Yar Muhammad's death, and was ransomed a few months later, together with six or seven hundred other Afghan subjects, by his son Syd Muhammad. He described the Turkmans as being very well armed with rifles and double-barrelled guns, and as never charging in parties less than fifty, and sometimes with as many as five hundred. They respect no class, nor sex, nor age, except the Arabs, and sell all they capture in the markets of Khiva, only killing the very aged and infirm, and those who offer resistance. They have been in this vicinity for the last three weeks, and have already carried off from one hundred and sixty to one hundred and eighty of the peasantry of Ghayn. Their favourite routes are by the Dashna-i-Gharcáb in Nímbulúk, and the Reg Amráni to the north of Gúnábád.

He most strongly and repeatedly urged us, as we valued our own safety, not to trust ourselves on the plains of Gúnábád, and advised us to follow one of the more western routes, where we should have the protection of the hills, amongst which the Turkmans fear to entangle themselves. The good old Haji's arguments were so just, and so clearly and strongly advanced, that, left as we were to our own resources, there was no hesitation in changing our course, and adopting a safer route through the hills bordering the dangerous tract on the west; and our friend was satisfied that his journey from Gizík, which is sixty miles north-east of Birjand, over an elevated plateau dotted with villages, was not altogether fruitless, since it afforded him the happiness of diverting us from a dangerous

route, and the pleasure of experiencing British generosity and gratitude, for the General did not allow his good service to pass unrewarded. The old man took leave of us with genuine expressions of good-will and friendship, and heartily commending us to the protection of God, warned us to be unceasingly on our guard against the cunning and treachery of the Persians. "Be very careful," said he in a mysterious whisper, "how you drink the tea and coffee they offer you. Many of our people have died with agonising stomachaches after partaking of this refreshment at their hands."

9th April.—Ghayn to Girimunj, twenty-two miles. Our route was north-westerly, seven miles across the plain, which is covered with asafœtida in profuse abundance, to the little castellated hamlets of Shermurgh at the foot of the hills.

We halted here for breakfast near a *kárez* stream of intensely brackish water. Here a noisy dispute occurred between our baggagers and a party of eight or ten armed men, who came after them from Ghayn in hot haste and tempers to match, with a couple of Persian officials, whose dignity it was pretended had been offended by our *mirakhor*, or "master of the stables," having hired some asses for our baggage without a reference to them. They made a great disturbance immediately in front of where we were seated, pulled each other about, lavished *pidr sokhtas* and *cabr káshídas* on all sides, and would not be appeased though the *mirakhor* uncovered his head to them, kissed the frothy lips of the irate Persian, and offering his beard as sacrifice, entreated his forgiveness. Even our *mihmandár*, Ali Beg, was as useless in this emergency as he had proved all along the march; and the offended officials, as heedless of his presence as of

ours, defiantly threw off our loads, and triumphantly marched off with the asses we had hired.

Had the Persian authorities made the arrangements they were in duty bound to do for our proper escort and treatment, this insult could not have occurred. We were even left to provide our own escort on a road acknowledged to be unsafe for travellers, and received such scant assistance that it was with difficulty fifty matchlockmen were collected to escort our party on this march. On starting from Ghayn it was arranged that we should take the route by Noghâb and Asadabad, skirting the hills on the western border of the Nímbulúk plain; but after proceeding a short distance, some scouts sent out to examine the passes returned, and from their reports it was deemed advisable to turn off into the more westerly route through the hills.

From Shermurgh our route continued north-westerly up the course of a wide drainage gully, bounded on the left by the snow-streaked Báras range, and on the right separated from the Nímbulúk plain by a low rocky range bare of vegetation. At eight miles we reached a watershed called Gudari Gód, and on the way up to it passed a bend in the hills to our left, in which we saw the villages of Nogirift, Razdumbal, and Mahanj. The elevation at the watershed is about 6075 feet above the sea. From it the descent is gradual, by a path that winds amongst ridges skirting the base of Báras and its continuation, Koh Behud, and crossing the Rúdi Myán Pyáz, traverses a hill slope stretching down to the Nímbulúk plain up to Girimunj. The Myán Pyáz rivulet is a brisk stream that drains Behud to the Nímbulúk plain, and of considerable size. Girimunj contains about two hundred houses clustered round a central fort, and is situated at the entrance to a picturesque glen, in which are seen the villages of

Dihushk and Buznábád with their rich orchards and vineyards. The Nímbulúk plain presents a wide valley, extending from north-west to south-east some thirty-five miles by twelve wide. On its surface to the northward are seen the villages of Siláyáni, Mahyám, and Khidri. It is separated from Gúnábád by a long curving range of hills, through which are several passes. The hill range is called Mysúr, and the passes, from south to north, are named Dahna Gharcáb, Mugri, Rijing, Bálághor, and Dahna Sulemán. The first and last are the routes commonly taken by the Turkmans.

Shortly after our arrival in camp, a party of matchlockmen arrived from Dashti Pyáz to warn Girimunj that Khidri had passed on word to them to be on the alert, as two hundred and fifty Turkmans had this morning swept across Gúnábád, and taken the road to Kakhak, which is our stage beyond Khidri. The news created a considerable stir in the village, and the people warned us to be on the alert during the night, and to continue our route by the hills to Munawáj, and on no account to venture into the open plain. At sunset Sir F. Goldsmid and General Pollock went round our camp, and posted the matchlockmen whom we had hired from the village to protect the approaches during the night, as it was thought we might possibly be attacked by them. We ourselves looked to our arms, and at a late hour retired to rest prepared for an alarm. Morning dawned, however, and no Turkman was seen, and we were inclined to think they were a myth, but for the lively fear and strict caution of the peasantry, which warned us of the necessity of vigilance.

From Girimunj we marched fifteen miles to Dashti Pyáz. Our route was north-west along the Nímbulúk plain, skirting the Isfyán range of hills (a continuation

of Behud) on our left. Out of deference to the Turkmans, we marched in a compact column with the baggage, a party of thirty matchlockmen leading the advance, and a similar party following in the rear.

At a few miles from camp, we came upon the fresh marks of horseshoes across our path. They were followed a little way on to the plain, and unhesitatingly pronounced to be the tracks of Turkmans who had come to reconnoitre our position during the night.

Our Afghan companions, who had some practical knowledge of these people about Herat, were satisfied on this point, and described to us their mode of attack, and how it behoved us to defend ourselves; whilst Haji Abdullah, Shahrki, a venerable old chief of Sistan, who had joined Sir F. Goldsmid's party at Kirman, and used often to entertain us with selections from his stories of traditional lore, propounded in most classical language and with the purest accent, in tones delightful to the ear, and with a captivating manner, was no less convinced of the necessity for caution, and forthwith turned his camel a little closer to the hills, and manfully followed the course of his own selection in solitary dignity, holding his rifle all ready charged with both hands across his lap, and keeping his sharp eyes steadily fixed in the direction of the plain.

We passed two roadside *ábambár* and three or four little hamlets at the foot of the hills, then crossed a hill torrent, and rising over an upland, at the twelfth mile came to Khidri, a flourishing village of two hundred houses, buried in fruit gardens and mulberry plantations. We halted here for breakfast, whilst the baggage proceeded to Dashti Pyáz, four miles farther on, at the top of the upland rise.

We halted two days at Dashti Pyáz, in hopes of the heavy baggage we had left at Birjand here overtaking

us. But as it did not arrive, and our Persian *mihmandár* told so many and such contradictory lies about it—his last report, told us with the coolest effrontery only at Khidri, assured us that we should find all awaiting us at this place, Dashti Pyáz—we were fain to proceed, leaving it to overtake us farther on.

Dashti Pyáz is a flourishing village of three hundred houses outside a dilapidated fort, which is also crowded with habitations, and all around are extensive fruit gardens and vineyards. The town is situated at the entrance to a wide glen, formed by a bend in the Isfyán and Koh Syáh hills to the west. It contains several flourishing villages, of which Munawáj and Buthkabad are the chief, and the ruins of an ancient city called Jáhul Fars, the capital of Isfandyár.

13*th April.*—Dashti Pyáz to Kakhak, sixteen miles. We were to have marched yesterday morning, but at the last moment the order was countermanded, as the Persian *mihmandár* refused to consent to our moving unless Sir F. Goldsmid gave him a written and sealed paper exonerating him from all responsibility in case of accident or injury on the road. He stated that he had received intelligence from his scouts that from two hundred to four hundred Turkman horse had been seen last evening on the plain at two *farsakhs* or *parasangs* (about eight miles) from the Bálághor Pass, and that they may to-day be expected to raid Gúnábád to Kakhak or this valley of Nímbulúk to-day. The day passed, however, without our seeing anything of them, and our only consolation in the delay was in the unfavourable state of the weather, which set in damp and chill with drenching showers, and the new information we gathered regarding the so-called Turkmans, of whom we have heard so much and seen so little.

These would-be Turkmans are in reality Tymúri horsemen, lately in the service of Ataullah Khan, their tribal chief. This man was one of the chiefs of the Tatar tribes settled about Herat since the invasion of Tymur Lang or Tamerlane, and named after that devastating conqueror. In 1857, when the prince-governor of Khorassan, Sultan Murád Mirzá, Hisámussaltanat, of Mashhad, attacked Herat, this chief, with his following, joined the Persian standard. On the retreat of the Persian army from Herat territory, Ataullah, by way of reward for his services, and compensation for the compromise his conduct had brought about, was transported, with four hundred families of his tribe, to the Kohi Surkh district of Turshíz, and granted the villages of Kundar, Khalilábád, Dihnan, Majdí, Sarmujdí, Bijingar, and Argi, in military fief for their support.

During the famine last year, these men, becoming hard pressed for food, threw off the restraint of their chief, and took to the more congenial occupation of plundering the caravans from Herat to Tehran, and were soon joined by other adventurers and robbers, who grow in this country like mushrooms on mould. Their depredations led to such wide-spread complaint, that the governor of Mashhad sent the Imami Juma to inquire into the conduct of the tribe, redress complaints, and restore the plundered property. Ataullah, hearing of this, himself fled and joined the robbers, but was conciliated, and persuaded to tender his submission at Mashhad. The subsequent conduct of his people, however, who waylaid and murdered a party of government officials on their way across Reg Amráni towards Tabbas, has still further compromised their chief with the Government, and Ataullah is now a close prisoner at Tehran, and it is supposed will answer with his life for the conduct of his

tribesmen. This history, interesting in itself, is eminently characteristic of the state of society and weak government on this frontier.

Our route from Dashti Pyáz was W.N.W., ascending a long upland or *chol* separated from the Gúnábád plain on the right by the Laki ridge of hills, and from the Munáwáj glen on the left by a broken chain of hillocks. Passing a roadside *ábambár* about half-way, we halted at the sixth mile at a willow-fringed tank near the picturesque little castle of Sihúkri for breakfast. Here we found some fine elm and walnut trees. The rise is about 900 feet above Dashti Pyáz, and affords an extensive view of the Nímbulúk plain and country to the southward. Our baggage, with the escort of hired matchlockmen, went on ahead, and we followed an hour and a half later.

Onwards from this, our route was N.N.W., through a narrow winding gorge bounded by low hills of slate and magnesian limestone, in which we found some fossil bivalves and oysters. A gradual ascent of four miles brought us to the Gudari Kakhak, a narrow watershed pass that marks the boundary between the districts of Ghayn and Tabbas. Its elevation is about 6838 feet above the sea, and 1408 feet above Dashti Pyáz. It is closed for two months in winter by snow, and in wet weather is difficult for laden cattle, owing to the loose marly soil becoming a deep slippery mud.

The descent is gradual, through a long drainage gully receiving branches on either side down to a wide boulder-strewn ravine with high banks, which opens on to the Gúnábád plain, near Kakhak. At three miles down the gully we came to an *ábambár*, where a road branches off to the left direct to Kakhak over the hills, but it is difficult for laden cattle. At this spot, too, a branch

gully comes down from the right. In it is said to be a copper-mine, which has been abandoned for some years, owing to the vein being lost. We noticed that the surface was strewed with stones of a bright greenish blue colour, as if coated with acetate of copper.

The hill slopes on each side of the gully are cultivated in terraces, and irrigated by streams led along their brows; and on our way down, we passed several black tents of *ilyat* families occupied in the preparation of cheese and the peculiar round balls of that substance known by the name of *cúrút*. At the lower part of the gully we turned to the left out of it, beyond the castellated village of Mullahabad, and at a mile farther on came to our camp, pitched on an open gravelly surface near some gardens at a short distance from Kakhak. This is a flourishing town of about four hundred houses, surrounded by fruit gardens and corn-fields, and protected by a citadel. A prominent object of attraction is the mausoleum erected to the memory of Sultan Muhammad, a brother of Imám Razá, the saint of Mashhad. It stands on a commanding eminence, and has a handsome dome of glazed tiles, the bright colours of which are set off to the best advantage by the whitewashed portals of its groundwork. Ferrier, in his "Caravan Journeys," mentions this place as being the site of one of the most bloody battles ever fought between the Afghans and Persians. It occurred in 1751, when Shah Ahmad's (Durrani) Baloch allies, under their own chief Nasír Khan, defeated the Persians and slew their leader, 'Ali Murád Khan, governor of Tabbas, who came here to give them battle. By this victory Tabbas was annexed to the Durrani kingdom.

A finer sight for a fair fight could not be found. The ground dips down to the wide plain or *júlagah* of Jun-

abad in an uninterrupted slope, and affords a splendid field for the use of cavalry, as is expressed in the name, applied generally to the succession of valleys or plains that characterise the physical geography of this country. *Júlagah* is evidently the diminutive form of *júlangah*, which means a plain suited to military exercises, or any level ground for horsemanship.

Kakhak seems to have suffered severely during the famine, but the accounts we received as to the extent of loss were so contradictory that it was impossible to get at the truth or an approximation to it. Numbers of beggars, sickly, pale, and emaciated, wandered timidly about our camp, craving in piteous tones a morsel of bread. Poor creatures! nobody cares for them, even the small coins we give them are snatched away by the stronger before our eyes. Truly if fellow-feeling makes wondrous kind, fellow-suffering makes wondrous unkind.

14*th April.*—Kakhak to Zihbud, sixteen miles; route nearly due west, hugging the hill range on our left, with the great Gúnábád valley down to the right. The centre of the valley is occupied by a succession of considerable villages, with gardens, vineyards, and corn-fields, watered by numerous *kárez* streams. To the east it communicates through a gap in the hills with the great desert of Kháf, which extends south-east to Ghoryán and Herat. To the northward it is separated from Bijistan on the one hand and Reg Amráni on the other by a low range of hilly ridges or *tappah*, over which are some easy passes on the direct route through the valley.

At Kakhak we parted from the *mihmandár* appointed to accompany us on the part of the governor of Ghayn, and were joined in the like capacity by Muhammad Ali Beg, the *zábit* or ruler of Gúnábád. He is a very ferocious-looking man, with square bull-dog features, and

a heavy coarse mustache, that completely conceals the mouth, and curls over the short-trimmed wiry whiskers, all dyed bright orange with *henna*. His manner, however, is very quiet and friendly. He welcomed us to the Tabbas district, and promised we should receive very different treatment from that we had experienced at the hands of Mír Ali Khan of Ghayn. He had heard of his conduct; considered he had acted host very indifferently; reckoned he would be called to account for it by the Shah; thought that the prince-governor of Mashhad would profit by the opportunity to injure him; and, for his own part, hoped he would come to condign grief.

Our new host proved an agreeable companion, and spoke very sensibly, with a remarkable freedom from the bombast and gesticulation the modern Persian so much delights to display. I learned from him that he was connected with the Shah by marriage with a sister of the Queen-mother, and that he had been on this frontier for many years. In the time of Kámrán of Herat, he accompanied Mír Asadullah of Ghayn in his retreat to Sistan, and spent two years at Chilling and Sihkoha. More recently, four years ago, he met Yácúb Khan at Mashhad, and subsequently his father, the present Amir Sher Ali, at Herat. He made some pointed inquiries regarding Sistan and the boundary question, but on finding they were not acceptable, adroitly turned the conversation to the more ephemeral, and perhaps to himself more congenial, topic of wines, their varieties and qualities; and his familiarity with the names at least of the common English wines and spirits not a little surprised me. He expressed concern at finding that we were travelling without a store of these creature comforts, and very good-naturedly procured us a small supply of home-distilled arrack from Gúnábád. It proved very

acceptable, for our own supplies had been long since exhausted; and Mr Rozario, who superintended our mess arrangements, cleverly converted it into very palatable punch, of which a little was made to go a great way.

But to return from this digression to our march. We had set out with the baggage in a closely-packed column, with matchlockmen in front and rear, and ourselves with a dozen horsemen leading the advance, for the dread of Turkmans was still upon us. We had proceeded thus about seven miles, passing the castellated hamlets of Iddo and Isfyán in picturesque little nooks of the hills on our left, when we turned a projecting spur and suddenly came upon a wide ravine, beyond which were the gardens and poppy-fields of Calát. Leaving the baggage to proceed ahead, we turned off up the course of the ravine to a clump of trees at its spring-head for breakfast. Our sudden appearance and martial array, for we were five or six and twenty horsemen all more or less armed, struck the villagers with a panic. Five or six of the boldest advanced into the mulberry plantations and fired their matchlocks at us, but the rest, shouting "*Alaman! alaman!*" "Raiders! raiders!" scrambled up the steep slopes of the slate hill backing the town as fast as their limbs would carry them. A bullet whistling by our *mihmandár* with a disagreeably close "*whish,*" sent him and his two attendants full gallop towards the village, vowing all sorts of vengeance on the *pidri sokhtas*, who could mistake their own governor and a party of respectable gentlemen for the marauding Turkmans, on whom be the curse of 'Ali and Muhammad. Ourselves meanwhile proceeded towards the clump of trees ahead. Here we came upon a watermill. The people occupied in it, disturbed by the firing, rushed out just in time to be confronted by us. If the devil himself with all his host had faced them, they

could not have evinced greater fear, nor more activity to escape his clutches. There were four of them, all dusty and powdered with flour, and they were up the hillside in a trice, going on all fours, so steep was the slope, like monkeys. The sight was absurdly ridiculous, and sent us into fits of laughter. Anon the fugitives stopped to take breath, and turning their heads, looked down on us with fear and amazement expressed on their faces. We beckoned them, called them, and laughed at them. They only scrambled up higher, and again looked down mistrustfully at us. Presently our *mihmandár* rejoined us with two or three of the villagers, who looked very crestfallen at this exposure of weakness, and excused themselves as well they might on the grounds of the frequent raids by the Turkmans they were subjected to. On seeing us in friendly converse with their fellows, the startled millers slided down from their retreat, and brought with them as a peace-offering some rhubarb-stalks, the plants of which covered the hillside. A general dispensation of krans and half-krans soon put us on the most amicable terms, and restored a thorough confidence.

The scene was altogether too absurd and unexpected to suppress the momentary merriment it produced, yet it furnishes a subject for melancholy reflection, as illustrating the state of insecurity in which these people live. Another fact of a yet more painful nature revealed by this amusing incident was the frightful state of desolation and poverty to which this village had been reduced by the combined effects of famine and rapine. The alarm produced by our sudden appearance had brought out the whole population on the hillside, and at a rough guess they did not exceed eighty men and women, and not a single child was seen amongst them. On resuming our

march we passed through the village. It contains about two hundred and fifty houses, but most of them are untenanted and falling to decay. The people were miserably poor and dejected, and looked very sickly. Yet the village is surrounded by gardens and mulberry plantations, which, in their spring foliage, give the place an air of comfort and prosperity by no means in accordance with its real condition.

Calát, indeed, like many another village our journey brought us to, in interior condition quite belied its exterior appearance. I may here state in anticipation, that in all our march from Ghayn to the Persian capital we hardly anywhere saw infants or very young children. They had nearly all died in the famine. We nowhere heard the sound of music nor song nor mirth in all the journey up to Mashhad. We passed through village after village, each almost concealed from view in the untrimmed foliage of its gardens, only to see repetitions of misery, melancholy, and despair. The suffering produced by this famine baffles description, and exceeds our untutored conceptions. In this single province of Khorassan the loss of population by this cause is estimated at 120,000 souls, and over the whole kingdom cannot be less than a million and a half.

Beyond Calát our path followed the hill skirt in a north-west direction. The surface is very stony, and covered with wild rhubarb and the yellow rose in great profusion, to the exclusion of other vegetation. We passed the villages of Sághi, Kochi, Zaharabad, and Shirazabad, and then crossing a deep ravine in which flowed a brisk little stream draining into the central rivulet of Gúnábád, passed over some undulating ground to Zihbad, where we camped.

15*th April.*—Zihbad to Bijistan, twenty-eight miles,

and halt a day. Our route was N.N.W., skirting the hill range on our left by a rough stony path. We passed in succession the villages of Brezú, Kásum, and Sinoh, each continuous with the other, through a wide stretch of fruit gardens, mulberry plantations, poppy beds, and corn-fields watered from a number of brisk little hill streams, and looking the picture of a prosperity which our experience has taught us is very far from the reality.

A little farther on, at about the eleventh mile, we came to Patinjo, and halted for breakfast under the shade of a magnificent plane-tree in the centre of the village. Proceeding hence, we continued along the hill skirt, and at about four miles entered amongst the hills that close the Gúnábád valley to the northward. We gained their shelter in a somewhat hurried manner, owing to a false alarm of Turkmans on the plain flanking our right. We had continued to hear all sorts of fanciful and exaggerated reports of these gentry, founded undoubtedly on a basis of fact, and were consequently kept alive to the chance of a possible encounter with them. On the present occasion a cloud of dust suddenly appeared round a spur projecting on the plain about two miles to our right. Our *mihmandár* reined up a moment, looking intently at the suspicious object, and shook his head. At this moment the cloud of dust wheeled round in our direction. "Ya Ali!" he exclaimed. "They are Turkmans. Get on quick into the hills;" and so saying, he unslung his rifle, and loaded as he galloped. A few minutes brought us all to the hills, and ascending some heights overlooking the plain, we levelled our glasses at the cause of our commotion. After a good deal of spying and conjecturing, we discovered, to our no small chagrin, that we were no better than our friends of Calát, for our would-be Turkmans were no other than a flock of goats and

sheep, grazing along the hill skirts for protection against surprise by those very marauders.

Our road through the hills was by a winding path, over ridges and through defiles, everywhere rough and stony, and in some parts very wild and rugged.

After passing the castellated village of Kámih we came to a very difficult little gorge between bare rocks of trap, and farther on reached a watershed called Gudari Rúdi, or "the pass of the tamarisk river." It runs north and south, and is about 5150 feet above the sea. The descent is gradual, by a long drainage gully between gradually diverging hills. At five miles from the watershed we turned to the left across a wide gravelly waste to Bijistan, where we camped near a *sarae* outside the town. As we approached camp, along the eastern side of this waste, we had the pleasure of seeing a long string of camels with our heavy baggage from Birjand converging to the same spot on the western side.

Bijistán is one of the principal towns of the Tabbas district, and contains about two thousand houses surrounded by gardens. It is a charming spot in this wilderness of barren hills and desert wastes, and lies at the base of an isolated ridge of hills, beyond which, to the west, is seen, down in a hollow, portion of the great salt desert of Yazd and Káshán. It is called *Kavír*, and its surface is of dazzling whiteness from saline encrustations.

The people here have suffered dreadfully from the famine, and have lost nearly all their cattle from the same cause. Our camp is surrounded by crowds of beggars, famished, gaunt and wizened creatures, most sorry objects to behold. Boys and girls, of from ten to twenty years of age, wan, pinched, and wrinkled, whine around us in piteous tones all day and all night, and vainly call on Ali for aid. "*Ahajo!* (for *Aghá ján*) *gushna*

am, yak puli siyah bidih!" ("Dear sir! I am hungry; give me a supper!") is the burden of each one's prayer; whilst "*Yá Alĥ-í-í-í!*" resounds on all sides from those too helpless to move from the spots doomed to be their death-beds. These prolonged plaintive cries in the stillness of night were distressing to hear, and enough to move the hardest hearts. To us these frequent evidences of such fearful and wide-spread suffering were the more distressing from our utter inability to afford any real relief. Poor creatures! there is no help for them. Hundreds of those we have seen must die, for they are past recovery even were relief at hand.

The district of Tabbas comprises the divisions or *bulúk* of Gúnábád, Kákhak, Bijistán, Tún, and Tabbas. The last contains the capital city of that name. The whole district has suffered fearfully during the famine by death, emigration, and raids. Some of the smaller hamlets have been entirely depopulated, and many villages have been decimated. We heard of one village in the Tún *bulúk*, in which not a man nor child was left, and only five old women remained to till the ground, in hopes of some of their people returning. It is not quite easy to understand the cause of the famine in these parts, for the villages are mostly well watered and their fields fertile.

17*th April.*—Bijistán to Yunasí, twenty-six miles. The weather during our halt at Bijistán was close and oppressive, and on the eve of our departure set in stormy, with violent gusts of wind from the south. At daylight this morning a sharp thunderstorm with hail and rain burst over our camp, and continued with violence for nearly three hours.

Our route was in a N.N.E. direction, down a long sloping steppe, with interrupted hill ridges on either hand, down to the *kavír* or "salt-desert," which here projects

an arm eastward to join that of Herat. At about the twelfth mile we passed the village of Sihfarsakh, at the foot of a white marble hill to the right; and at three miles farther on halted at a roadside *ábambár* for breakfast. On the way to this we passed a small camp of Baloch gypsies—a very poor, dirty, black, and villanous-looking set. The vegetation here differs from what we have seen in the highlands of Ghayn and Tabbas, and resembles that we observed on the plains of Calá Koh. The characteristic plants are *ghích*, wormwood, wild rue, caroxylon, and other saltworts, the wild liquorice, and a variety of flowering herbs, such as gentian, prophet flower, malcomia, and other crucifers, &c.

At four miles farther on, passing amongst some low hills, we left the fortified village of Márandez a couple of miles to the left, and entered on the wide waste of the *kavír;* and at another four miles reached the village of Yúnasi, where we camped. The sun shone hotly here, and a strong north wind blowing all day filled the atmosphere with clouds of saline dust, very trying to the lungs and eyes. On approaching the town, a number of its people, headed by an athlete wielding a pair of huge wooden dumb-bells, came out to meet us, and merrily conducted us to our camp. Yunási is a collection of about two hundred and fifty houses round a central fort, and possesses a commodious *sarae* built of baked bricks. It stands on a small river flowing westward into the desert, and marking the boundary between the districts of Tabbas and Turbat Hydari. There are no gardens here, and a singular absence of trees gives the place a very forlorn look, quite in keeping with the aspect of the desert around. The place has been almost depopulated by the famine. Yúnasi is about 2860 feet above the sea.

Our next stage was Abdullahabad, twenty-five miles.

After crossing the river or Rúdi Kavír by a red brick bridge a little below the town (there are said to be seven similar bridges across the river in different parts of its course), we went across a wide lacustrine hollow, the soil of which was light and powdery, and white with saline efflorescence, and at half-way came to Miandih, "the midway village," and halted at its *ábambár* for breakfast. The village consists of perhaps a hundred domed huts, ranged outside a square fort fast falling to decay, and has a vertical windmill similar to those used in Sistan, only made to work with an east wind. The desert here runs from east to west between high hill ranges, and is almost bare of vegetation beyond the wild rue and liquorice, and a coarse grass growing in tufts, with here and there strips of camel-thorn and salsolaceæ.

Along the line of march we passed several roadside graves, the last resting-places of famine-struck travellers hastily buried by their companions. Wild beasts had pulled out the bodies from three or four of these shallow pits, and scattered their bones and clothes upon the road. Thousands upon thousands have been so put away, or left to rot on the roads where they lay. Their place knows them no more, and but too often none are left to reck their loss.

From Miandih our route continued in an E.N.E. direction over a wide plain covered with a scanty pasture, on which we found large herds of camels, oxen, and asses at graze. They belong to Baloch nomads of the Mirza Jahán tribe, and are tended by small unarmed parties of their herdsmen. We have all along noticed that the peasantry of Persian Khorassan, unlike those of Afghanistan, are all unarmed. This is the more surprising as a new feature on the scene here warns us

that we have come into the country which from time immemorial has been the hunting-ground of the real Turkman. The whole plain is dotted all over with hundreds of round towers as places of refuge from these marauders, and they serve also to convey a very lively idea of the insecurity of the country. These towers consist of a circular mud wall about twelve feet high, enclosing an empty roofless space about eighteen feet in diameter, and are entered by a small opening on one side, only large enough to admit of entrance on all fours. On the appearance of the raiders the shepherds or husbandmen desert their flocks and fields, and rush into these refuges till the enemy has disappeared. The Turkman has a lively dread of firearms, and a very wholesome respect for all armed travellers. He always gives these towers a wide berth, and only attacks the unwary and unarmed. From all we heard of them, they must be sorry cowards before a worthy foe, and heartless tyrants over their helpless captives. Those who used formerly to raid this country, and who do still occasionally as opportunity offers, belong to the Sárúc and Sálor tribes, whose seat is in the territories of Sarrakhs and Marv. With the Takka Turkmans of the latter place, they habitually harry all this country up to the very gates of Mashhad. In 1860, the Persian Government sent an expedition against the strongholds of these miscreants. Though the Persian troops were driven back with disastrous loss, they managed to inflict considerable damage upon the enemy, and for several years their inroads upon this frontier were put a stop to; but in the disorganisation and laxity of authority produced by the famine they have again commenced their wonted forays, and during the last three years have, it is said, carried off

nearly twenty thousand Persian subjects from Mashhad district alone, for the slave markets of Khiva and Bukhara. During the pressure of the famine, we are told, the citizens of Mashhad used to flock out to the plains on purpose to be captured by the Turkman, preferring a crust of bread in slavery to the tortures of a slow death under the heedless rule of their own governors, who never stirred a finger to alleviate their sufferings or relieve their necessities. This species of voluntary exile soon grew to such alarming proportions that the Mashhad authorities were obliged to post military guards to prevent the citizens from leaving the city.

At about ten miles from Miandih we came to the ruins of a very extensive town, called Fyzabad, and beyond them passed the modern village of the same name. It is a remarkable place, and consists of a compact little town, sunk below the level of the ground, surrounded by a deep ditch, and ramparts but little raised above the general level of the plain. Within are many trees, the tops of which only are seen above the ramparts. Here the road turns due north to Abdullahabad, four miles distant, leaving the new fort of Husenabad standing boldly out on the plain away to the right.

At Fyzabad we were met by an *isticbál* party of thirty or forty horsemen, headed by Haji Agha Beg and Muhammad Karím, expressly deputed to meet us by the prince-governor of Mashhad and Husen Ali Khan, the governor of the town. They received us in a very polite and friendly manner, and conducted us to a garden house on the skirts of the town, where, as we entered its gate, a couple of sheep were sacrificed on our path, with such haste and clumsiness, that ourselves and fol-

lowers were sprinkled with the blood spurting from their severed throats. The quarters prepared for us were tastefully furnished in the Persian fashion, and on a carpeted platform, under the shade of some fine mulberry trees, and on the edge of a sparkling little stream, we were refreshed with iced sherbets and trays of sweetmeats, accompanied by the inevitable *calyán* and coffee.

We halted here a day, and received a post from India with dates from Peshawar up to the 20th March. The packet came by the route of Kurram and Ghazni to Kandahar, and thence by Farrah, Herat, and Ghoryán to this. Our Afghan friends have certainly earned our gratitude for the promptitude and safety with which they have maintained our postal communication with India. Our weekly budgets from that side have seldom failed to reach us punctually, notwithstanding the rapidity of our movements, and the difficulties and dangers of the road on this side of Kandahar, where no post is established. In this respect, at all events, Afghanistan may favourably compare with Persia, where there are no proper established posts at all. Sir F. Goldsmid's party had only received two posts since we joined them in Sistan—namely, one at Banjar, and the other only yesterday as we set out from Yunasí. It came *viâ* Mashhad, with dates from Tehran to the 8th March, and London of 14th January.

Abdullahabad is a charming place, and, like most Persian villages, lost in a maze of gardens and vineyards. Through its centre flows a clear hill stream, and to its south stands a strong little castle, now in a state of decay, like all the other fortifications we have seen in all this frontier. It appears as if they had all been dismantled on purpose to prevent the people from entertaining any thought of revolt, and to

deprive them of the temptation to rebellion that such handy strongholds might give rise to.

During our stay here a party of a hundred horsemen, under 'Abdul Husen Khan, grandson of the celebrated Karai chief Ishák Khan, arrived here from Mashhad as escort for our party. With them came a messenger to Sistan, bearing a jewelled sword and letters of commendation from the Shah for Mir 'Alam Khan, the governor of that newly acquired province.

20th April.—Abdullahabad to Turbat Hydari, thirty-two miles, and halt two days. We set out at four A.M., and pursued a generally north-east course over a wide upland pasture tract towards the Asgand range of hills, which stretch across the plain from north-west to south-east. A lofty mass away to our left, and separated from the rest of the range by an intervening chain of lesser hills covered with a furrowed surface of white marl, is called Koh Fighan, or "the hill of lamentation," and is said to be the site of Rustam's retreat for mourning after he had unwittingly killed his son Sohrab.

At eight or ten miles out we passed the villages of Doghabad and Salmidasht, on the left and right respectively, and farther on, passing over the undulating plain of Maháwalát, alighted at a *kárez* stream for breakfast. As a steady rain had set in, we pitched a bell-tent for the more comfortable discussion of this repast, for which our appetites were well whetted by the morning ride of twelve miles. Our escort of Karai horsemen meanwhile dismounted and scattered themselves over the hillocks around. They are a remarkably fine body of men, and excellently mounted, but are indifferently armed, and are wanting in the dash and elasticity so characteristic of the Afghan trooper. On the march they diverted

themselves and us too with a display of their horsemanship and mock fights. Their movements appeared to me slow, and the firing at full galop harmless, particularly when, in retreat, the fugitive loads, and turning round in the saddle, with a wide sweep over the horizon, discharges his rifle in the direction of his pursuer. Against a European armed with a revolver the Khorassan horseman would have a poor chance of escape. They are wonderfully hardy, however, both man and horse, and accomplish incredibly long marches, carrying their own and horses' food and clothing, with little inconvenience. Our new companions, Haji Agha Beg and the *peshkhidwat* Muhammad Karím, entertained us, in truly Persian hyperbole, with amusing accounts of the Turkmans, and never failed to enlarge on the prowess of the Persian cavalry against them. The Haji, as a piece of the latest news from Mashhad, informed us of the capture of eight hundred of these *pidr sokhta* (burnt fathers), and the release of upwards of a thousand captives they were carrying off, by a brilliant display of military tactics on the part of a son of the Hisámussaltanat. The Turkmans, he told us, had entered the Burdjnurd lands through the Darband pass, and were allowed to proceed well ahead unmolested, when the pass behind them, which it seems is the only route of ingress and egress, was occupied by a party of the Mashhad troops. On the return of the raiders with their plunder and captives, they were suddenly attacked in front and rear, and killed and captured, for exchange, to the number of eight hundred.

"The heads of the slain," said he, "have been brought in for exhibition at the gates of the city. You will see them on reaching Mashhad." This was welcome news to me, for I was anxious to obtain a

few skulls of this race for the collection of my learned friend, and distinguished anthropologist, Dr Barnard Davis, and therefore availed myself of the opportunity to engage the interest of our companion in procuring me a few specimens. "Any number is at your service," replied he with charming readiness. "How many, and of which kind, do you require?" I naturally inquired what the different kinds were, and presently learned that some were merely stuck on a lance, and allowed to bleach intact in the sun, and that others were prepared so as to preserve the features. In these last, the bones of the skull were smashed by blows with a wooden mallet, and the brain, soft parts, and fragments withdrawn through the neck. The interior was then stuffed with straw, and the integument allowed to dry over it. "Thanks!" I said; "I should like two of each kind, and shall esteem it a great favour if you will procure them for me." "*Ba chasm-házir!*" ("By my eyes—present!" or "With all my heart!") They are ready," was his prompt reply. "They are yours. I will bring them to you myself so soon as we reach the city." This was very satisfactory, and I congratulated myself on my prospective good fortune. But to anticipate the sequel. I did not then know the Persian character so well as I do now, and was consequently completely deceived by the Haji's specious politeness. On arrival at Mashhad, we found the whole story was a myth, only created for our amusement. There had been no brilliant exploit against the Turkmans, nor was a single head, stuffed or bleached, procurable. So much for Persian veracity.

At a couple of miles from Turbat Hydari we were met by the governor of the district, Haji Mirza Mahmúd Khan. He was attended by twenty cavaliers, and

preceded by a couple of *yadak*, or led horses, handsomely caparisoned. He is a remarkably handsome man, with very polished manners, and was richly dressed. He received us with graceful civility, and conducted our party to the residence prepared for us in a garden adjoining his own quarters.

Our road passed through a long succession of gardens and orchards and villages, and finally led through the main bazar of Turbat, which is full of life, and well supplied. It consists of two main streets crossing at right angles, and covered in by a succession of domes built of red brick. Altogether it is the most flourishing place we have seen on this frontier. Turbat Hydari is picturesquely situated on the bank of a deep and wide ravine, in the midst of lofty hills, and is surrounded by a cluster of villages, each embosomed in luxuriant orchards, mulberry plantations and vineyards. Its elevation is about 4562 feet above the sea, and it enjoys a delightfully salubrious climate. During our stay the weather was unpropitious, and rain fell constantly, with only brief intervals of sunshine, and the air was damp, chill, and raw. In winter, snow lies deep for a month or six weeks.

The town derives its name from the mausoleum of a Bukhara saint buried here, and is the capital of the district of the same name, which comprises the divisions or *bulúk* of Maháwalát, Turbat, Záwah, Kháf, Azghan or Asgand, Báyak, and Rúkh. Previous to the famine this district was one of the most populous, fertile, and prosperous places in Persia, but it has suffered fearfully in the dearth of the last three years. Owing to deaths and emigration its population has been reduced by twenty thousand, and several villages are now deserted. It is reckoned it cannot recover its losses for another genera-

tion. Formerly, the silk crop alone in this district produced an annual profit of forty thousand *tumans*, or about eighty thousand dollars, but the yield now is less than a tenth of that amount. Formerly, too, from fifteen to twenty thousand pilgrims, mostly from Bukhara, annually visited the shrine here, but the famine has quite put a stop to this source of wealth.

Turbat is the headquarters of the Karai, a tribe of Tatar origin, whose settlement here dates from the time of Tamerlane. They subsequently became dispersed in the successive revolutions and conquests that for centuries convulsed this region, and their lands were left more or less waste and depopulated. Nadir resettled seven thousand families of the tribe in Turbat. On his death, Shah Ahmad annexed the country to Afghanistan, and secured the good-will of their chief, Ishák Khan, by a liberal policy of protection and favour. On the decline of the Durrani dynasty, and the extension eastwards of the Cajar rule, this district, and the adjoining principality of Mashhad, wrested from the unfortunate Shah Rokh Mirzá, were restored to Persia. The Karai, however, proved very rebellious subjects, and took a leading part in the successive revolts marking the earlier years of the Cajar authority on this border. In 1816, Ishák, and his son Husen 'Ali, were executed at Mashhad by Muhammad Wali Mirza, the governor, and another son, Muhammad Khan, placed in the government of the district.

He too evinced a very dubious loyalty during the subsequent operations of Persia against Herat, and in the rebellion of the Salár, Hassan Khan, some years later, joined his standard against the Shah. In 1849, Sultan Murád Mirzá, Hisamussaltanat, having recaptured Mashhad, executed the Salár and his son, and sent a

number of the Karai and Kurd chiefs who had sided with him as prisoners to Tehran. Since that time the power of the Karai has steadily decreased, and now, under a Persian ruler of the district, they are reduced to a complete subjection.

23*d April.*—Turbat Hydari to Asadabad, twenty-eight miles. Weather showery all day, cold and cloudy. We left Turbat as we entered it, through its bazár, and passing round its ditch and fortified walls, followed a good road leading due north over an undulating gravelly plain covered with rich pasture. At the eighth mile we passed a roadside *ábambár*, and at two miles farther on reached the foot of the hills, and ascending a narrow drainage gully, at a mile farther reached the crest of a ridge of chlorite slate. Its elevation is 5920 feet above the sea, and 1358 feet above Turbat Hydari, and affords a very fine view, which, though much obscured by clouds, is sufficient to convey a correct idea of the wild and picturesque combined in the scenery of these mountains. Descending into a deep little hollow, bright in the verdure of its spring vegetation, we passed the village of Kámih Páyín, and rose up to the *sarae* Kist-kat, where we took refuge from the rain, and smoked ourselves dry at blinding and suffocating fires, raised with the stable litter strewing its interior.

On our way up to this we found several human skeletons strewed along the road, and I dismounted to pick up a tolerably bleached skull in my path. "Why burden yourself with that?" exclaimed he who had promised me the Turkman heads; "the road ahead is white with them, and you can pick up any number, much better and purer." The one I held was certainly not as clear of its contents as it might have been, so I threw it aside and remounted; and calling up one of my

own servants, directed him to pick up two or three perfect skulls as he went along towards camp. As events proved, I might have saved myself the trouble, for we did not see another skull on all our road from this to Tehran. So much again for Persian veracity.

Opposite the *sarae* is a collection of thirty or forty mud cabins, and overlooking it from the north-west is the snow-topped and cloud-beshrouded Bedúr mountain, with its bare slopes and rugged heights. We set out from the *sarae* in a steady set rain, and ascending a narrow gorge, in forty minutes reached the Gudari Bedar, on which are three observation towers for watching the movements of the Turkmans on the *júlagah* Rúkh below to the northward. This pass is over a watershed ridge of chlorite and trap rocks running east and west, and forming the boundary between the *bulúk* of Turbat and that of Rúkh. Its elevation is 7135 feet above the sea, and 2573 feet above Turbat, and from it is obtained a full view of the *júlagah* Rúkh running east and west.

The descent, at first steep, leads through a turfy dell, in which we found the wild rose, barberry, prickly astragalus, tulips, lilies, and a multitude of other herbs, with here and there arms and legs of human skeletons strewing the path, and at about four miles emerges on the plain at the little castle of Shor Hissár. We crossed the *júlagah* due north, and passing a new red brick *rabát* or post-house about half-way, at eight miles reached Asadabad, and camped on a gravelly slope covered with fresh sprouting rhubarb. The weather was cold, chill, and damp, and a strong north-west wind, with the thermometer at 46° Fah. at two P.M., intensified its severity. Asadabad stands 5790 feet above the sea, and 1228 feet higher than Turbat. Its vegetation is very back-

ward; the corn has hardly sprouted above the ground, and the fruit trees have not yet expanded their buds.

Quarters had been hastily prepared for us inside the fort, but we found them so filthy, and the stinks so disgusting, that we preferred to face the stormy elements in our tents. The entrance gate of this fortified village is of very peculiar construction, and similar to some others we have seen on this frontier. It consists of a circular opening closed by a great millstone about a foot thick and six feet in diameter, which rolls back into a side casement. Owing to the scarcity of timber, large slabs of slate or millstone grit are commonly used as doors for houses and gardens in this country. Asadabad was only built some ten years ago, by Asadullah Mirza, one of the princes of the blood royal. There are eight or ten other fortified villages seen from it on the *júlagah* or *júlgah*. The wild sheep (*koch* m. and *mesh* f.) and wild goat (*takka* m. and *buz* f.) abound on these hills. Here, as at Turbat, specimens of each, shot in the vicinity, were brought to our camp as dainties for our table.

Our next stage was thirty-four miles to Sharifabad. Weather cold, cloudy, and windy, with alternating showers, mists, and sunshine. Route northerly, up a gentle slope to the foot of a hill range running north-west to south-east, then, passing between low marly hillocks, ascends a steep ridge of chlorite, to the Gudhari Rukh. Elevation, 6962 feet above the sea, and 1172 feet above Asadabad, six miles distant. The descent leads down a long winding defile, flanked by bare rugged hills of chlorite and trap and granite, and then, at four miles, passing through a narrow gorge between high perpendicular hills of green and red rocks, emerged on to the valley of Rabáti Sufed. This gorge is only about forty yards wide, and perhaps five or six hundred long,

for our horses walked through it in six minutes, along a clear little rivulet that flows in its midst.

The crest of the hill on the right of this gorge is topped with the ruins of an ancient fort called Calae-dukhtar. It looks down upon a domed chamber built of very solid masonry on the plain below, and called Darocsh-khána. Tradition assigns the fort as the retreat of some ancient king's beautiful daughter, whilst a devoted suitor pined away in unrequited love in the domed chamber. At the foot of the hills to the left are two or three similarly domed chambers. They stand on separate little mounds, and are called *átash kadah*, or "fire temple." Farther out on the level stands an old *sarae*, and on a ridge of hill at the farther end of the valley, to the left, is the village of Rabáti Sufed. It is the first we have seen with flat-roofed houses. This little valley communicates westward with the Nishabor plain, and is constantly infested by Tymuri and Turkman robbers.

Beyond this we crossed a low ridge, and passing down a long turfy slope, halted for breakfast on a patch of fresh green sward, close under Káfir Calá, a small castle on the summit of an isolated mound, which appears to be of artificial construction. Though strongly situated, the village has, it is said, been several times swept clear of its occupants by the Turkmans. During the last year they have made repeated raids in this direction, and have carried off most of the people belonging to Sebzar, a small fortified village in a nook of the hills about two miles to the S.S.E. Some years ago a large body of Turkmans, in collusion with the Tymuri Hazarah of Turbat Shekh Jám, were returning by this way from a foray to Nishabor, when they were overtaken by troops sent out from Mashhad to intercept them. A large

number of them fell into the hands of the Persians, and received punishment, not according to their deserts, but according to the necessities of the case. Thus the Tymuri, who are accounted subjects of the Persian Government, were put to death with the most horrible cruelties. Some were put out of their misery at once by having their throats cut or their heads chopped off, some were cut to pieces limb by limb, and others were ripped up and disembowelled, and many were impaled or doomed to a lingering death of torture, pegged to the ground by a stake driven through the belly. The real Turkmans, on the other hand, were sent to Mashhad, and there retained as hostages for exchange with Persian subjects carried off by their brethren in other forays. As a rule, the Persians seldom kill their Turkman captives, for fear of retaliation on their own captive fellow-countrymen.

The Káfir Calá hollow is closed to the westward by a ridge of red clay hills, in which is a mine of very pure white rock salt. It is quarried extensively for the Mashhad market. On the gravelly mounds skirting this ridge we found the burrows of a large species of rat, called *múshi Sultánya*. A couple were shot by one of our party, and measured about a foot from the snout to the root of the tail, which is short and bushy. The head resembles that of the beaver, and has long incisors. The colour of the fur is a yellowish grey, inclining to brown. Their burrows are very extensive, and render the ground unsafe for the movement of horses.

From this the road continues to slope towards the north, and passing over an undulating tract of red marl, drops on to a wide valley or plain, the *júlagah* Bewajan, which is bounded on the north by a snow-topped moun-

tain of the same name—a terminal prolongation to the south-east of the Nishabor mountain. The Bewajan plain is dotted with a number of fort-villages, which are remarkable from the absence of gardens or trees about them. The plain presents a gently undulating pasture-covered surface, and extends for many miles east and west and forms a long, narrow strip of tableland between the deserts on either side. To the eastward it drops suddenly, by a very broken surface, on to the Sarjam district, which presents a wide waste of red clay hummocks, of no use whatever but to provide concealment and shelter to the Turkman. To the south of Sarjam is seen a great snowy mountain, on which there is said to be a glacier. It is continuous to the north-west with the Turbat Hydari range of Asgand, and to the eastward separates Turbat Shekh Jám from Bákharz. To the north-east Sarjam is continuous with the desert of Sarakhs and Marv, and is the general rendezvous of the Takka, Sarúc, and Sálor Turkmans. To the westward Bewajan drops on to the plain of Nishabor on the one hand, and the *kavír* of Yunasi, through which it is continuous with the waste of Pul Abresham, on the other. Bewajan is the route by which the Marv Turkmans invade Nishabor and Sabzwar, and the country up to Shahrúd, where they meet their brethren of the Yamút and Goklán tribes.

We crossed the Bewajan plain in a N.N.E. direction, and passing the fortified village of Sháh Tughi—which, what with Turkmans and famine, had been reduced to only three miserable families, who longed to escape the burthen of its desolation, the dread of Turkmans, and the thoughts for their daily bread; but there was none to cheer them, nor to relieve them, nor even to commiserate them—rose gently up to some low ridges of slate,

trap, and granite, towards a ruined tower that stands on the edge of a muddy pool. At this point the caravan route from Tehran *viâ* Nishabor joins that from Turbat to Sharifabad and Mashhad. We here turned to the right, and descending into the secluded hollow in which stands Sharifabad, camped near its *sarae*. This is a commodious and substantial building, erected by Ishák Khan, Karai, when this town formed the frontier of his territory in this direction.

CHAPTER XI.

25*th April.*—Sharifabad to Mashhad, twenty-four miles. Weather cloudy and showery, with occasional glimpses of sunshine. We set out at seven A.M., and proceeded at first north-east then north, up and down over a succession of rich pasture-grown ridges, by a good military road, that exposed rocks of friable slate and a coarse granular granite abounding with great flakes of glistening mica.

At about six miles we crested the *Tappa Salam*, or "ridge of obeisance;" and got our first view of Mashhad *i mucaddas*, "the holy," with its gilded shrine and blue-domed mosque overtopping the rich foliage of its gardens—a pleasant oasis in the centre of a wide desert plain. Our road companions and Persian attendants, straining their eyes in the direction of their loved city, muttered a prayer, and bowed reverently and low.

In fine weather, the view of the city and the mountains beyond it must be a very pretty sight. Pilgrims go into ecstasies at it, and run ahead of their caravans to get an earlier glimpse. The ridge is covered with graves, and small heaps of stones to which are tied long shreds of many-coloured cloths—the altars raised by pilgrim devotees. On the present occasion, owing to the misty weather, our view of the place was but indistinct, whilst the hills beyond were hidden in the haze.

Beyond the *tappa*, we passed down some granite slopes to the wide bed of a clear little rivulet, and

following it awhile, at half-way to Mashhad halted for breakfast on its turfy slope, where we pitched a couple of bell-tents for shelter from the rain. Whilst here, the British agent, or *Wukíl uddaula*, arrived from Mashhad to pay his respects to Sir F. Goldsmid and General Pollock, and with him came an Armenian merchant, a cunning fellow, evidently with an eye to business, in which no doubt he acquitted himself eminently to his own satisfaction. He had a small supply of English bottled beer, which, on the faith of its name, we were as glad to get as he was to part with. Our subsequent experience, however, proved it to be but a very sorry imitation, and how or when it came here, if it ever did come here, we did not discover.

Besides these arrived a merchant of Peshin, one Sayyid Karm Shah, who came out to meet his kinsmen the Afghan Commissioner, Saggid Núr Muhammad Shah, and to give and learn the latest news, and also a couple of Persian officials to warn us of the grand preparations made for our reception and the order of our procession. This intelligence necessitated a change from our travelling costume to the more imposing habiliments of official uniform. Our passing baggage was stopped, and the transformation effected as we set out afresh in a provoking set shower of rain.

A short descent brought us to a muddy river draining eastward in a noisy stream a foot deep. We crossed its boulder-strewn bed, with a hill of granite on the right and left rear, and going across the plain, reined up at Turogh *sarae*. Here Sir F. Goldsmid, with his party, proceeded ahead to meet the *isticbal* sent out to meet him, and some minutes later, two field-officers of the Persian army rode up to conduct General Pollock and the Afghan Commissioner to meet the *isticbal* sent out for their

honourable reception, all according to programme and the strict rules of Persian etiquette.

The Persian officers were dressed in European military costume with the Persian hat, and in their general bearing no way differed from European gentlemen. Each was, however, attended by a *calyan* bearer, who, on a nod from his master, lighted the tobacco, and urging his horse forward, handed its long tube to him, and following close in rear, awaited another nod to receive it back. Our friends smoked nearly the whole way, and very obligingly offered us a whiff. The "weed" is the finest-flavoured in the world, but the fashion of inhaling its fumes so constantly cannot but prove injurious to the lungs. As we rode along exchanging commonplace remarks, I observed that the plain was an uncultivated waste, dotted towards the east with numerous Turkman towers.

On approaching the city, both our processions coalesced, and formed a very gay cavalcade of about three hundred horsemen. The costumes of the Persian cavalry were very varied, and generally handsome, and the types of physiognomy were not much less so, whilst the horses of all were the most divergent in blood and bone. Altogether, the *cortége* formed a crowd very interesting to look at and study, but very difficult to describe; and I will, therefore, not attempt to do so, lest I confound Kurd with Karai, and Dághistani with Daingháni, and Cajar with them all.

We entered the city at the Darwazac Khayábáni Páyín, or the "Gate of the Lower Avenue," and proceeded up the avenue to the railings of the court of the holy shrine of Imám Razá. Here we turned off to the right, through some narrow lanes and covered passages, into a cemetery completely choked with tombstones, and emitting a very disagreeable effluvium, dank, mouldy, and

strongly sepulchral. Beyond this, turning to the left, we regained the avenue on the farther side of the shrine, where it is called Khayábáni Bálá, or "Upper Avenue," and presently alighted at an ornamental garden, where tents had been pitched for our accommodation.

The avenue is a very fine street, broad and straight from east to west. Down its centre flows a stream brought from the Dorúd river, and on its sides are rows of tall, shady, plane-trees. In fine weather it must be an interesting and agreeable promenade, to the foreigner especially, if only to study the variety of the Asiatic races to be met in its bazars; but as we traversed its best portion at a season of continued rain, its fancied delights pale before the recollection of its black mud and offensive odours—too real to be easily forgotten. The shops and *saraes* on either side the avenue presented a busy scene, though nowhere crowded, nor did the people evince any curiosity or commotion at our appearance amongst them. I was surprised to find many of the people quite fair and ruddy, and hardly to be distinguished from Europeans in this respect. They were, I was told, merchants from Bukhara. Some veritable Turkmans, too, were pointed out to us at one of the *saraes* as we passed, and a couple of them at the entrance smiled with an expression of good-natured curiosity, as they found themselves made the objects of our attention. They were light-ruddy complexioned, and large-limbed men, with thick short beards, and a distinct trace of the Tatar physiognomy in their high cheek-bones and small widely-parted eyes. The expression of face was agreeable than otherwise, and betrayed none of the well-known ferocity of their nature. There are nearly a hundred of these men detained in this city as hostages for the good behaviour of their tribe. They are allowed full liberty within certain quarters of

the town, but are not allowed to pass beyond the gates. They are said to abuse their liberty pretty freely by conveying intelligence to their tribe, of caravans and travellers arriving and departing from the city.

We halted a week at Mashhad, and on the day following our arrival and that preceding our departure, paid ceremonial visits to the Prince-Governor, Sultan Murád Mirzá, uncle of the Shah, from whom he has received the title of Hisámussaltanat, or "sword of the state," for his services at the siege of Herat in 1856. His palace is situated at some little distance from the garden allotted to us, and on each occasion we were conducted to the august presence with a minute observance of all the tedium of Persian etiquette. At the hour appointed for our departure, a couple of tall Turkman horses, richly caparisoned, were sent over from the Prince's stables for Sir F. Goldsmid and General Pollock. These, with our own horses, and a long file of servants, were ranged outside the gate of our garden; and as we mounted, the latter fell into two lines, Indian-file, one on each side of our path. They were about fifteen men on each side, all dressed in their own best, or, as I suspect was the case with most of them, in borrowed clothes. At all events, they looked very decent people, and were hardly to be recognised as our grooms, tent-pitchers, and valets, so complete and sudden was their metamorphosis. With these men leading the way, and ourselves in full-dress uniform, our procession cut a very respectable figure. We proceeded leisurely, guided by the measured paces of our conductors, who each and all, with hands folded in front and heads slightly bowed, looked as solemn and lugubrious as sextons at a funeral.

Arrived at the palace gate, we dismounted, and were ushered into an outer court paved with flat red bricks

and enclosed by high blank walls. Here we drew india-rubber goloshes over our boots, and advanced through an inner court to the reception room, in which our host was seated. At the threshold our goloshes were removed and taken charge of by our servants, and stepping in we each in turn, without doffing our hats, saluted the Prince-Governor in military style. He was seated, hat-on-head, in a chair at the farther end of the room, and, without rising, merely motioned us to the chairs ranged on either side his own at right angles. The usual inquiries as to our health were dispensed with, I presume, because the court chamberlain had called on us the previous afternoon for *hál púrsí*, that is, to ask after our state; and instead thereof, the Prince, so soon as we were seated, asked the name and rank of each of us, and then started the conversation with a string of inquiries regarding our journey up, and maintained it for some time on various topics, proving himself a remarkably well-informed man. The room of our reception was richly carpeted with splendid Birjand carpets and magnificent floorcloths of purple satin. During the visit a number of servants—one for each visitor and the host—marched in successively with loads of sherbet, coffee, tea, and ices, and between each tour another set of servants marched in with a *calyan* for each of us. The cups were of very superior china, and the spoons of solid gold. The *finjans* of coffee were richly jewelled with pearls and emeralds and rubies, set in a delicate filagree of gold. The *calyans*, too, were mostly costly, the jars being of Sevres china, decorated with French pictures, whilst the bowls were of solid gold, studded with brilliants and pearls, and the mouthpieces of gold studded with turquoise. No two of them were alike, and yet all were alike costly, enamelled, and jewelled. The Prince is reputed to be one of the

most wealthy men in the country, and one of the most stingy. He has done nothing for the starving poor during the famine, and the suffering and loss has been something frightful. He himself reckoned the loss of population in Khorassan alone at 120,000 souls, and the British agent here informed us, that of 9000 houses in the city, not one half were tenanted. The picture he drew of the suffering here during the winter was awful. Hundreds died in their cellars and huts, and in the lanes and passages, from sheer cold and want of food, and remained unburied for weeks.

In this respect, however, the Hisamussaltanat is no worse than the rest of those in authority in this country; for, from the Shah downwards, it is said not one has moved a finger to alleviate the general suffering. The consequence is, the country has lost a million and a half at least of its population, and cannot regain its former prosperity for a full generation to come.

We paid a third visit to the Prince-Governor, and spent the afternoon with him in the garden adjoining his palace. We were here received under a marquee, erected over a carpeted platform, and the same course of ceremonies and refreshments were observed as on the other occasions. In this garden we saw a Turkman tent of the kind called *khargáh*. It is of circular shape, about eighteen feet in diameter, and dome roofed, and is built up of lattice-work frames of wood, fixed together by leather thongs, and is protected from the weather by a covering of thick felts. The whole takes to pieces, and forms a single camel-load.

On this occasion the Prince spoke at length regarding our experiences in Sistan, and the conduct of the Hashmat-ul-mulk, and alluded in very plain terms to the rapid encroachment of Russia upon the countries of Central

Asia, and the inevitable consequences of her aggressive policy in that direction. Khiva he considered as doomed since the base of Russian operations had been changed from the side of the Aral to that of the Caspian. The Jafar Bai section of Yamut Turkmans had already been conciliated, and they would help to win over the others. Further, he laid stress on the sympathy and support the Russians would receive from the captive Persians in Khiva and Bukhara, whose numbers are not far short of fifty thousand.

On the last occasion of our visiting the Hisamussaltanat, we were all photographed in a group, with himself in the centre, by a Persian who had learned the art in Constantinople. He might have learned it better at Tehran, though, considering the locality, his work was creditable. We were obligingly presented with a copy each, as a memorial of our visit, which I may say is remembered as the most agreeable portion of our long journey. We had been favoured with a distinguished reception, were accommodated in a delightful garden swarming with nightingales, whose clear strong notes resounded on all sides night and day ; and enjoyed as much of the society of the Prince as circumstances admitted of. Our treatment here, notwithstanding the irksome forms of Persian etiquette, and the pride that prevented a return visit, was, after our experiences in Ghayn and Sistan, very gratifying ; whilst the assimilation of the terms of social intercourse to those of Europe—so different from the absurd prejudices and caste obligations we had been accustomed to in India—was alone a subject for congratulation. But as every good has its counteracting evil, so it was with us in this last case ; and we more than once had cause to wish that our Persian servants, in place of their unbounded freedom in the matter of dressing and eating, were bound by the

same rules as our Indian servitors. We might then have been spared the mortification of seeing our shirts and trousers airing on their persons, and our meats and drinks disappearing ere they had been well tasted.

Mashhad, the capital of Persian Khorassan, is a considerable commercial city, and the point of convergence of the caravan routes between Persia and India and China, through the countries of Afghanistan and Turkistan respectively. It covers a large extent of ground, surrounded by fortified walls several miles in circumference. Much of the intramural area is occupied by gardens and extensive cemeteries. In the latter the graves are closely packed, and contain the remains of pilgrim devotees who die here, and of the faithful in all parts of the country, whose last wish is to mingle their ashes with the sacred soil in which lie those of their loved saint. Formerly from thirty to forty thousand pilgrims annually visited the shrine of Imám Razá, bringing in many cases the bones of their dead relatives for interment under the shadow of the sacred dome; but since the famine the number has considerably diminished, and hardly exceeds ten or twelve thousand.

Mashhad *i mucaddas*, or "the holy," is one of the principal places of Muhammadan pilgrimage, the others being Mecca *munawara*, or "the enlightened;" Karbalá *mualla*, or "the exalted;" Najafa *ul ashraf*, or "the most noble;" and Bukhara *sharíf*, or "the noble." Like these centres of Islamite piety, it too is a sink of vice and immorality of all sorts the most degrading, and its baths and bazars swarm with swindlers and gamblers, who, with a curious perversion of conscience, combine devotion with debauchery.

Amongst the special industries of this place is the manufacture of ornamental vases, goblets, tables, pipes,

and other utensils of domestic use, from a soft blue slate or steatite, which is quarried in the hills to the south of the city. Some of them are very tastefully engraved, and they sell at a remarkably cheap rate. Cooking-pots, kettles, &c., are made from this stone, and they stand the fire well.

This is the headquarters of the turquoise trade, the mines of which are in the adjoining district of Nishabor, and we had hoped to obtain some good specimens of the gem; but they were either not shown to us, or had been already bespoken by the agents for merchants in the trade. We saw better stones at Shikárpúr in Sind than any they showed us here, and at more reasonable prices. I suspect we owed our disappointment to the irrepressible greed of our servants for their customary *mudakhil*. They certainly required some such means of increasing their incomes over and above the fixed salaries they received from us, in order to enable them to gratify their expensive tastes in the matter of dress. The Mirzá (secretary) was particularly conspicuous for the variety of costumes he delighted to disport in. At every place we made a halt at, he appeared decked out in a new suit of clothes. One day he would wear a coat of purple broadcloth and Angola trousers, then a suit of black broadcloth; and here, where our stay was more prolonged, each day produced a new dress, and it was a puzzle to find out where he got them from, and how he paid for them, for they must have been all expensive, particularly one which struck us as very handsome. It was a coat of blue broadcloth, trimmed with gold braiding and lined with squirrel fur.

During our stay at Mashhad the weather was more or less cloudy, and showers and sunshine succeeded each other at short intervals. Our garden residence proved

very damp and chill, and we all suffered more or less in health from its effects. The winter here is described as a cold season, owing to the winds that sweep the plain, on which snow lies for three weeks or a month. The summer heats are sometimes tempered by cool breezes from the north, but are more frequently intensified by radiation from the deserts around. The elevation is about 3180 feet above the sea.

3*d May.*—Mashhad to Jágharc, or Jáarc, twenty miles. Our heavy baggage and tents had been sent on yesterday to Nishabor by the route of Sharifabad and Cadamgah. We set out at eleven A.M., and going up the Khayábáni Bala, left the city by the gate of the same name, and proceeded across the plain in a W.N.W. direction, with a low range of hills to our left. Standing out from it, close together, are two hills of granite called Koh Nucra, and Koh Tilá, or the silver hill and gold hill respectively, from a traditionary belief that they contain, or did contain, those metals. Across the plain to the right is a high mountain range that bounds the Mashhad district to the north. Coal is said to be found on it; and a great mass towering above the rest of the range was pointed out as Calát-i-Nadiri, a celebrated mountain fortress supposed to be impregnable. It was for some years the depository of the treasures Nadir brought with him from India.

The plain in our front represents a wide flat of mostly uncultivated land, and is traversed obliquely by a singular line of tall towers, which we learned on inquiry were fortified watermills on the course of the stream that is led off from the Dorúd river for the water supply of the city. At about ten miles we reached the foot of the hills, along which are scattered a few villages, and by a rough stony ascent crested a low ridge called *Tappa*

Salam, and from it got an excellent view of the city and the great Mashhad plain, which extends away to the eastward as a desert flat so far as the eye can reach, and cuts the horizon in a clear line like the sea. Here, as on the ridge of the same name on the side of Sharifabad, the ground was piled in every direction with cairns from which fluttered a multitude of rag shreds.

Beyond this we crossed the Dorúd river, a little way below a strong masonry dam built across a narrow passage between rocks, and a little later found the river above it was retained in the shape of a small lake. Farther on we passed the picturesque village of Gulistan, and then turning S.S.W., followed a winding lane up to Targobah, a delightfully situated village in the midst of gardens and orchards sloping down from both sides to the noisy and rapid little hill torrent flowing between. The vine, apple, plum, peach, and apricot, the cherry, filbert, walnut, and mulberry, with willows and poplars, formed a thick forest on either side our path, and higher up we found the elm, ash, and plane tree, whilst everywhere the damp soil was luxuriant in a rank vegetation of weeds. We recognised the wild mignonette, forget-me-not, buttercups, goosefoot cleavers, the bright red poppy, and a multitude of other common English herbs. The scene at once reminded me of Devonshire; and had I been dropped on to the spot blindfolded, should, on looking around, have thought myself on the banks of the Plym. At four miles beyond Targobah, proceeding up the course of a rapid torrent, which we crossed from side to side some thirty times *en route*, and passing a succession of orchards, in which we saw a number of boys and girls at work collecting fuel, and as fair as English youths and maidens, we arrived at Jágharc, where we

very damp and chill, and we all suffered more or less in health from its effects. The winter here is described as a cold season, owing to the winds that sweep the plain, on which snow lies for three weeks or a month. The summer heats are sometimes tempered by cool breezes from the north, but are more frequently intensified by radiation from the deserts around. The elevation is about 3180 feet above the sea.

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were accommodated in a private house adjoining a *sarae*, which was made over for the shelter of our servants and cattle. Weather rainy and air damp.

Jágharc is built on the slope of a high slate hill right down to the edge of the torrent, which, with another farther south, goes to form the Dorúd, or "two river" stream we crossed at the foot of the hills. Its name signifies "the place of drowning," from a tradition, as I learned from our landlord, that this country was at one time under the sea, and that this was the spot where Jonah, or Yúnas, was cast into it. He was cast up again from the whale's belly at the spot now named Yúnasi, the same we camped at on our march from Bijistan. Jágharc is about 4650 feet above the sea, 1470 feet above Mashhad, and 1790 feet above Yúnasi.

Our next stage was over the Nishabor mountain to Dihrúd, twenty-four miles. We set out at 7.30 A.M., and proceeded S.S.W up the stream, through orchards as yesterday. At two miles we came to a fork in the rivulet formed by an intervening hill of slate; and following the branch to the right, at two miles more cleared the vineyards and orchards, and continued ascending along a row of pollard willows bordering the stream, which we crossed continually in our course. At another seven miles we came to the Páe Gudar Sarae, a small rest-house, as the name indicates, at "the foot of the pass." Here two roads branch off, one on each side of a great overtopping bluff. Both are very steep and difficult, but the one to the left being pronounced the easier of the two, we took it. After crossing a deep and dangerous snowdrift that blocked the bottom of a very narrow gorge, and was undermined by little streams flowing beneath its soft subsiding mass, we struck a path on the steep slope of the hill. It was so steep we were

obliged to dismount and lead our horses up the hill, or, as was done by some, to hang on by their tails and let them drag us up.

At the top of the pass (the ascent from the *sarae* at its foot occupied us an hour and five minutes without a halt), the aneroid indicated an elevation of 9390 feet above the sea. The summit was covered with wide fields of snow, and afforded an extensive view of the plain of Mashhad on the one side, and that of Nishabor on the other. The range runs from north-west to south-east, gradually subsiding towards the latter direction, but in the former rising into the high snow-clad mountains of Kháwar and Binaloh. A strong west wind, cold and withering, swept the pass, and had cleared its crest of snow. Here we found an immense number of cairns, some of large size, and thousands of shreds of cloth fluttered from them like pennants in the breeze. This is the first spot at which the pilgrim coming from the westward sights the shrine of Imám Ráza. The sky was unfortunately overcast with clouds, and we did not distinguish the gilded dome and minars, though the city itself was plainly discernible. Near the top we passed a small party of pilgrims hurrying down the hill. They had with them two pannier-mules carrying veiled ladies. They must have had a trying and hazardous journey, for the road is extremely difficult, and, when we saw them, their clumsy vehicles swayed from side to side in a most alarming manner, over the very brink of tremendous precipices. Their mules were allowed to pick their own way, and always took the precipice edge, as if out of bravado, to show how far they could go without toppling over, though really from an instinct of self-preservation, and to avoid contact with projecting rocks on the hill-side, a sudden concussion against which would most

likely send them and their loads off the narrow path down the precipice.

The descent is by a very steep and stony path in a deep defile, and in twenty minutes brought us to Rabát Dihrúd, a dilapidated resting-house, where we alighted for breakfast. Below this the path is extremely rough, steep, and difficult, down a narrow winding gorge, blocked here and there by snowdrifts, undermined by running water beneath. Several of our cattle fell here by the snow subsiding under them, and were extricated with difficulty. The rocks around are as rugged, wild, and barren as the gorge is narrow, steep, and difficult, and altogether the scene is one of weirdly picturesque character, whilst the skeletons of men and cattle that strew the path everywhere testify to its fatality.

At five miles down from the Rabát a branch defile joins from the right, and thence the descent becomes less steep, and follows a line of willow, ash, and poplar trees (all polled for the manufacture of charcoal), along the course of a strong rivulet, and a few miles onwards conducts through a succession of vineyards to Dihrúd, where we found accommodation in some empty houses, of which there is, *miserabile dictu*, no lack. The village has been decimated by the famine, and wears a gloomy, miserable, and deserted look, in the midst of luxuriant vineyards and orchards, exuberant in their foliage from want of hands to tend and prune them. Its people, such as are left, pale, haggard, and hungry, wander listlessly through its deserted quarters and crumbling tenements, resignedly waiting the ripening of their crops, and eking out the while a miserable subsistence on such stores of fruit and grain as are yet left to them.

5th May.—Dihrúd to Nishabor, twenty-two miles, and halt a day—route west, down a gravelly slope and

then W.N.W. across the populous and fertile plain of Nishabor, to the garden of Imám Wardi Khan, a little beyond the city. At the sixth mile we passed Cadamgah a little to the left. There is a shrine here, built over a stone bearing the impression of a foot, said to be that of the saint buried at Mashhad, and pilgrims visit it on their way to the mausoleum. A couple of miles farther on is the village of Ardaghích, and then Abbasabad and Shahabad, all on the left. To the right, following the hill skirt northward, are the villages of Kháwar, Burji-liṛán, Dasht, Bijan, Ayik, Rúh, and others. The plain, in fact, is dotted all over with villages and green spots of cultivation and fruit trees. Thirty or forty villages are seen at one view on either side the route, and give the plain a most populous and flourishing look, but they are all more or less depopulated owing to losses from the famine.

Beyond Shahabad we passed a wide extent of ruins a little to the left of the road. Prominent amongst them are a tall blue-domed tomb, and the battlements of an extensive fort. They mark the site of ancient Nishabor, which was destroyed at the period of the Arab conquest. It was subsequently restored, and, in the time of Sabuktagin, was the residence of his son, Mahmúd of Ghazni, as governor of Khorassan. Under his rule it regained its former prosperity, but afterwards experienced many misfortunes, and was repeatedly plundered by Tatars and Uzbaks, and was finally razed to the ground, and its people massacred, by Changhiz Khan.

The present town rose from its remains, on the plain close by, and for centuries had a hard struggle for existence, being repeatedly plundered by Turkmans and Uzbaks, who annually ravaged the country. Early in the eighteenth century it was restored by Abbas Culi

Khan, a Kurd of the Bayát tribe, and from him was taken in 1752 by Shah Ahmad, Durrani. The Afghan afterwards reinstated the Kurd in the government of this frontier province of his newly-established kingdom, having secured his loyalty by the bonds of matrimonial alliance, giving his own sister in marriage to the chief, and one of his daughters in marriage to his son.

On the death of Shah Ahmad, and the removal of the seat of government from Kandahar to Kabul, the Bayát chief became independent, as did the rest of the local chiefs on this frontier. The weakness produced by this divided authority and independent action facilitated the Cajar designs in this direction, and in 1793 the city fell to Agha Muhammad Shah, the first sovereign of that dynasty. The city formerly contained nine thousand inhabitants, but its present population is less than half that number. As we passed by the city on the way to our garden quarters, we were beset by an importunate crowd of starving creatures, most pitiful objects to behold. Their pinched features, attenuated limbs, and prominent joints, gave them a look of utter helplessness; but, to our astonishment, they fought, and screamed, and bit, and tore each other with fierce energy, in their struggles for the small coins we threw amongst them. Our escort charged in amongst them, and flogged right and left; but the sight of money had rendered them frantic, and the lashes fell upon them unheeded, so intensely fixed were their imaginations on the prospect of securing the wherewithal to satisfy the cravings of their hunger. I saw several of the weaker ones knocked down and ridden over by the horses; and some of our escort actually fell back to despoil the stronger of the petty wealth they had secured in the struggle!

Imám Wardi's garden, in which we are accommodated, is

a bequest by the founder to the shrine at Mashhad. It has a handsome pavilion at each end, and between them extends a long row of ornamental tanks furnished with pipes for fountains. On either side the ground is laid out in vineyards and fruit gardens interspersed, between which are flower-beds bordered by beautiful rose-bushes, now in full blossom. Some of these—double roses—are of a bright-yellow colour, and others—single—are of a yellow colour outside and scarlet inside. The garden is used as a resting-place for the Shah and all distinguished travellers in this region.

The district of Nishabor was formerly reckoned one of the most populous and fertile places in Persia, and is certainly the most flourishing-looking place we have seen in the country. In reality, however, its villages are only half peopled, and many of its *kârez* streams have run dry. The district comprises the twelve divisions, or *bulúk*, of Zabarkhan, Ardighích, Zarbi Gházi, Ishkabad, Sághabad, Mázúl, Tahti Júlgah, Rewand, Tághun Koh, Bári Mádan, Sarwiláyat and Dihrúd. It also contains twelve perennial streams, and formerly was irrigated by twelve thousand *kárez* streams; but of these, three-fourths are now dry, or have become filled up. Its villages and hamlets are reckoned at twelve hundred, and it is said to possess twelve different mines, that yield turquoise, salt, lead, copper, antimony, and iron, also marble and soapstone. The turquoise-mines are in the Bári Madán *bulúk*, and a second has recently been discovered in the hills to the south, separating Nishabor from Turshiz. The plain of Nishabor is girt on three sides by lofty hills, but towards the south slopes to a great salt desert, continuous with the *kavir* of Yunasi by gaps through a low range of marly water-worn ridges.

7th May.—Nishabor to Zámiuabad, sixteen miles—

route W.S.W. across the plain, passing many little square forts on either side the road. These, like all the others on the south and west quarters of the plain, are bare of trees, but are surrounded by wide corn-fields. Trees, we were told, would not grow here, owing to the strong winds that prevail from the west and south. We marched in the face of a strong cold south-west wind, which swept up and drove before it thick clouds of saline dust, until the clouds above dissolved into a thin shower, which cleared the atmosphere and laid the dust.

One of the Persians of our escort assured us that this wind often prevailed with such furious force that it knocked people off their legs. "Why, only last year," said he, with most animated gestures, "it tore up the sand in that hollow away to the left with such force, and swept it away in such quantities, that it exposed the remains of an ancient town nobody ever dreamt of the existence of before. The houses were discovered in rare order. The chambers were clear of debris and clean swept of dust, and, marvellous to relate, the furniture was found just as it stood when the city was swallowed up in the earth." "You astonish me," I said; "this is something very wonderful." "Yes," he continued, "you speak the truth—it is wonderful. God is great and His power is infinite. But I will tell you the most wonderful thing of all. Everything looked perfect and most substantial, but the moment a hand was stretched out to touch an object, it at once crumbled to powder. The place is only a few miles off our road, would you like to gallop over and see it?"

I thought of the Kol Márút inscription, and the Turkman heads, and the earthquake at Khabúshán or Kochán, and politely declined the invitation. "Your description,"

I said, "is so complete, I see the place before my mind's eye. Why incommode ourselves in this rain for what is so apparent?" I saw he felt the sarcasm, though, with genuine Persian nonchalance, he covered his retreat with an—"As you will! There the place is, and if you like to see it, I am ready to accompany you." Of course he would have made some trivial excuse at not finding the city of his imagination, or have kept me wandering over the plain till in sheer disgust I gave up the search. I should, however, like to have taken him on his proffered errand, had I full power to punish him on proving his delinquency; for, on subsequent inquiry, I ascertained the whole story to be a pure invention.

I referred just now to an earthquake at Kochán, which I have not mentioned in the narrative. We were told at Turbat Hydari, and by the governor of the place too, as the most recent news from Mashhad, that a fearful earthquake had almost completely destroyed Kochán. The convulsion was described as so violent, that the houses were completely inverted, and hundreds of the people crushed to death in the ruins. One of our first inquiries on arrival at Mashhad was regarding the calamity at Kochán, but nobody had heard anything about it.

Our road companions were so thoroughly untrustworthy in all they said, that we found it difficult to get any reliable information out of them regarding the countries we were passing through, and our Persian servants evinced such a dislike to our inquisitiveness, that it was hopeless to look for any assistance from them. We all took notes, and each catered for himself, and many a time were we hard pushed for material to fill our diaries. A traveller on the road, a peasant at the plough, or a shepherd tending his flocks, was hailed as a godsend, and at once charged down upon by three or four Britons,

note-book in hand, foraging for information. "Do you belong to this place?" "What's the name of that village?" "And that on the hillside?" "What's the name of that hill?" "And of this *bulúk?*" "Where do you live?" "How many houses does this village contain?" "How many people died in the famine?" and so forth.

Our blunt authoritative volley of questions generally elicited unhesitating and truthful replies; but sometimes our examinee became impatient under our "wait a bits," whilst we wrote, and began to hesitate and reflect on his replies. We knew he was concocting a lie, and without waiting to hear it, galloped off to join our comrades, leaving him to stare after us in bewilderment.

The last few miles of our march was over a very slippery clay soil, white with salines, and drained by a sluggish muddy river, which we crossed by a masonry bridge. Our camp is pitched on rising ground beyond the fort-village of Záminabad, and affords a good view of the Binaloh range, running north-west, and separating Burdjnurd from Kochán. To the north-west the Nishabor plain narrows, and communicates through a long valley with Burdjnurd, just as the plain of Mashhad does on the other side of Binaloh with Chinaran and Kochán. To the southward the prospect is bounded by the Koh Surkh range, running east and west, and separating Nishabor from Turshiz. The weather here proved very raw and black, and a cold south-west wind swept over the country in stormy gusts.

Our next march was nine miles to Shoráb, on the bank of a ravine that drains the chain of hills separating the plain of Nishabor from that of Sabzwár. Shoráb is a neat little fortified village of some sixty houses. There

is a post-house here, and a large *ábambár*, and a new and commodious *sarae* is in course of erection.

From this we marched nearly due west eighteen miles to Zafarani, and halted a day. For the first five miles our road led over a very broken mameloned surface, up to a watershed running north-west and south-east, and marking the boundary between Nishabor and Sabzwár. Its elevation is about 4290 feet above the sea, and from it we got a good view of the great plain of Sabzwár, which is singularly void of trees and villages, and looks like a desert compared with Nishabor. Indeed, its southern coasts are a veritable salt desert, glistening white as snow in the sunlight. The plain is bounded to the westward and southward by the lofty Gomesh mountain, and beyond the desert tract to the south by the Koh Surkh and Turshiz ranges.

At four miles on, passing amongst rough rocky hills of slate and trap, we came to the Sarae Caladár, and thence west down a long slope to the plain of Sabzwár. Its surface is a firm coarse gravel, covered with pasture plants, such as the camel-thorn, asafœtida, liquorice, wild rue, astragalus, &c., and the wild almond, the fruit of which was nearly ripe; but not a single tree was visible on all the plain, and but only two or three villages, widely apart. The land slopes to the salt desert on the south, where flows the Káli Shor, or "salt river." It drains Nishabor and Sabzwár south-west to the desert of Káshán, and its water is so saline as to be unfit even for purposes of irrigation.

Zafarani is a walled village of about two hundred houses, belonging to the Zafaranlu tribe of Kurds. There are a good post-house and a large *sarae* here. The Kurds originally came into Persia with the invasion of Changhiz Khan, and possessed themselves of the moun-

tainous region bordering its western provinces. A colony of them, amounting to forty thousand families, was afterwards transported into the neighbouring provinces of Persia by Shah Tamasp, and Shah Abbas the Great subsequently settled them in the northern districts of Khorassan, viz., Daragaz, Radgán, Chinárán, Khabúsháu, Burdjnurd, Nishabor, and Sabzwár. On the downfall of the Saffavi dynasty they became independent, till reduced by Nadir. After the death of this conqueror they passed under the nominal rule off the Durrani Shah Ahmad, but they soon threw of the ill-secured Afghan yoke, and again became independent under local chiefs. who for several years successfully resisted the authority of the Cajar kings, until finally reduced to subjection in the reign of the present Shah, about the middle of this century.

11*th May.*—Zafarani to Sabzwár, twenty-five miles, and halt a day—route west, over a gravelly plain, covered with asafœtida and wild rue in profusion. To the left the plain slopes down to the Káli Shor, the course of which is marked by a white belt of saline efflorescence. Beyond the river rises the Gomesh range of mountains, their summits streaked with snow. To the right is a high range of bare rocky hills, that separate Sabzwár from Juwen and Bám of Burdjnurd.

At eight miles we came to the village of Sarposhida. Here the sandy soil is cut, scooped, and honeycombed by the wind in a manner similar to some parts of Sistan. At four miles farther we passed the two roadside villages of Julen, with their rich fields of corn fast ripening into ear. Here we witnessed an interesting hawk-hunt. A solitary snippet, startled from its safety in a roadside pool by our approach, took wing with the quick flight peculiar to the species. Instantly a small hawk stooped

at it from the sky, and then commenced an exciting chase. The snippet redoubled its speed, and, screaming with fright, dodged the rapid stoops of its relentless pursuer by quick darts first to one side then to the other; again it would double back, and strive to keep above the hawk, or rush off in the opposite direction to his soar. The poor snippet struggled bravely for life, but the enemy was too strong for it. Swoop followed swoop in rapid succession at close quarters, and were just escaped with wonderful activity, till presently the quarry began to show signs of fatigue, and the hawk was on the point of securing his prey, when in cut another hawk, and at a single swoop carried off the game. The poor snippet's shrill screams ceased at once, and the hawk, thus cheated of his rights, quietly sailed away in the opposite direction.

Beyond Julen we passed Zydabad and Nazlabad, and half a dozen other villages, to the right of the road; and then meeting a few horsemen who were hurriedly sent out by way of *isticbal*, were conducted by them through the covered bazars of Sabzwár to the quarters prepared for us in the centre of the town, and adjoining the residence of the governor. Here we were received by the governor himself, Muhammad Taki Khan, with pleasing civility and attention. He is quite European in manner and appearance, and speaks French like a Frenchman, as do most Persian gentlemen of the modern school.

Sabzwár, we were told, contained four thousand houses, only half of which are now tenanted. The district is said to have lost twenty-four thousand souls by death and emigration during the famine. The loss of Nishabor district is reckoned at only twenty thousand, which I think must be under the mark, for its population is naturally much above that of Sabzwár, which only comprises nine *bulúk*,

some of which are very sparsely populated. They are Shamkán, along Kálí Shor to the south, Gomesh, Humaon, Kasaba, between Sabzwár and Zafarani, Tabbas, Káh, Mazinán, Tagao, to the north of the plain, and Zamand. Besides these, the *bulúk* of Juwen and Bám of the Burdjnurd district have recently been added to Sabzwár by the Hisamussaltanat.

13*th May.*—Sabzwár to Mihr, thirty-three miles—route west through an uninterrupted sheet of corn for two miles, then across an undulating plain, gradually sloping to a salt desert on our left. At four miles passed Abári village, and, near it, the Mil Khusro Gard. This is a lofty minar standing by itself in a ploughed field. It is built of red bricks arranged in arabesque pattern, and is much decayed. At a little distance from it stands a domed mausoleum, coated with plates of tin or similar white metal. From its interior proceeded the voices of men chanting the Curán. None of our party could tell us anything about these relics, and there was no stray peasant whom we could charge down upon and question; so I must be content with the bare record of their locality.

At five miles on we passed Pírastír and its gardens and corn-fields, and at another five miles came to an *ábambár* where the road branches. That to the left goes W.S.W. by Námen and a succession of deserted villages on the edge of the salt desert to Mazinán. It is a fearful road, and how any one could take it, with the option of a better, is a mystery. Not a particle of vegetation was to be seen; the whole vista was one of aridity and salt, blinding with a dazzling glare, and great heaps of drift-sand half buried the little castles lining the route. Yet the road was a well-trodden track, indicating frequent use. That to the right went W.N.W. up a rising ground, and

at four miles brought us to Rewand, where we found shelter from the heat of the midday sun under the shade of some magnificent plane-trees in the midst of the village. It is delightfully situated amidst gardens and vineyards, and outwardly has all the surroundings of prosperity and plenty, but inwardly, within its houses and courts, who can tell the amount of misery and suffering that there reigns? We could only guess it from the number of poor men and women who, through fear of our escort, stealthily crept amongst the bushes to our resting-place, and in low voices begged a morsel of bread, whilst gathering up and munching the crumbs and bones thrown aside from our late repast.

Proceeding hence, we followed a long hill skirt strewed with bits of trap, and chlorite, and cellular lava, washed down from the hills to our right, the base of which is set with red clay mounds, in the hollows between which are spied many little hamlets and farmsteads. At six miles we passed a roadside pond, and thence sloping down gradually, at another six miles reached Mihr, where we camped at 6.20 P.M.—the thermometer 84° Fah.

14*th May*—Mihr to Mazinán, twenty miles—route due west down a gentle slope skirting the Chaghatay hills, that separate us from Juwen on the right. The soil is bare and gravelly, and slopes down to the desert on our left. At four miles we passed through the Súdkar village, which is the only one on the route. On approaching our camp at Mazinán, we left a large village at the foot of the hills to the right. It is called Dawarzan, and is protected by a double row of outlying Turkman towers.

Mazinán is a small village on the edge of the desert, and adjoins the ruins of an extensive town, in the midst of which stands a decayed *sarae* of the Arab period. There is a post-house here, and also a good newly-built

sarae. The place wears a wretched inhospitable look, and in summer must be very hot.

15*th May.*—Mazinán to Abbasabad, twenty-three miles*—route at first north, and then round to the west, along the skirt of the hills bounding an arm of the desert. Soil gravelly, and surface covered with saltworts, camel-thorn, mimosa, tamarisk, and similar vegetation. At half-way we came to the Sadarabad Sarae and halted for breakfast. It is a recently-built and commodious structure, erected by the late Sadar Azim, and is furnished with a good *ábambár.* Opposite is a small fort for the accommodation of a few families charged with the care of the *sarae.* There is no village here, and the supplies are brought in and stored periodically from Sabzwár. There are no trees nor cultivation here, and the whole population consists of three men, as many women and one child, and a very miserable set they look. They were anxious to leave the place, as they were in hourly dread of Turkmans, and owing to the few travellers now frequenting the route, never made any money. Whilst here, we were overtaken by a courier with our last post from Peshawar through Afghanistan, with dates to the 10th April. It had been sent from Mashhad by a Persian courier, and ought to have reached us at Sabzwár; but the Persian has not the energy of the Afghan.

Ahead of us is a dangerous bit of desert, which is always infested by Turkmans; so, on setting out from Sadarabad, careful preparations were made for our pas-

* We were here joined by an escort of fourteen horsemen, eighty footmen, and ten artillerymen with one gun; and were roused at daylight by a fearful bray from the trumpets of the last arm of the service, which, by the way, was the only one dignified with uniform. They are to escort us across the Turkman-infested country lying between this and Sháhrúd. We set out at 4.30 A.M., in rather loose order, the artillerymen with their gun, preceded by a detachment of horse, leading the way.

sage across it. Our baggage and servants, &c., were all collected together, and massed in a close column outside the *sarae*. The gun was placed at their head, and protected by a score of matchlockmen, whilst the rest ranged themselves Indian-file on either side the column. The cavalry took up their posts on the flanks, front, and rear, and threw out advanced parties, who topped every rising bit of ground to scan the country ahead.

All the arrangements being completed, our trumpeter brayed out some hideous sounds, which of themselves were enough to scare the enemy, if the gun was not, and we proceeded, ourselves amongst the horsemen in advance of the gun. At a couple of miles, over a flat bare clay surface, we came to a rivulet crossed by a crumbling brick-bridge of very ancient appearance. This is Pul Abresham. Here there was a block in the passage. We had about a hundred camels, more than half the number of mules, and asses innumerable, for every matchlockman had his accompanying *ulágh* (beast of burden), and there were besides several others who had taken advantage of the opportunity to join our caravan. The bridge was narrow, and only a few could pass at a time; presently a few scattered horsemen were spied far away on the desert to the left. The news spread like wildfire. "Haste to the front!"—"Keep together!"—"Cross quickly!"—"Don't lag behind!"—resounded on all sides from our escort. The bridge was abandoned to the camels and mules and asses, and horsemen pushed across the muddy stream on either side of it, and again formed up on the open ground ahead. Some horsemen had galloped on in advance to bring intelligence regarding those we had seen on the desert, and meanwhile the crowd in the caravan looked around watchfully in every direction, as if they expected a Turkman to start up from behind

every bush that dotted the plain. The terror these well-cursed marauders inspire in the Persian breast is laughable, were it not for the reality of the cause. Men who bounce and brag of their prowess when they have hundreds of miles between them, pale and shiver in their shoes when they find themselves in a position where they may meet them face to face.

After a brief halt here, our horsemen on an eminence some way ahead were seen to dismount. On this our leader pronounced the road clear, and we set forward again. This tract has from time immemorial been infested by Turkmans of the Goklan and Yamút tribes, whose seat is in the valley of the Atrak. A country better adapted to their mode of warfare could nowhere else be found. The hill ranges to the north afford them an unobserved approach to their hunting-grounds. Arrived on them, they conceal themselves amongst the inequalities of the surface, finding water in some ravine, and pasture for their horses in the aromatic herbs and rich grasses that cover the hollows. Their scouts from the eminence of some commanding ridge, or the top of some of the innumerable mameloned mounds and hummocks that form the most striking feature of the country, watch the roads, and on the approach of a caravan or small party of travellers, warn their comrades, who dispose themselves for the attack. If they find the caravan is marching on the alert and with precaution, they act on the principle that "Discretion is the better part of valour," and remain in their concealment; otherwise they proceed along the hollows to some spot where the road strikes across a bit of open ground, and so soon as their prey is fairly out on it, they sweep down upon them, and generally, I am assured, carry them of without resistance, for resistance, the Persians have learned, means death.

In conversation with one of our escort, I asked him why the Government did not make a great effort, and for once and all put an end to this constant source of trouble and loss? "*Púl!*" (money), he said, with a Gallic shrug of the shoulders; "our Government won't spend the money. This is an old institution. Nobody put a stop to it before, and who is to do it now? The present arrangements meet all requirements. A guard starts twice a month to escort coming and going caravans between Mazinán and Shahrúd, as we now escort your party, and that meets all wants." "Have you ever been attacked on this duty?" I asked. "Very seldom, and only when the Turkmans take the field in great force. They mostly attack small parties travelling without a guard, or sweep off the peasantry at work in their fields, or surprise a village at daydawn." "But are no arrangements made to protect these people?" "What would you have?" he replied. "Travellers have no right to move without a guard in a dangerous country, and the villagers have the protection of their forts." "But surely the country would be better off if there were no Turkmans to harry it," I said. "Of course it would; but we don't hope for such good fortune from our Government. You people might do it, or the Russians might do it; but we can't. People say the Russians are going to rid us of the Turkmans—God grant they may! and if they clear these *pidr sokhta* (burnt fathers) off the face of the earth, they will gain the good-will and esteem of all Persians." "How," I asked, "could the Russians rid you of the Turkmans?" "Russia is a great country, and very wealthy, and has a large army. What are the Turkmans to them? If they will only spend their money, they can do anything. People say they are going to conquer Khiva, and are making prepara-

tions for the campaign. So soon as they take Khiva, the Turkmans of Marv will also disappear."

I further learned from my informant, that the Turkmans of the Atrak valley raid all the country from Shahrúd and Samnán to Sabzwár and Nishabor, where they meet their brethren of Marv, the Takka, Sarúc, and Sálor Turkmans, who raid all the country between Mashhad and Herat up to Sabzwár, thus cutting off from Persia all that portion of the country to the north and west of the great salt desert of Káshán and Yazd, so far as security of life, liberty, and property is concerned.

But to return to our route. Pul Abresham, or the stream it bridges, marks the boundary between the districts of Sabzwár and Shahrúd. There is another bridge of the same name about thirty miles higher up the stream, on the direct road from Shahrúd to Mashhad, by Jájarm and Juwen; but being more dangerous, it is less frequented than this route.

The Pul Abresham river also marks the extreme north-west limit of the Afghan kingdom founded by Shah Ahmad, Durrani. It flows south-east, and joining the Káli Shor, or Nishabor, and Sabzwár, is ultimately lost in the salt desert between Yazd and Káshán. Beyond the Káli Abresham, we crossed some low slaty ridges where they terminate on the desert, and traversing a gravelly plain thinly dotted with tamarisk bushes, rose up to the ridge on which the Abbasabad Sarae stands, and camped on some mounds under its walls, our escort filling the *sarae*.

Our next stage was twenty-two miles to Myándasht—route westerly, over a broken country thrown into little mameloned mounds, with hills on our right. At six miles we came to the Dahna Alhác, an easy defile

winding between bare rugged hills of coarse brown trap. On our way through it, we met a caravan of pilgrims on their way to Mashhad, escorted by a military guard similar to our own. It was a curious spectacle, from the variety of costume and nationality and conveyance, all jumbled together in jostling confusion. We passed each other with mutual stares of wonderment, and I did not appreciate the novelty of the scene till it was gone from my sight. There were great shaggy camels bearing huge panniers, in which were cooped three or four veiled bundles of female beauty, rolling from side to side like a ship in a heavy swell. There were others mounted by wiry Arabs in their thin rope-turbans, or by thick-set Tatars in their shaggy sheep-skin caps, swaying to and fro with an energy that led one to suppose that the speed of the camel depended on the activity of their movements. There were pannier-mules bearing veiled ladies and their negress slaves, accompanied by their Persian lords, gay in dress and proud, on their handsome little steeds. There were quiet calculating merchants, with flowing beards and flowing robes, borne along by humble ponies as absorbed in thought as their riders; and there were sleekly attired priests, serene in their conscious dignity, comfortably flowing with the tide on their well-groomed and neatly caparisoned mules. There were others too, a mixed crowd of footmen and women, all dusty and hot, struggling on to keep pace with their mounted wayfarers. How many will lag behind and fall to the Turkman's share? There are amongst these whole families emigrating in search of food and work: father and mother each bear an infant on their backs, and two or three of tender years trot by their side. There are tattered beggars, reduced by sheer want; and there are other beggars, the impu-

dent, idle, and dissolute scoundrels who impose on the community by an ostentatious assumption of the religious character, through no other claim than that of their bold importunity, backed by noisy appeals to true believers in the name of God and Ali. Their trade pays, and they flourish in their rags and dissoluteness.

With this caravan came a courier with despatches from Tehran for Sir F. Goldsmid. He was a mission servant, and had been sent off from our camp at Birjand with letters for Mr Alison, the British Minister at the court of Persia, and was now returning with the tidings of his death on the 29th April. After a brief pause, during which "Ismail," for such was his name, greeted his old comrades all round with a kiss each on the mouth, we proceeded, and clearing the defile, halted for breakfast, and to read our letters and papers, at the dilapidated *sarae* of Alháć.

Beyond this our route led over a broken hummocky country, in crossing which we were overtaken by a thunderstorm and rain, and gently sloped to the Myándasht Sarae, situated, as its name implies, in the midst of a desert plain girt by hills. The soil is a firm gravel, and not a tree is to be seen, though the surface is covered with the asafœtida and rhubarb, the latter in flower.

17*th May.*—Myándasht to Myánmay, twenty-four miles—route westerly, over a very broken country, similar to that traversed yesterday, and intersected by numerous ravines draining to the northward. At about twelve, we crossed a deep gully called Dahna-e-Zaydár, and pointed out as one of the favourite routes by which Turkmans come from the Jájarm valley. At six miles farther on, crossing a wide stony ravine, we halted for breakfast under the shade of some *sinjit* (*oleagnus*) trees

on its bank, close to the fort of Zaydár. This is apparently a recent erection, and is held by a small garrison of *sarbáz* who watch the Myánmay valley. On the summit of a high rock projecting from the neighbouring hills is a look-out tower, held by a small picquet. Beyond this we skirted the hill range on our left, and arrived in our camp at Myánmay just in time to escape the fury of a thunderstorm with hail and rain, and the cold raw blasts of a north-west wind.

Myánmay is a considerable village at the head of a long valley, which towards the east is continuous with that of Juwen. To the northward the valley is separated from Jájarm by a range of bare hills, through which are several passes. The hill skirt is dotted with flourishing-looking villages, whilst the valley itself is a wide uncultivated pasture tract.

There is a very fine *sarae* here, and some splendid mulberry-trees around give it a charming appearance. The *sinjit* trees are now in full flower here, and quite overload the air with their strong perfume. On the top of a high hill overlooking the village from the south, there are, it is said, the ruins of an ancient town, and some reservoirs excavated from the rock. We could see no traces of them, however, and as the information was volunteered by a Persian of our escort, it may be only a myth.

18*th May.*—Myánmay to Shahrúd, forty-one miles. We set out at 2.45 A.M., before it was light, our camels with the heavy baggage having preceded us by four hours. Our route was west by north, over a plain country for twelve miles parallel to a hill range on our left, and then diverging to the right, led across a very uneven country overrun by gravelly ridges and intersected by ravines, the slopes of which are richly covered

with pasture herbs; and another twelve miles brought us to a roadside *ábambár*, where we halted for breakfast, and to let the camels with the heavy baggage, here overtaken by us, get ahead.

Along the foot of the hills, parallel with the first part of our route, is a succession of picturesque little villages and orchards, that extend for six *farsakhs* up to Armyán, half-way on the route from Myánmay to Shahrúd. They are on the line of road followed by single travellers or small parties, for the sake of protection afforded by the villages.

From the *ábambár* our course led due west across an open and gently sloping plain, towards Shahrúd, visible in the distance, at the foot of a bare rocky hill, that separates it from Bostám, at the base of the great snow-crowned Kháwar mountain, and at the entrance to the pass of the same name leading to Astrabad. Both towns are delightfully situated, and their luxuriant gardens present a most pleasing view to the eye in this waste of desert and hill.

At a few miles short of Shahrúd we alighted at a small canal, fringed with *sinjit* trees, and rested under their shade till our jaded cattle had gone on with our camp. Our whole party was much done up by the length of the march and the heat of the midday sun. But strange to say, our escort of matchlockmen, of all our following, showed the least symptoms of fatigue. As I mentioned before, they were accompanied by a number of asses carrying their clothing and stores of food, &c. The patient little brutes moved along with their owners, who, turn about, strode across their backs, and thus, riding and walking alternately, escaped the exhaustion of a long march and the fatigue of the unvaried ride. The Persian infantry soldier, or *sarbáz*, as he is called, is noted

for his hardihood and endurance of long marches, but the humble *ulágh* contributes no small share to his reputation in these respects. He is cheaply got, easily managed, and costs little or nothing to feed, being generally left to pick up what he can off the ground. The ass of the *sarbáz*, who yet knows neither a commissariat nor transport corps, is a useful institution—in fact, he is indispensable, for, under the existing conditions, the infantry soldier could not march without him. They would certainly not prove so efficient and ready as they are without him. We no sooner arrived at Shahrúd than our escort of *sarbáz* were ordered off to accompany the governor of Bostám on an expedition against a party of Turkmans, who, it was said, had come through Jájarm on the chance of cutting us off on our way across the desert. They were to proceed with all speed to take up a position in some pass of the hills, by which alone the Turkmans could leave the valley, and away they went merrily, with no impedimenta of tents, baggage, and luxuries.

We halted five days at Shahrúd, where we came into communication with the civilised world through the line of telegraph connecting Astrabad with the Persian capital. The town is a flourishing place, surrounded by vineyards and fruit gardens, now in full foliage, and must be a delightful residence. Our camp is pitched on an open bit of ground between some walled gardens in the midst of the town, and close to a *sarae* occupied by some Russian and Armenian merchants. We meet them as we issue for our evening ramble, and pass with a polite doffing of hats. They have been settled here for the last twelve or fourteen years, but have not got their families with them. From one of them we got a supply of very indifferent wine, prepared on the spot, and picked

up some copies of Russian primers with pictorial alphabets and illustrated anecdotes.

This place is the entrepot of the trade between Tehran and the countries to the north and west, and has several commodious *saraes*. It is also an important strategic position, situated as it is at the entrance to the pass leading to the Caspian, and is the place where the Persian armies concentrated preparatory to their campaigns in Khorassan. The plain to the south of the town is well watered from numerous hill streams, and is dotted with several flourishing villages, the chief of which are Badasht, Bázij, Ardyán, Mughán Jáfarabad, Husenabad, Ghoryán, &c. The Shahrúd district, of which this town is the capital, extends between the hills from Abbasabad on the east to Dih Mullah on the west, and contains some fifty or sixty villages. The governor, Jahánsoz Mirzá, resides at Bostám, but has an agent here.

We did not visit Bostám, only four miles off, as the governor neither called on us nor made any advances towards the interchange of civilities. Our Afghan companion, however, Saggid Núr Muhammad Shah, went over to pay his devotions at the shrine of the Imám Báezid, which he described as an unpretending pile of loose stones, raised by the contributions of passing pilgrims. The saint is held in great veneration, and the simplicity of his tomb is out of deference to his dying injunction that no mausoleum should be built over his grave. In an humble grave near the shrine rest the mortal remains of the late Amir Muhammad Azim Khan, the usurper of the throne of Kabul. After his final defeat at the hands of the reigning Amir, Sher Ali Khan, in the beginning of 1869, he fled to Sistan, and was on his way to the Persian capital, when he was cut short in his career by cholera at this place, about the 6th July.

The Saggid, being an adherent of the opposite party, suffered severely at the hands of the usurper, who plundered his property at Kandahar to the extent, it is said, of fifty thousand rupees. He took this opportunity, however, to forgive him, and to offer up a prayer for his soul.

The day before our departure from this, a strange Afghan came to my tent, and, with looks of pleased recognition, said, "Saggid Mahmúd sends his salám, and begs you will give him some medicine to cure fever and dysentery. He is too ill to move, or he would himself have come to pay his respects." A few words of explanation sufficed to inform me that my applicant was no other than our old friend of Ghazni, whom we so unexpectedly met at Barshori at the very outset of our journey. We went over to see him in his lodgings at the *sarae*, and found him in a truly wretched plight, so emaciated and weak was he from the combined effects of the hardships he had endured on his long journey, and the exhausting nature of his disease. He rose and received us at the door of his cell, with all the grace of that innate gentility well-bred orientals can so easily display, and ushering us in with a dignity enhanced by his handsome features and snow-white beard, motioned us to seats formed of hastily arranged rugs, with a composure and self-possession quite charming and wonderful under the circumstances. He ordered his servant to prepare some tea for our refreshment, and the while gave us an account of his travels. "Poor Cásim," he said, the tears dimming his bright eyes, "*tamán shud*—he is finished. His remains," he added with a consolatory sigh, "rest in the sacred soil of Karbalá. He was the son in whom my hopes centered, but God gives and God takes away—His will be done." The details of his journey through Kúm were simply

harrowing, and the scenes he witnessed appalling. Dead bodies strewed the roads and poisoned the air with their putrescence. The *saraes* were filled with the dying, whose wails and sufferings produced a scene impossible to describe. The villages, empty and still as a house of mourning, were invaded by troops of dogs, who contested with the survivors the possession of the dead. Loud were his lamentations for Persia. "The country is gone," he said. "There is neither religion, justice, nor mercy to be found in the land. We (he was a Shiá) in Kabul look to Persia as the centre of all that is good in Islam, but Afghanistan, with all its faults, is a better country to live in." Poor old gentleman! he quite brightened up at the idea of moving on homewards, though he had one foot in the grave already, and was fully a thousand miles away from his home, and talked composedly of retiring into private life, and devoting the rest of his days to the worship of God and meditation on His laws. On our departure, the General, with characteristic kindliness and forethought, presented our pilgrim friend with a Kashmir scarf. The old man's gratitude was touching, and he blessed us all round. I wonder if the old man ever did reach his home, though the chances were greatly against his doing so? But it is astonishing what distances these pilgrims do travel, and what hardships they endure on the way. Let us hope that the old man did complete his circle. When we met him on this second occasion, he had in the course of six months travelled from Ghazni to Kandahar and Shikarpúr and Bombay, thence by sea to Baghdad, and thence to Karbala, and back to Baghdad, and thence by Kirmanshah and Kúm to Tehran, and on to this place. He has yet before him the inhospitable route from this to Mashhad, and thence to Herat and

Kandahar, before he can reach his home at Ghazni. I gave the old man a small supply of medicines, and some hints for observance on the road; and with all good wishes for his onward journey, and a small sum to assist him on the road, we parted.

CHAPTER XII.

24*th May.*—Shahrúd to Dih Mullah, sixteen miles. We set out at 5.30. A.M., bidding adieu to Mr Bower of our party, who at the same time set out for Astrabad *en route* to London with despatches. If fortunate in catching the steamer and trains, he hopes to reach his destination in twenty days, *viâ* Astrakhan, Czaretzin, Berlin, &c. Were but Afghanistan an open country, Indian officers proceeding on furlough might with advantage take this route homewards. But as it is not an open country, and there is little use in speculating when it will become so, its peoples and mountains and deserts may yet for another generation maintain their isolation from the civilised world, and remain a country of interest to the politician, and a region of curiosity to the scientific man.

Our route led S.S.W., along a stony hill skirt by a well-beaten track, following a line of telegraph posts, a promising emblem of Western civilisation in this yet semi-barbarous land. The hills on our right belong to the Alburz range, that separates the Caspian basin from the tableland of Persia. The northern slopes are described as clothed with dark forests, the southern, however, are precipitous, and mostly bare, a few juniper-trees only dotting the rocks here and there, as little black specks on their rugged sides. The range is said to abound in wild goat and sheep, and the stag or *gáwaz*, called *bárásinghá* in India. The leopard and bear are also

found on it, and on its eastern spurs a small species of lion, but not the tiger.

To the left of our route the land slopes down to a water-worn ridge of red clay. It separates the Shahrúd valley from the salt desert to the south. A range of hills rises out of the desert far away to the south. One of our escort called the range Jandak, and pointed out a prominent peak as Ahwand. Jandak is twenty *farsakhs* from this, and contains ten or twelve villages on the edge of the desert, where palm-trees grow in plenty, as my informant said. He was a very communicative man, and after volunteering scraps of information regarding the country we were traversing, took an early opportunity to enlarge on his own grievances.

"The present the *sardár*" (chief), pointing to Sir F. Goldsmid, "gave us sowars and *sarbáz*, has been taken from us by the governor," he said. "We have been so many days out," he added, "our horses are exhausted, and we are famished. Nobody cares for us, and the villagers have nothing we can take from them." "It is hard," I said, "but it is the custom of your country." "Yes, it is the custom of the country," was the ready reply, "and that is why our country is ruined." "With the aid of the famine," I add. "The famine! no that is a decree from God, and we must submit. No one can fight against what God ordains. But our governor is a very hard master. He is deeply in debt, and screws his subjects to pacify his creditors. Not a *pul-i-siyáh* (a copper coin) escapes his grasp; and there are many like him. *Irán tabáh shud*—Persia is ruined. *Khyle, khyle sakht ast*—it is very hard."

And so it is really. We found the Afghan troops in every respect better off than those of Persia. They are physically finer men, are better clad, better armed, and

better provided with shelter, carriage, and provisions, though there is room for improvement on all points.

At Dih Mullah we were accommodated in a double-storied summer-house, in an ornamental garden adjoining the village. Its shelter, such as it was, with doors and windows opening in every direction, was hardly so efficient as that afforded by our tents against the chill gusts of wind sweeping down from the hills to the north. The situation, however, afforded us a wide prospect of the country, which, from its nature, hardly compensated for the discomfort. To the south was an unlimited view of a vast salt desert, as unvaried as the horizon-girt ocean. To the north rose a barrier of bare rocks, tipped here and there by snow, and dotted above by black spots, like one with a mild attack of small-pox; and on either side lay a long gravelly valley, with a string of villages and gardens running down its central course.

This evening, having reserved a small supply of wine for the occasion, we observed the Queen's anniversary, and at dinner raised our glasses "To the Queen—God bless her!"

25*th May.*—Dih Mullah to Damghán, twenty-six miles. We set out at 3.30. A.M., by the light of a full moon—route south-west along the valley, passing a succession of villages with their gardens and corn-fields. The gardens are luxuriant in their foliage, but the corn crops are thin and backward. Nobody is seen moving about; the villages are half empty, and a painful silence reigns over a scene outwardly so prosperous. At about half-way we passed the large village of Mihmándost, near which are the ruins of the ancient city of Damghán, the scene of the grand battle between Nadir and Mir Ashraf, Ghilzai, in which the latter received the first of those crushing defeats that soon after led to his flight

from the country, and ignominious death at the hands of some petty Baloch robbers in Sistan, and the expulsion of the Afghan invaders from the Persian soil in 1730. The ruins present nothing worthy of attraction, and but for the decayed domes and small mounds that rise amongst the low broken walls, might be easily passed without notice.

Damghán is a decayed little town, full of ruins ancient and recent, though buried in the midst of most prosperous-looking gardens. It has suffered frightfully in the famine, its population having fallen, it is said, from a thousand to two hundred families. There is a telegraph office here, and a very fair *sarae*. Our next stage was to Khoshá Sarae, twenty-three miles—route south-west, over a plain country skirting a hill range to our right, and passing twenty-five or thirty villages *en route*; morning air cold and bracing. Khoshá is simply a *sarae* on an uncultivated gravelly plain at the entrance to a pass in the hills dividing Damghán from Samnán. No supplies are procurable here, and but a limited supply of water.

Our next stage was twenty-four miles to Ahuán Sarae, or the *sarae* of gazelle deer—route south-west, gradually rising over an undulating pasture country between broken hills. The soil is hard and gravelly, and the surface is everywhere covered with a thick growth of saltwort, wild rue, &c., and the *ghích*, on which we found a number of camels at graze; but we found no habitation or water on all the route. The weather was very changeable. The morning air was sharp and chill, and during the day sunshine and cloud succeeded each other, producing quite a wintry state of atmosphere at this altitude, Ahuán being 6500 feet above the sea, 2240 feet above Khoshá, and 2820 feet above Damghán. Owing

to the wind, the air here felt much colder than the thermometer said it was; and for about the twentieth time on our march we found ourselves retrograding back into winter instead of advancing into summer. These sudden changes of climate and temperature are characteristic of travelling in Persia. One passes up and down from the hot dry atmosphere of the desert-bordered plains, to the chill damp air of the cloud-attracting hills and their elevated tablelands, with such rapidity that it is always necessary to be provided with warm clothing as a protection against the ill effects of these sudden alternations of temperature, and particularly against the cold winds that blow. The Persian overcoat, with its close folds gathered in across the back, is a well-suited garment for the protection of the loins, and no doubt its adoption as a national costume is the result of its proved efficacy or adaptability to the requirements of the climate.

Ahuán is merely a roadside *sarae* with a supply of water. There is no village or cultivation here, nor are supplies procurable. There is a tradition connected with the name of this place. It is to the effect that the Imám Razá once halted here on his march to Mashhad. Some huntsman in the neighbourhood brought in a deer he had ridden down in the chase for presentation to the saint. On seeing the Imám, the deer appealed to his justice, and begged to be released, on the plea of having a young one dependent on herself for support, promising, so soon as the fawn grew up, to return and surrender herself to her captor. The Imám at once directed the release of the deer, and himself stood surety for her return at the appointed time. The deer, however, did not return at the end of a year, and the fact being reported to the Imám, he at once caused a deer to seek out the huntsman, and surrender herself to him in his name. From this time the deer in

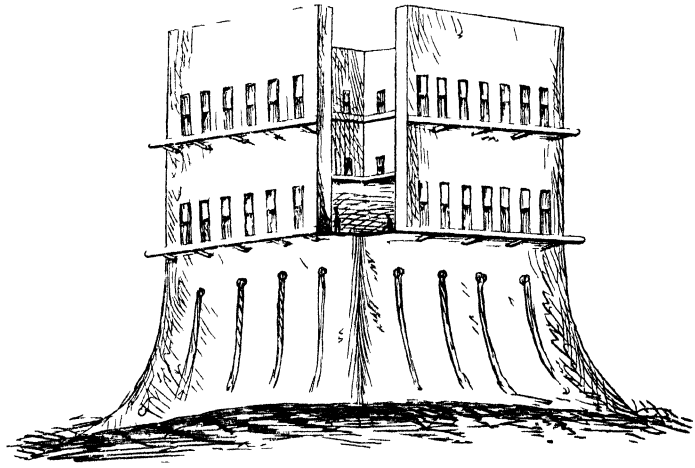
these hills have been held sacred, and are not hunted, and are in consequence very numerous here.

28th May.—Ahuán to Samnán, twenty-four miles, and halt a day—route S.S.W. through a hilly tract on to the plain of Samnán. At two miles we crossed a water-shed running north and south, at an elevation of 6750 feet above the sea. It marks the boundary between Damghán and Samnán. This wide tract of hills forms a barrier between the plain valleys of Damghán and Samnán. It extends from east to west about thirty miles, and rises 2500 feet above the general level of the plains on either side. Its hills are an emanation southwards from the Alburz range, and join a parallel range on the borders of the salt desert, to the south. Its higher ridges are perfectly bare, but the lower are richly clothed with excellent pasture bushes and herbs, saltwort, wormwood, wild rue, *ghích*, &c. We left this hill tract by a very narrow ravine, between banks of conglomerate and ridges of friable slate, and descended a long stony slope on to the plain of Samnán, and crossing its bare, parched, stony desert surface, camped at a *kárez* stream under the shade of some mulberry-trees to the north of the town. The plain wears a desolate uninviting look, and is suggestive of unpleasant heat in summer.

On approaching the town, we were met by an *isticbal* party of six or seven horsemen, with a couple of led horses, and a rickety little carriage drawn by a pair of very unkempt ponies. And on our arrival in camp, the governor sent us some trays of sweetmeats and many polite messages. There is a telegraph office here, but owing to a break in the line ahead, we were unable to communicate with Tehran. Though we are now only six stages from the capital, we have received no later intelligence than the 29th April, received on the 16th instant.

Our next stage was twenty-two miles to Lasjird, where we camped on stubble-fields, near some ruined huts opposite the town—route westerly, over a plain undulating and gently rising to the westward, where it is narrowed by hills. At this place we received a post two days out from Tehran, with letters dated London, 8th May. Weather close and sultry, ending at sunset with a dust-storm, and slight rain from the north-west. A disagreeably high wind blew in squally gusts all night.

Lasjird is a very remarkable little collection of dwellings on the summit of an artificial mound with scarped sides. They are ranged in two stories, in the form of a quadrangle, which at the south-east angle is open, and presents a glimpse of the interior space. The chambers open on to a balcony, that runs on both sides of each face of the quadrangle, as shown in this diagramatic



sketch, which will convey some idea of the general appearance of the place.

The sides of the mound are streaked with open drains,

that carry off all the sewage from the interior, and must render the places above a very unwholesome and disagreeable habitation. The place seemed pretty crowded, and numbers of its inhabitants looked down upon us from the balconies running in front of their chambers. The community thus crowded together must, judging from our single night's experience, lead a life of constant wrangling and quarrelling. The voices of querulous old women and obstreperous children, and the rebukes of angry husbands, kept us awake all night, with not the best of wishes bestowed upon the Lasjirdis. This place looks unique of its kind, but I am told that Yazdikhast is built on a similar plan.

Our next stage was twenty-five miles to Dih Namak. Set out from Lasjird at 1.30. A.M., and crossing three or four deep ravines by masonry bridges, passed on to a stony desert hill skirt that falls quickly to the southward, where it merges into the salt desert, which glistens in the morning sunlight as white as snow. At half-way we passed a deserted village and ruined *sarae*, but on all the route saw no cultivation or habitation.

The country is very uninteresting, and no incident occurred to enliven the march or occupy our thoughts, and hence I suppose the unwonted attention devoted to the peculiarities of our own surroundings. We were marching in the usual order of procession—that is to say, the Mirakhor Jafar Beg, in his handsome Kashmir-shawl-pattern coat, led the way, with a couple of mounted grooms, each leading a *yadak*, or handsomely caparisoned horse, by which, according to the custom of the country, all men of rank are preceded when they take the saddle. Next came ourselves, and behind us followed our personal servants, the Mirza, and the escort. The last had now dwindled down to only half-a-dozen horsemen. Our heavy

baggage with the camels generally went ahead overnight, and the mules with our light tents, &c., followed in rear of our procession.

The Mirakhor, always serious in look, yet strictly deferential in his bearing, was always ready with a reply to any and every query, and, as may be conjectured, with no possible reliance on any of them. "Mirakhor!" "Bale" ("Yes"). "The village of Sarkhrúd lies on our route to-day. How far may it be from this?" "Yes, I know the place. You see that hill ahead? Well it is just a *farsakh* beyond." We move on, prepared for another eight miles before we alight for breakfast; but on cresting a low marly ridge ahead, a village buried in gardens lies below us. "What village is this, Mirakhor?" "This is Sarkhrúd. Will you breakfast here?" "Why, you said it was a *farsakh* beyond that hill." Without moving a muscle, or evincing a trace of discomposure, he merely replies, "This side the hill. This is Sarkhrúd. Will you alight for breakfast here?"

The way this man ate his own words was surprising, but the way, under a quiet undemonstrative demeanour, he gathered in his *mudákhil*, was more so; for, not content with charging double rates all round, he charged for larger quantities than were actually supplied. By the merest accident I gained an insight into the system of corruption carried on under the specious rights of *mudákhil*, for the extent of which I was not at all prepared. Our Afghan companions kept their expenditure accounts distinct from ours, and it was from what I heard from them regarding our Mirakhor's desire to cater for them too, that I first got an inkling of the liberality of his views in the matter of perquisites, and his anxiety to prevent the extent of them becoming known, by an attempt to get the whole management into his own hands.

Rogues sometimes fall out amongst themselves, and so it happened one day that a quarrel amongst our stable establishment threatened a disclosure of their dishonest dealings. The Mirakhor, however, was master of the situation, and the contumacious groom who demanded a larger share of the spoil than his chief chose to give him was summarily dismissed, and turned adrift on the line of march, on the accusation of selling for his own profit grain given to him for the feed of the horses under his charge. "Clever man!" whispered the observers, as their respect for the Mirakhor's *savoir faire* increased with his success. "He deserves to prosper. You see he has got the upper hand of his enemy. Any complaint he may hereafter prefer against the Mirakhor will be declared malicious. Was he not deprived of his post and turned adrift for a fault exposed by him?"

The discharged groom followed our party for several hundred miles, up to the capital, and, what was more surprising, came out, in his disgrace and downfall, in a new suit of broadcloth and silks, in place of the discarded attire of his late mean occupation, and certainly looked, so far as outward appearances go, the most respectable of our servants. The Mirakhor after this *coup* affected a character for honesty, and was more punctual than ever in the observance of his religious duties. As the sun lit up the horizon, he, and he alone, would move off the road, dismount, and, facing the *Cablá*, perform his morning prayers, and then galloping up, resume his position at the head of our party, with self-satisfied pride in his singular devotion.

Dih Namak is a wretched collection of huts round a dilapidated fort on the edge of the desert. Close by is a substantial and commodious *sarae*. Our camp was at first pitched on the plain to its west, but the wind blew

with such force from the west, and raised such clouds of dust, that we were obliged to strike the tents and take refuge in the *sarae*—a move of very doubtful advantage; for though we escaped the violence of the wind, we were almost stifled by the whirling eddies of stable dust and litter, and tormented by myriads of the voracious little insects bred in its deep layers.

1*st June.*—We set out from Dih Namak at 1.30. A.M., and marched twenty-four miles to Kishlác, facing a high north-west wind, sensibly warm even at this early hour, nearly the whole way. Our route was westerly, skirting the Ferozkoh range of hills to our right, and having a bare desert away to the left. The country is generally flat, dotted by a succession of villages, and crossed by numerous branches of the Hubla rivulet, which drains to the desert, and irrigates on its way a wide surface of corn land.

At eight miles we came to the Padih village, and leaving a cluster of four or five others on the right and left of the road, at two miles farther came to Arazan, where there is a telegraph-office. Arazan is the chief town of the Khár *bulúk* of the Veramín district, and is one of the granaries of Tehran, and consequently by no means the "very mean" country, one of our party facetiously styled it.

At nine miles from Arazan, crossing *en route* ten or twelve little streams formed by the outspread of the Hubla river over the surface, we arrived at Kishlác, and took refuge in its little *sarae* from the wind, which blew with such force that we could not pitch our tents.

Our next stage was twenty-one miles to Aywáni Kyf —the "portals of delight" to the traveller approaching the capital from the west—route W.N.W., across a wide piece of cultivation, and then over a gravelly pasture tract to the Sardarra defile. This is a winding path

through low clay hills, said to contain rock-salt. Through the defile flows a small stream, the sides of which are encrusted with salines. These hills emanate from Ferozkoh, and stretching on to the plain in a south-west direction, separate Khár from Veramín. Beyond the defile we went north-west over a wide pasture tract sloping up to the hills, and camped on rising ground above the village. Aywáni Kyf is a considerable place, surrounded by fruit gardens, and protected by a neat fort, all situated on the right bank of a stony ravine that issues from the hills to the north, amongst which rises aloft the snowy cone of Damavand, a prominent object in the landscape as one approaches from the defile.

We halted here a day, and received letters from Tehran in reply to some sent off from our camp at Shahrúd. Persia has a telegraph line, but she has no post. The delays and inconveniences resulting from the absence of this established institution of civilised countries must be experienced to be appreciated. To us, accustomed as we had been to the daily receipt of intelligence from our friends, the hardship was difficult to endure.

At this place we found the midday sun shone with considerable force, though cool breezes from the hills to the north tempered the air. The summer sun in Persia is too hot to admit of travelling during the day, and consequently our marches latterly have commenced an hour or two after midnight, an arrangement that admitted of our reaching camp before the cattle could suffer from the heat, which, however, is nothing in comparison with that of India. We had no cause to complain on this score, and even where it was hot, always enjoyed the luxury of ice, of which the Persians are very fond, and which they use freely. Every village almost has its *yakh-chál*, or ice-pits, stocked from the winter snows. The

luxury is sold at a very cheap rate, and is at the command of all classes.

From this place we marched twenty-seven miles to Khátúnabad, where we found shelter in the *sarae*, a filthy place, swarming with vermin, and reeking with offensive odours, and crowded with famished beggars, who sifted the horse litter for the undigested grains of barley it contained, and rummaged the ground for bones and fragments left by more fortunate travellers. Our route was W.N.W. over the Veramín plain, by a good road skirting a hill range to our right, and in sight of the magnificent peak of Damavand.

At about ten miles we came to a bifurcation of the road. That to the right follows the hill skirt direct to Tehran. We followed the branch to the left, and crossing the Jájrúd (*jájárúd* = river everywhere ?), which here spreads over the surface in a number of little streams that water several villages on either side our route, went down a gentle slope to Khátúnabad.

5*th June*.—Khátúnabad to Gulahak, eighteen miles. We set out at one A.M., across the plain towards the Sherabánú hill, skirting the foot of which we arrived at Takiabad at 4.30. A.M., and alighted at a garden belonging to Prince Ahmad. It is a delightful spot, with a comfortable house looking down an avenue of plane-trees, that flank a long vista of flowering plants. On each side are vineyards and fruit trees, in the shady foliage of which are hundreds of nightingales, strong in song. The morning air here was so chill that we were glad to warm ourselves at a blazing fire raised to cook us some coffee.

Beyond this we passed through the ruins of Re, or Rhages, in the midst of which stands the town of Abdul Azím, with its rich gardens overtopped by the dome of

its shrine; and then turning north, went over a rising plain towards Tehran, of which we now first got a view, its domes, minars, and palaces appearing high above the dead wall of its fortifications. The appearance of the city is not so fine as I had expected, but the general view of the landscape, backed as it is by the snowy range of Alburz, with Damavand's fleecy peak standing sentry over it, is very fine; whilst the bright gardens and happy villages nestling in the inequalities of the slope at the foot of the range add a charm to the scene delightfully in contrast with the bare plain that cuts the horizon to the southward.

We entered the city at the Abdul Azim gate, and passed through its bazars round by the king's palace, to the new buildings of the British Legation, which appear to be the finest in the whole place. Beyond this we left the city by a gateway in the new line of fortifications (like that of Abdul Azim, it is decorated with gaudily-painted tiles of inferior quality), and followed a carriage-road to Gulahak, the summer residence of the members of the British Legation. Here we were conducted by our servants to some unoccupied bungalows, and alighting, found leisure to reflect on the marked difference in the forms of social sentiment that animate Englishmen in India and Persia. Here, after a march of upwards of two thousand miles, through barbarous countries and dangerous regions, a small party of British officers arrived in the midst of a little community of their countrymen, without so much as drawing one of them from their doors for a welcome or greeting.

Gulahak is one of several picturesque little villages on the slope at the foot of Alburz mountain, and occupied as a summer residence by the members of the several European Legations at the court of Persia. It has an

agreeable climate and pleasing scenery, and but for the limited society, would be a delightful residence.

On our way through the city we saw sad evidences of the effects of the famine. Beggars, squalid and famished, were found in every street appealing pitifully to the passers for charity, and no less than three corpses were carried past us on the way to burial, in the great and densely packed graveyards that occupy much of the intramural area, and sensibly taint its atmosphere. The condition of the population is deplorable. The official returns for the past week represent the daily mortality within the city walls at two hundred souls, almost wholly victims to starvation and typhoid fever. This high rate cannot last long, it is to be hoped, though the prospect ahead is, from all accounts, gloomy in the extreme. Thousands of families, who have hitherto kept body and soul together by the sale of their jewellery and property, down to the clothes on their backs, are now reduced to a state of utter destitution, and have not the means of purchasing the food the ripening crops will soon render available. For these the future is indeed dark, unless the Government at the last moment comes forward to save its people from destruction. But as it has so far ignored the existence of a calamity that has well-nigh depopulated the country, there is little reason to hope that it will at the eleventh hour stultify its conduct, and stretch out an arm to save the country from ruin.

The Shah, it is said, is kept in ignorance of the extent of the sufferings of his people, through the false representations of his ministers. He was at this time absent from the capital on a hunting excursion in the Shamrán hills, and as he did not return until after my departure from the capital, I did not enjoy the honour of being presented at His Majesty's court.

At Tehran I made hasty arrangements for my return to India *viâ* Baghdad and the Persian Gulf, with our Indian camp establishment and despatches for Government. Through the kindness of Mr Ronald Thomson, *chargé d'affairs*, I was provided with letters to the Persian and Turkish authorities for my expedition on the road, and one of the mission *ghulâms* or couriers, Shukrullah Beg by name, was appointed to accompany me as guide.

On the 8th June, the camp having been sent ahead in the morning, I took leave of my chief, Major-General F. R. Pollock C.S.I. (now Sir Richard Pollock, K.C.S.I.), and of the Afghan commissioner, Saggid Núr Muhammad Shah, of Sir Frederick Goldsmid, and the members of his staff, and at 4.30. P.M. set out from Gulahak accompanied by Mr Rozario, and one of the mission servants as guide to our first stage from the capital. Major Ewan B. Smith, Sir F. Goldsmid's personal assistant, rode some way out with us, and then a "Good-bye—God bless you!" and we moved off in opposite directions.

On our way down the avenue leading to the city, we met two carriages-and-four, full of veiled ladies of the Shah's *andarún*, out for their evening drive. They were driven by postilions, and preceded by a number of horsemen, who with peremptory gestures motioned the people off the road, where they stood with their backs towards royalty till the carriages had passed. Our guide, seeing the carriages in the distance, tutored us in our conduct, and as they approached, we turned off the road, and respectfully turned our horse's tails to where their heads ought to have been.

Our route through the city traversed its western quarters, and led out by the Darwaza Nao—"the new gate"—and then across the plain to Khanabad, where we

were accommodated for the night in a summer-house situated in a very delightful garden belonging to Prince Ali Culi Mirza. On our way through the city we passed a bloated corpse in a horrible state of putrefaction lying in the street, and by it stood a couple of men about to drag it into concealment amongst the broken walls and crumbling huts that here and there separate the occupied houses, and assail the passengers with the most sickening stinks. The view of Alburz and Damavand from the south side of the city is very fine, whilst the wide plain of Veramín, with its numerous villages and gardens, wears an aspect of prosperity and plenty, cruelly belied by the hard reality of their misery and poverty.

Khanabad was our *nacl mucám* or preparatory stage, hardly four miles from the city. Our servants had had the whole day to run backwards and forwards for the hundred and one things they had forgotten, or which the opportunity made them fancy they required for the journey, and when we arrived at nightfall, half of them were yet lingering there, taking a last fill of the pleasures it afforded them. Seeing this, I anticipated trouble and delay, but, to avoid the latter as much as possible, gave the order to march at midnight, and, as a first step, had the loads brought out and arranged all ready for loading, as a plain hint that I expected the absent muleteers to be present at the appointed hour. The measure proved successful, for after much running to and fro amongst the servants, our party was brought together by two o'clock in the morning, and we set out on our march half an hour later, but without the head muleteer and three of his men, who, having received their hire in advance, were indifferent on the score of punctuality.

Our route was W.S.W., by a well-beaten track, over a plain country, covered with many villages, and traversed

towards the south and west by detached ridges of hill. At about eight miles we came to Husenabad, and passing through it, halted on a piece of green turf near the road for the baggage to come up. I had had no rest during the night owing to the bustle of our people and the noise made by the nightingales, and was here so overpowered with fatigue, that I stretched myself on the sward, and was fast asleep in a minute, dreaming where all the hundreds of mules and asses we had just passed on their way to the city with loads of green lucerne could have come from, since our Mirakhor had assured us that not one was to be procured in the country, and had, simply as a token of goodwill, provided me with twenty of those that had brought us from Sistan, only at quadruple the former rates, half down in advance for the whole journey. Clever fellow! he at all events secured his *mudákhil* before losing sight of the muleteers.

From this we went on, and crossing the river Kárij by a masonry bridge, passed over a stony ridge from a hill on the right, and sloped down to Rabát Karím, where we found quarters in some of the many empty houses of the village, having come twenty-five miles from Khanabad. The population of this village was formerly reckoned at a thousand families. It does not now contain a fourth of that number, and a very wretched, sickly-looking set they are, with hardly a child to be found amongst them. And so it was with every place we came to on all the journey down to Kirmánshah.

We concluded our first march away from Tehran more successfully than I had hoped for in the face of the troubles lowering ahead at the first start. My guide, Shukrullah Beg, has been most energetic and willing, and promises to turn out a good conductor. He is a blunt, plain-spoken man, with sharp intelligent features, a

freckled complexion, and bristly red beard, and has none of the polish and love of finery so characteristic of the Persian of Tehran, though he is equally impressed with the necessity for ceremony and show. To my amusement he started our procession this morning quite *en règle*, with a strict adherence to the form observed by great men on the march. My spare horse was lead as a *yadak* in front by the groom mounted on a mule, whilst he himself, having assumed the title, led the way as Mirakhor, the two riding camels, servants, and baggage following us in column close in rear, and gradually dropping behind as our pace exceeded theirs.

We arrived at our resting-place at the breakfast hour, and now I missed the cheerful society of those we had parted from, and my thoughts ran back over the long journey we had done together. The frosts and snows of Balochistan, the passage of the Khojak, and the cutting winds of Kandahar recurred to memory; and with them came recollections of the General's enduring energy and indomitable pluck, that overcame all difficulties and inspired a confidence that deprived hardships of half their sting; his ever-cheerful spirits too, and kindly thought for all, that made distance wane, and fatigue lose its load. Recollections of the Afghan welcome and hospitality, and of the Saggid's friendly intercourse and sociability, his amusing conversation, interesting tales, and theologic dogmatism. Recollections too of our Persian secretary, Mirza Ahmad (a native of Peshawar), his cheerful bearing under trials, his modest demeanour, his honesty and readiness at all times for all things. I thought of Sistan, and ran over the journey thence to the Persian capital with those we joined there, and I missed the charming grace of Sir F. Goldsmid's manner, his benevolent self-denial, and his instructive conversation.

Our march through Khorassan was gone over again, with many an agreeable recollection of the benefits derived from Major Ewan Smith's excellent arrangements for the road, and recollections, too, of many a tedious march enlivened by the vivacity of his humour and sprightly wit. The first of April in our camp at Birjand was not forgotten, nor the post we all rushed out of our tents to meet; and if the others have not forgiven Major Beresford Lovett, I have, out of respect for his talents. Many a race across country with Mr Bower to bring to bay and question some astonished shepherd or ploughman came to mind, and the sharp ring of his "*Máli ínjá hastí? Dih chi ism dárad?*" ("Do you belong to this place? What's the name of the village?") methought was heard afresh.

With such thoughts was I occupied when Shukrullah Beg made his appearance, and, with a serious face, announced that the mulemen demanded their discharge, as they had no money for the journey, and the head muleteer, who had received the advance, had not joined them. They were afraid they would never get their share of the hire, and did not wish to go on without being paid. This was rather embarrassing news. However, I sent for the men, explained to them that the head muleteer would probably soon overtake us, and that meanwhile I would pay for their food and that of the mules, and dismissed them to their work, and ordered the march at two in the morning. At the same time, for safety's sake, I had the mules brought over and picketed in the court below our quarters, and at sunset had the loads packed and ranged out ready for lading.

10*th June*.—Rabát Karím to Khanabad, thirty-three miles. We set out at three A.M., following a westerly course over wide pasture downs, along the line of telegraph between Tehran and Baghdad, with a range of hills away

to the right. At an hour and a half we came to a roadside *sarae*, where we alighted for the baggage to come up. The *sarae* dates from the time of Shah Abbas the Great, and was very substantially built of trap rock and cellular lava. It is now in a state of ruin. In the interior we found portions of several human skeletons. To two of them were still adhering the clothes they wore during life, and they told the tale of the dead—poor peasants cut short on their way to the capital in search of food. To one of them the skull was attached uninjured. I took it off, and carried it away with me for the anthropological museum of a learned friend.

Beyond this we crossed the Rúdi Shor, a brackish stream that drains past Kúm on to the salt desert, where it joins the Káli Shor of Nishabor and Sabzwár, and went over an undulating pasture country, rising gently to the westward, and having the snowy mountains of Shámrán in view to the right. At about twenty miles we rose to the crest of the downs, and looked down on the smiling valley of Pashandia with its many villages and gardens, an agreeable change from the dreary wilds and pasture downs of the country we had traversed. The elevation here is 4380 feet above the sea, thus giving an ascent of 700 feet from Rabát Karím.

Up to this point we found no water except that of Rúdi Shor, and the whole country wears a very uninteresting and wild look. From the crest we dropped into the valley, and passing several villages, some in ruins, crossed a wide sandy ravine in which lay some great blocks of brown lava, and farther on arrived at Khanabad, where we alighted at the *chappárkhana* or post-house, glad of its shelter, for the sun shone out towards noon with much force. This is a poor little village, and has only fifteen families left of a population of sixty before

tne famine. It is in the Zarand *bulúk*, which contains sixty or seventy villages, with Sába as their capital town. The *bulúk* is the dower of one of the Shah's wives, named Anísuddaula. She deputes her brother, Muhammad Hasan Khan, to its government. His residence is at Sába, where are the ruins of an ancient fire-temple. Gabr relics are found all over the district. Such were the fruits of a chat with the keeper of the post-house, who, his horses having all died, and the appearance of travellers being few and far between, was only too glad of the opportunity to talk on any subject with any one, and answered our endless questions with willing readiness.

Hence we marched twenty-six miles to Khushkak—route W.S.W., and then west over a wide hill-girt plain, mostly uncultivated owing to want of water. At three miles we passed Asyábad, and then no other village up to our stage. A few were seen at the foot of the hills to the right, at long distances apart, and a number of *kárez* wells were traced across the plain by their line of little mounds of excavated earth. The soil is firm and gravelly, and the surface now presents a thick green carpet of herbs of sorts, all in full flower. I recognised the Syrian rue, two or three kinds of spurge, the wild poppy, lark-spur, clove pink, ragged-robin, and a variety of cruciferous, composite, labiate, leguminous, and umbelliferous herbs. Myriads of caterpillars loaded their little branches, and the whole surface, along our route at least, was fluttering with innumerable butterflies with leopard-like spotted wings. Lizards of different sorts and sizes were common enough, and dodged our horses' hoofs at every step, but not a bird was seen of any kind.

Across the plain the road rises over a long hill slope up to the post-house and hamlet of Khushkak at the entrance of a pass into the hills. We found the post-

house deserted and falling to ruin, and therefore alighted at one of the empty huts of the village. Khushkak is the last village of the Zarand *bulúk* in this direction. It is a poor place, and only retains twenty of the fifty families that formed its population. The little hut we occupy, though it has just been swept and spread with carpets, has an almost insupportably disagreeable musty odour, raising unpleasant suspicions as to the condition of its former occupants. The floor was a little below the level of a brisk little stream that ran down the hill close outside its walls, and the moisture, percolating through the soil, filled the atmosphere of the room with a heavy sickly vapour. In the absence of our tents, which were yet far behind, it was the best shelter the place afforded, and I was content to correct its vapours with the addition of tobacco fumes.

12*th June*.—Khushkak to Novarán, thirty-six miles. Marched at 1.45. A.M.—route a little south of west by a winding path continually ascending and descending across a range of low rounded hills covered with the richest pasture, on which we found large herds of camels at graze, and in the sheltered hollows between spied the black tents of their *ilyát* owners.

At two miles we crossed a noisy hill torrent, and, turning to the left, went up its narrow glen, with long strips of orchards and hamlets on either slope, and at about another five miles reached the watershed. Its elevation is about 6938 feet above the sea, and 1528 feet above Khushkak. Here we turned to the right, and passing over rolling pasture downs, gradually descended to a long valley in which are many villages. At about twenty miles we passed the villages of Shamrin and Bivarán, picturesquely perched on the hill slopes amidst delightful vineyards. Farther on, we left the hills, and

going along the valley, passed a number of villages to our left; and at eleven o'clock, after a fatiguing ride of nine hours, camped under the shade of some splendid walnut-trees close to the village of Novarán. Several of the villagers flocked out to see us, and, to my surprise, I found they did not understand Persian. They are Kurds, and speak a dialect of Turki, said to be different from the language spoken by the Turks.

This place is in the Muzdkhanchay *bulúk*, which contains about forty villages. It is said to have suffered less from the famine than other parts of the country. Its people, however, looked the impersonation of poverty.

13*th June.*—Novarán to Zaráh, thirty-two miles. Departed at 2.15 A.M.; morning air still and chilly. At four miles out crossed the Muzdkhanchay river by a masonry bridge. It is a tributary of the Kúm river, which is lost on the desert towards Kirman, and here marks the boundary between Tehran and Hamadan. It is subject to violent floods after rains on the hills, and its bed certainly bears the traces of violent rushes of water.

At four miles on we came to a ruined and deserted hamlet by which flowed a sparkling little hill torrent. On its bank lay the corpse of a woman half devoured by wild animals, and beyond it lay the broken skeletons of other victims of the famine. Here our route changed from W.S.W. to N.N.W., and led over a long uninteresting succession of undulations, and finally cresting a low ridge, sloped down a wide hollow in which are many villages. The soil is everywhere up to the ridge a bare clay thrown up into hummocks, and furrowed by the action of water. Onwards from the ridge we marched in view of the snow-crowned Alwand mountain away to the south-west.

At 9.30. A.M. we arrived at Zaráh, a miserable little village, almost depopulated, and the very picture of poverty and neglect, and alighted at the *chapparkhana*, which we found empty and extremely filthy. Below the village, on a turfy spot beyond its rivulet, we found the camp of Imám Culi Khan, Imáduddaula, the governor of Kirmanshah. He is a son of the late Muhammad Ali Mirza, one of the many sons of the late Fath Ali Shah, and is consequently an uncle of the reigning Shah. He is now going to the capital to take part in the discussion of various important state questions that are shortly to occupy the attention of the Shah and his ministers. His camp consists of a large single-poled tent, and a dozen smaller ones round it for his ladies and attendants; and in front of them are drawn up three very handsome four-wheeled carriages of English or French manufacture.

Towards sunset Shukrullah Beg announced that a *peshkhidmat*, or page in attendance, had arrived with a message from the Prince. He was ushered up to the room I occupied, and, with a polite bow, and hands folded in front, delivered his message. "The Imáduddaula is pleased to say that a saddled horse is ready if your honour feels disposed to pay him a visit." "My compliments to the Imáduddaula, and I shall have much pleasure in paying my respects to his excellency." "By your leave I will go for the horse." "There is no necessity for that. My own is at hand, and I will ride over in half an hour." And the *peshkhidmat* with a bow retired. I gave the order for my horse to be saddled, and meanwhile donned a suit of presentable attire. Shukrullah Beg the while was busy arranging a procession *more Persico;* and when I came down to the gate of the *chapparkhana*, I found my groom with the spare horse ready as a *yadak*, and the mulemen, and others he had

somehow got hold of for the occasion, ranged in file on either side the path, and looking as solemn as if they were about to be led to execution.

It was all, no doubt, quite correct, and had the individual actors in the ceremony been at all decently attired, I might have submitted to the rules of conventionality, and allowed myself to be led off *en grande tenue*. Under the actual conditions, however, the processionists did look such a set of ragamuffins, that I could not consent to play a part in the farce, and consequently, much to the chagrin of Shukrullah Beg, sent them all back to their places, and mounting my horse, set off towards the camp, attended by my personal orderly in uniform, and Shukrullah Beg leading the way.

Near the camp we met the horse sent out for me, and crossing a small rivulet, arrived in front of the great tent. Here I dismounted, and sent in my card by one of the servants ranged in two rows in front of the tent door. Presently a very intelligent-looking man stepped out, and, with a deferential manner, invited me to walk in. I did so, and removing my hat, bowed to the Prince, who was seated, oriental fashion on a broad cushion, like a mattress. Without rising, he motioned me to a chair placed at the side of his cushion. As I took my seat, his son, the only other occupant of the tent, and who had risen from his kneeling posture seated on his heels as I entered, again resumed his former position on the other side of the cushion. He was a handsome young man with a glossy black beard, and throughout the interview observed a respectful silence, with an attentive gaze towards his father. The Prince was plainly dressed in a suit of black cloth, and, with spectacles adjusted, appeared to have been busy with a number of manuscripts that lay in a small pile before him. His close-trimmed grizzly beard gave

him a somewhat stern expression, but his voice was gentle and his manner affable, with an easy sense of conscious dignity. He inquired how I fared on my travels, and how long I had resided in Persia. "It is my first visit to the country," I said, "and I have been marching through it for four months." With an inquiring look of doubt he asked where I had learned the language, and was pleased to compliment me on my knowledge of it. He alluded in a kindly way to the death of Mr Alison, said it was a great loss to Persia, and speculated on his successor, giving his own vote for Sir H. Rawlinson. He made several inquiries regarding Sistan, and asked if the boundary had been settled. The question, I replied, was now under discussion at Tehran. He had heard of the assassination of Lord Mayo, and asked whether it was true that a general rebellion in India had followed the tragedy. He referred to European politics very sensibly; said the defeat of the French took all Persians by surprise; they must fight again, but Prussia would maintain the position she had gained in Europe. He spoke in disparaging terms of Turkey; the country was rotten to the core, had no credit, no organisation, and no army; she was doomed sooner or later to fall before Russian progress. He supposed the proposed Euphrates Valley railway would soon be set on foot; it would prove the regeneration of Persia. The country now, he said, was in a deplorable state, upwards of a million of its people had perished in the famine. The country, he said, was naturally divided into five fifths. One fifth was desert, two fifths were mountain, another fifth was pasture, and the remaining fifth was arable and habitable.

In such converse the set courses of coffee, sherbet, tea, and ice, with the *calyán* between each, were got through, and I took my leave with the same ceremony as on entering.

On returning to my quarters in the post-house, I found a sheep, trays of sweetmeats, four great cones of Russian white sugar, two large packets of tea, and two boxes of *gáz* (a sweatmeat prepared at Kirmanshah from manna), had been politely sent over for me by the Imáduddaula—a civility which in the East corresponds with an invitation to dinner in the West. I was much pleased with this visit, particularly as it afforded me an opportunity of correcting some mistaken notions regarding the pride and insincerity of the Persians, and the disposition of the leading men of the country towards our nation.

In the Imáduddaula I found a dignified, quiet, and well-informed man, who spoke sensibly on all matters, and bore himself like a prince. He thanked me for my visit, said he was much pleased to have seen me, and wished me a prosperous journey onwards, and hoped I would make use of his garden-house at Kirmanshah during my stay there.

14*th June*.—Zaráh to Míla Gird, twenty miles—route W.S.W., across a wide alluvial plain, bounded by the Alwand mountain on the south, and the Caraghan range on the north. The level surface presents a bright sheet of green corn, pasture land, and meadows, interspersed with numerous villages and gardens, all radiant in their summer foliage. The scene is one of great promise, but its reality sadly disappoints.

On arrival at Míla Gird we rode up to the post-house. A corpse with gaping mouth and staring eyes lay athwart the threshold; hungry, pinched, and tattered men and women, careless of their surroundings, passed and repassed without so much as a glance at it. We too passed on through the village, and witnessed the nakedness of its misery. Men desponding, bowed, and paralysed by want, women nude in their rags, with matted hair and shrivelled

features, wandered restlessly like witches, naked children with big bellies and swollen feet turned up their deep sunk eyes with an unmeaning stare as we disturbed them at their morning meal of wild seed grasses and unripe ears of corn. The scene was the most frightful we had anywhere seen, and the roadside deposits of undigested grass and weeds, told of the dire straits the surviving population endures.

We passed on from this scene of suffering, and alighted under the shade of some willow-trees fringing a water-course beyond the village, and there awaited the arrival of our baggage, which by some mistake had taken the wrong road, and was passing our stage, as we rightly concluded by the dust rising on the plain some miles off. Shukrullah Beg galloped after them, and brought them back about midday, all more or less knocked up by the heat of the sun.

In the afternoon I had a quantity of bread prepared and distributed to the poor villagers. The frantic struggles for its possession, the fighting and biting and screaming that followed, decided me not to attempt such a mode of relief again. I had had thirty or forty men and women and children seated in a row preparatory to the distribution. But the bread was no sooner brought forward than they all rushed on Shukrullah Beg and the two muleteers bearing the bread, and nearly tore the clothes off their backs. They dropped their loads, and extricating themselves as best they could, left the crowd to fight it out amongst themselves. And they certainly set to work with the ferocity of wild beasts, and the bread, of which there was a sackful, was torn from hand to hand, and fought over till much of it was destroyed.

15*th June.*—Míla Gird to Hamadan, thirty-six miles, and halt a day. We set out shortly before midnight by

a westerly route along the plain to the foot of the hills, and then turned south-west to Hamadan, at the foot of the snow-topped Alwand mountain. At about seven miles we reached a range of low hills, and beyond them passed over a long stretch of pasture downs, a dreary solitude, without a sign of life for miles. At another seven miles we passed the roadside hamlet of Durguz, and three miles farther on a decayed village, which we were told had been depopulated by the famine. As it stood close to the road, I turned aside to visit it, and witnessed a scene that baffles description, and, from what we heard, is but too common in this part of the country.

The village (its name I omitted to note at the time, and have since forgotten) contained about a hundred and fifty houses, but only five of them were now tenanted. The rest were all deserted, and many of them were falling to ruin. In one of the now still and voiceless streets I passed a middle-aged man, apparently in the last stage of starvation. He was propped in a sitting posture against a wall, with his lank withered arms crossed in front to support his shrivelled legs from weighing upon his misshaped feet and swollen ankles. His sickly-looking face, with puffed cheeks, drawn lips, and sunken eyes, rested on his knees, and as we rode past he had not the energy to move or beg a morsel of bread. I threw him a *kran*, but, without a motion towards it, he merely gasped out, "*Nán, bidih nán!*" ("Bread, give me bread!") A little way on a horrible stink declared the existence of a putrid corpse in the tenantless houses around; and outside the village, on the edge of a small patch of ripening corn, we found the remnant of the population, already at this early hour (it was only four o'clock) staying the pangs of their hunger by literally grazing the green grass. They were three or four hag-like women, and as many half-grown lads;

and as they plucked the ears of bearded corn, they chewed and swallowed them beard and all.

At four miles farther on we crested an upland, and then sloped down to the delightful valley of Hamadan. Its green sward, yellowing crops, and gardens dark in the luxuriance of their foliage, presented a picture of happiness and prosperity strangely reversed by the cruel reality. On a hill slope overlooking this crest of upland we observed a couple of small military tents. In front of them were seated three or four *sarbáz* of the guard, stationed here to protect the road from depredation by the hungry peasantry around. Lower down the slope we passed a party of Hamadanis, driving their oxen and asses in the direction whence we had come. They were almost all armed, indicating the insecure state of the country here, for they are the first armed people (other than military) we have met in all our journey from the eastern frontier.

Our road across the valley led past Surkhabad over a river crossed by a masonry bridge of five arches, and then by Shivím to the city, where we found accommodation in the post-house. We arrived at 7.47. A.M., and at this hour the thermometer rose to 71° Fah. At daybreak on the march it was so low as 48° Fah. Hamadan is an extensive city, delightfully situated at the foot of the Alwand. In the nooks and hollows extending along the base of the mountain, and some way up its bare rocky slopes, are situated a number of picturesque little hamlets, buried from view in their surrounding vineyards and orchards; and in the valley stretching away to the west is a continuous succession of corn-fields, fruit gardens, and villages, amidst which flows a considerable stream fed by numerous little rills coming down from the hills. Altogether the scenery is very charming, and the snowy heights of the mountain above add a feature as pleasing to view as it

is refreshing to the senses. The ground, too, is classic. Here stood the ancient Ecbatana, whose mouldy soil yields a variety of ancient relics, Median, Grecian, and early Arab signets, seals, and rings, with coins, beads, and sculptures. Here too are shown the tombs of Esther and Mordecai, and of Avicenna, the Arabian philosopher and physician.

The present city occupies the depression and slopes of a hollow at the foot of the mountain, and is said to contain nine thousand houses. Its situation affords facilities for drainage, but is objectionable on the score of ventilation. The climate, however, is described as very salubrious, although its winter is a rigorous season, as may be well understood from its elevation at 6162 feet above the sea. The surrounding country is pretty and productive, and in prosperous times the place must be a delightful residence, which it certainly is not now.

The population of the city was reckoned at fifty thousand before the famine, and is now estimated at half that number, but I don't think there can be so many as fifteen thousand. The place was the centre of a considerable trade, especially with Russia by Resht on the Caspian, and had a numerous colony of Jews. It now appears to be utterly ruined. Hardly a decently-dressed man is to be seen, and nothing is to be got in its bazars; even our cattle were with difficulty supplied with fodder and grain. The city swarms with famishing beggars, and our lodging in the post-house was besieged by crowds of them, whom it was impossible to satisfy. We were prevented moving outside the walls of the post-house through fear of them, for, as Shukrullah Beg warned us, they were in a dangerous mood, and if I ventured into the city on foot, I should certainly have the clothes torn off my back, and might possibly lose my life—neither

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very pleasant alternatives; so I curbed the promptings of curiosity at the dictates of discretion, and fed my would-be assailants with bread, the distribution going on through a hole in the gateway, by way of protection against assault.

A good deal of wine is made at this place, The white is something like hock, and the red like claret. The samples brought to us, however, were of very inferior quality and crude flavour, but were as good as one could expect at the rate of tenpence a quart, which was probably double the market price.

17*th June*.—Hamadan to Asadabad, thirty-two miles. We set out at 3.30. A.M., and passed through the northern quarters of the city, where is a covered bazar in a state of dilapidation. Its shops are mostly empty and tenantless, the streets are choked with refuse and filth of sorts, and the air is loaded with abominable stinks. The dress, appearance, and condition of the people we met was in keeping with their surroundings. Beyond the city we passed through an old cemetery, crowded with handsome tombstones of the Arab period. Some were carved out of splendid slabs of white marble, and others were formed of massive blocks of granite and sandstone, all from the mountain overlooking. Farther on, clearing a number of vineyards and orchards, we came to the open country, and following the path skirting the foot of the mountain, passed several villages, and crossed many brisk little streams from the hill slopes, some of them by masonry bridges, till, at about fourteen miles, we came to a branching of the road. The branch to the left goes direct over a high ridge of Alwand, and was taken by our baggage as being the shortest route; the other winds over lesser heights of the same ridge farther to the westward.

We followed the latter, and passing the castellated village of Zaghár, entered amongst low hills. Here our route changed from W.N.W. to south-west, and crossing two lesser ridges, at about twenty-six miles from Hamadan brought us to the crest of a watershed, from which we looked down on the hill-locked valley of Asadábad. Here the aneroid figured 22·38, giving the elevation at about 7525 feet above the sea, and 1363 feet above Hamadan. The road is very good and easy. It was made two years ago for the Shah's journey to Karbalá. The soil is light and fertile, and corn crops cover the hill slopes. The rock is a soft friable slate, traversed by great veins of quartz.

The descent is by an easy gradient in view of the high snowy range of Nahwand away to the south. At the foot of the descent we came to a wide boulder-strewn ravine, over the surface of which were scattered great gabions and fascines, the relics of a disruptured dam built across the ravine to retain its floods for purposes of irrigation. Some few weeks ago a violent flood from the hills above burst through this dam, and inundated the town of Asadabad, destroying several of its houses, and causing much loss of life and property,

On arrival at the town, a few miles farther on, we found the streets had been furrowed by the rush of waters, the height of which was plainly marked on the walls by a water-line two feet above the level of the street. The town wears a wretched, desolate look, and a gloomy silence reigns over it. We put up at the post-house, which we found deserted and in a filthy state. We could procure no barley for our cattle here, a decided hardship after their long march; and our followers had to go on half rations, owing to the unwillingness of the people to sell their bread. Asadabad is said to contain

five hundred houses, but only two hundred are occupied. I saw no beggars here, and the people appeared in much better plight than we had anywhere yet seen.

Our next stage was twenty-five miles to Kangawár. The night air in Asadabad was close, oppressive, and steamy, probably owing to the action of a hot sun during the day (a thermometer placed in its direct rays rose to 142° Fah.) on its soaked soil. For so soon as we got out on the plain beyond the town, the early morning air struck cold and damp.

We set out at 2.40. A.M., and proceeded over a level plain south by west, along the line of telegraph posts. The plain is girt on all sides by high hills, and presents a green sheet of corn-fields and meadows, over which are scattered many villages. We passed six or seven dessicated and putrefying corpses on the road, and overtook several small parties of destitutes, forty or fifty people in all, dragging their withered limbs slowly along. Men, women, and children were eating from whisps of unripe corn, plucked from the roadside fields, to stave off the bitter end that was fast creeping upon them. There is nobody to help them, and they themselves are past begging.

At about half-way we passed Mandarabad, a collection of twenty or thirty huts round fortified walls enclosing an ancient tumulus, and covered with storks' nests. Here we found the corpse of a woman lying across the road, at the edge of a *kárez* stream supplying the village with water.

Farther on we passed a little roadside hamlet, and beyond it, crossing a swampy rivulet by a masonry bridge, entered low hills. Passing over these, we entered the Kangawár valley, and turning westward along a hill skirt blooming with flowers and whole fields of wild

hollyhock, and at 8.20. A.M. arrived at Kangawar post-house.

The valley is rich in crops, and covered with villages. Most of them are more or less depopulated, and the people have yet a month to wait before the growing corn will be ready for the sickle. Meanwhile, how many must perish! The town, which is said to contain five hundred houses, half of which are empty, is indescribably filthy, and swarms with beggars, many of whom are dying curled up on the dungheaps obstructing the roads. Cold and starvation together must soon put an end to their sufferings, for the night air at this elevation of 5125 feet above the sea is chill and damp.

This town appears to occupy the site of some more ancient city. On an eminence in its midst, and at the foot of some low hills, we saw the ruins of some ancient temple of vast proportions and very solid build. Six round monolith pillars on a corniced basement still exist in position, and another lies prostrate before the pile. Each pillar, so far as I could see between the intervening houses, is of solid limestone, about twelve feet high and four feet diameter. Nobody could tell us anything about the history of this ruin.

19*th June.*—Kangawar to Sahuah, twenty-three miles. Departure, 3.45 A.M.—route south-west, by a good though stony road, winding up and down between hills all the way, their slopes bare rock, but the skirts covered with a profusion of flowering plants, that perfume the air with their fragrance. Overtook several parties of travellers on their way to Kirmanshah. They had been waiting for several days for a caravan, and took advantage of my arrival to proceed with my party. They kept with us all the way, but held themselves aloof from our people at each stage.

At half-way we came to the Kotal Sahuah or "Pass of Sahuah." Its top is called Gardan Búmsúrkh, or the "red-earthed ridge," from the colour of the soil. Its elevation is 5800 feet above the sea. Here our course changed to due west, and the descent at four miles brought us to the spring and hamlet of Sarab, the first water met from Kangawar. At six miles farther, we reached Sahuah, and finding its post-house in ruins and its *sarae* yet incomplete, were glad to pass on from the scenes of its misery to a garden on the outskirts, where we camped under the shade of some magnificent elm-trees. Around us are vineyards and corn crops, the latter ripe and being cut.

On our way through the town, we passed several beggars lying in the streets, and moaning pitifully. During the day we have seen at least sixty poor wretches, mostly women and half-grown youths, who cannot live another month, I should say, even if they were now provided with food, to such a state of bloodless dropsy are they reduced. All the afternoon, tattered famished wretches hovered around our camp. Amongst them, in strange contrast, appeared a gaily-dressed, active, and rather good-looking young wench, with bare legs and short petticoats not reaching to the knees. A loose open shift of gauze showed a tattooed bosom and full stomach, whilst her painted cheeks and saucy bearing advertised her calling.

Some villagers who brought our supplies into camp gave us harrowing details of the sufferings this village had passed through. "This vineyard is full of the skeletons," said one of them, "of those who have died here eating the leaves and shoots of the vines." "Come," he added, "I will show you some of them." And at less than thirty paces from where I was seated

at my table, he showed me three human skeletons. I saw several others farther in amongst the vines, and took advantage of the opportunity to secure a skull. But none of them being fit to take away, I asked my guide to fetch me a clean and perfect one. He disappeared over the wall into the next vineyard, and in less than as many minutes returned bearing three skulls in his arms. I selected one, and the others he tossed back amongst the vines we had just left. He told me this village formerly had two hundred and twenty families, but that not one hundred of them now remained.

20th June.—Sahuah to Besitun, eighteen miles. Night cold, clear, and moonlight—morning air delightful and fresh—midday sun hot. Departure, three A.M.—route west for two miles to foot of hills, and then south-west through a fertile valley along the course of the Lolofar river. The country is crossed by numerous irrigation streams, dotted with many villages, covered with corn crops, and fragrant with the perfume of multitudes of pretty flowers.

At the spring-head of Besitun I dismounted, and climbed over the rocks to look at the wonderful sculptures rescued from their obscurity and set before the world by Rawlinson, and then proceeded to the village, hardly five minutes off. The village is a miserable collection of forty or fifty huts close to a large *sarae*. As we passed the latter on our way to the post-house, a great wolfish shaggy dog stalked by, head erect, with the leg and foot of a woman held between his jaws. Some villagers staring at our party did not even take up a stone to hurl at the brute. We found the post-house so filthy, and after being swept, sprinkled with water, and carpeted, so unbearably foul-smelling, that we were obliged to quit it. A corpse lying at the door of the *sarae* turned us away from that too, and we went off to the turfy bank of a

little stream hard by, and there awaited the arrival of our tents and baggage. The midday sun shone with considerable force, and the plague of flies and musquitoes was most annoying. A number of diminutive goats panting in the sun's rays sought shelter in our tents from their worry and stings.

In different parts of our journey we had fared on what bread the places respectively produced, and took it, good, bad, and indifferent, as it came. But here the stuff they brought us was simply uneatable, so black, gritty, and musty was it. Even our servants refused to eat it, and we did very well without, aided by the disgust the horrid sights we had witnessed of themselves produced. An intelligent-looking Persian of this place came up to me at sunset, when our tents were being struck, and to my surprise addressed me in very good Hindustani. I learned from him that he was a Wahabi, and had recently returned from Dacca, where he had resided two years in the service of a wealthy merchant of that place. He told me there were no people left in this place except ten or twelve families of shopkeepers, who kept a small stock of supplies for wayfarers at the *sarae.*

We slept out, *à la belle étoile,* under the majestic shadow of Besitun. The lights and shades on the face of the precipitous rock, reflected by the rays of a full moon, were very magnificent, and I long gazed at the glorious steep, watching the grotesque phantom forms produced by the flitting shadows stirred by the breeze; and at last, overcome by fatigue, fell asleep dreaming of the ancient peoples whose mark, living on the rock, hallows the place with a mysterious interest.

21*st June.*—Besitun to Kirmanshah, twenty-eight miles. Marched at one A.M.—route westerly, at first through a narrow valley skirting Besitun hills, and then

away across an open undulating country, covered with ripe corn crops and villages and Kurd camps. As we struck away from the hills, a splendid meteor shot across the sky horizontally, and burst only a few hundred yards from us, in a shower of most beautiful stars of purple, gold, and silver hue, just a "roman candle."

At six o'clock, crossing the Cárású river by a masonry bridge of six arches, we alighted at a dilapidated *sarae* for our baggage to come up. Here we were joined by Abdurrahím, a very fair and intelligent youth of eighteen years, a son of Agha Hasan, the British Wakiluddaula at Kirmanshah. He had been sent out, attended by a single horseman, to meet and escort us to the quarters prepared for us in the city. Up to this point I had ridden my dromedary, but here changed to my horse, as the more fitting mode of entering the city, though he was in such poor condition from his long and rapid marches, that he must have attracted as much attention from the punctilious as the camel would have excited comment. Kirmanshah has a clean, neat, and agreeable appearance as one approaches from the east, and is decidedly the most flourishing place we have yet seen in Persia. As we neared its walls, we passed a vast collection of new graves, filled during the last two years with the bodies of fifteen thousand people who have died here. Most of them, it is said, had come in from the surrounding country to find food in the capital of the province, but found instead a stone in place of bread.

In the city we alighted at some very dilapidated quarters adjoining the residence of the Wakiluddaula. The rooms were nicely carpeted with rich felts, and furnished with tables and chairs and cots. Soon after our arrival a couple of servants brought over tea and sweets for our refreshment; and the young lad return-

ing from a visit to his father, said the Wakiluddaula begged his absence might be excused. He was laid up with a fit of ague, but he hoped on its passing off to call in the afternoon. I begged he would not take the trouble, and thanked him for his arrangements for our comfort, which were all very satisfactory.

Towards sunset Agha Hasan was announced. He walked across the court supported by two servants, and really looked very ill. With him came Mirza Sádic Khan, Hakím Bashi, a physician who had walked the London hospitals, and spoke English remarkably well. He told us we had now got over the worst part of our journey, and that all ahead would be easy travelling. His words were very strangely falsified, as the sequel will show.

We halted here a day, and I took the opportunity to return the visit of the Wakiluddaula, and inquire after his health. He came out to the court to receive me, and seemed much pleased at the attention. He told me that I should most likely have some difficulty in crossing the Turkish frontier, as reports had recently been received of disturbances on the road. He had applied to the governor here for a special passport for me, and would himself write to the commandant on the frontier, who was a personal friend—a service for which I afterwards had reason to be grateful.

The Wakil in conversation told me that the famine might now be considered as past. Prices had fallen greatly since the cutting of the crops, and would soon reach the usual rates. He said Persia was utterly ruined, and had lost nearly half her population, and he did not think the country could recover its prosperity for fifty years under favourable conditions. Society was disorganised; no two men in the country could trust each

other, or combine for any good. Turkey, he said, though looked down on by Persia, was far ahead in civilisation. I took my leave much pleased with his attentions, and sent him a revolver as a present before starting on my forward journey, and he sent me a couple of small carpets in return.

Whilst here, we rode over to see the Tác o Bostam sculptures, and returned by the garden of Imáduddaula. The reservoir at the spring-head at Tác o Bostam is a charming spot, and the sculptures, so fully described and delineated by Sir H. Rawlinson, are well worth a visit. Kirmanshah is a very fertile province, and the city in better times was very populous and flourishing. We did not go over the bazars, as it was considered unsafe to do so for fear of the beggars offering us insult or annoyance. I was disappointed at this, as I wished to see some Kurdistan carpets, which are here procurable of the best quality.

CHAPTER XIII.

23*d June.*—Kirmanshah to Mydasht, twenty-three miles. Owing to the promptitude of the Wakiluddaula in meeting my wishes and expediting my journey (for I had told him my object was to reach Basrah in time for the first July steamer to Bombay), we were enabled to set out from the city at ten o'clock last night. I had given the order to load and start at six P.M., but the mulemen rebelled, led away their mules, and caused much trouble. Shukrullah Beg, however, advanced them some money, and by alternate threats and conciliations, persuaded them to return; and just then an escort of four horsemen arriving from the governor with letters for the commandant of the troops at Zuhâb, I left three of them in charge of the baggage, with directions to bring it on so soon as loaded, and with the other as guide, set out from the city without further delay, calculating that my departure would decide the mulemen on their course, and hasten their movements.

After clearing the city and the low ridges to its west, we halted awhile for the rest of our party, who presently came up and joined us. The change from the close air and foul smells of the city to the pure fresh breezes on the open plain was most agreeable, and quickly dispelled the headaches, nausea, and feverish malaise most of us complained of in the filthy pent-up courts of our temporary residence. If the choice were mine, I should never enter these filthy Persian towns and villages, but camp

under the shade of the trees in the gardens and vineyards surrounding all such habitations. In this time of famine and pestilence, one never knows what sickness may have occurred in the empty houses we took up our quarters in, whilst their state of neglect and impure atmosphere only suggested very disturbing fancies, and speculations we had no means of correcting.

We reached Mydasht Sarae at 4.30 A.M. The morning air was so cold that we were glad of a fire to warm ourselves, and the midday sun was so hot that we took off our coats as superfluous. At daylight, the temperature was as low as 40° Fah., and in the middle of the day it rose to 136° Fah. in the sun's rays, and 88° Fah. in the shelter of the *sarae*.

At half-way on our march, descending a long winding gully that opens on to a plain covered with some crops, we met a very large caravan of pilgrims and merchants on their way to Kirmanshah from Karbalá and Baghdad. There were nearly two thousand mules, camels, and asses, and fully as many men and women. We heard the sounds of their approach some minutes before we met. The escort with me and Shukrullah Beg were at first disconcerted by the sounds, and hastily collected our baggagers and party into a close compact column, and moved cautiously down the slope. Presently, on turning a rock, we were suddenly challenged by a party of four or five horsemen.* "It 's all right," said Shukrullah Beg, "let us go on in the order we are now in. The caravan is a large one, and we may get confused with those in it." The warning was quite necessary, for the caravan was the largest I have ever seen, and we were

* They proved to be the advanced guard of the detachment escorting the caravan, for owing to the depredations of Kurd robbers, such protection was now necessary on this road.

fully half an hour passing each other. Amongst the crowd were many mule-litters bearing veiled ladies. I counted one string of thirty-five out of several others.

I rode my dromedary on this march, and was, in the dim light of dawn, taken for a pilgrim by the people of the caravan, and received many a "*Salám alaik Háji!*" from those nearest to me. I was so fatigued by the excitement and wakefulness of the past twenty-four hours, that soon after arrival at the *sarae*, I fell asleep in front of the fire lighted to warm our numbed hands and feet, and was for a time dead to the assaults of the vermin that swarmed all over the place. Their voracity, however, soon roused me from my slumbers, and I found myself violently attacked by the hosts of bugs, lice, fleas, spiders, and cockchafers, on whose domain I had intruded. They punished me so severely that I was glad to beat a retreat, and take refuge in my own tent, which, the baggage having come up, I had pitched at once. The delights of a tub and a cleán suit can be better imagined than described.

Our next stage was twenty-eight miles to Hárúnabad. We set out at ten P.M., and marched all night in a south-westerly direction by a very good road over three successive ranges of hill, where the path is very stony. The rocks are limestone and magnesian limestone, and are thickly covered on their slopes with dwarf oak-trees. Except a small hamlet and a tiny stream at the first hill pass, called Kotal Cház Zabbú, we passed no village nor water in all the route. We saw, however, some *ilyat* camps, and small patches of corn cultivation in the nooks of the hills.

At five A.M. we arrived at Hárúnabad, a dilapidated village occupied by only twenty or thirty families. The rest, we were told, had gone off for the six summer months

to their *aylác* or summer quarters in the hills. The *kishlác*, or winter quarters on the plain, are now mostly abandoned. The people here are all Kurds. We found the *sarae* here (there are no post-houses on this road west of Kirmanshah) so dirty, and occupied by such dreadfully unwholesome-looking beggars, that we gladly availed ourselves of the offer of the chief man in the place to alight at the residence of the governor, who is at present absent on a tour in the district.

The house stands on the slope of a laminated limestone ridge, and overlooks a stream of beautiful clear water, full of fish and tortoises. It is apparently a new building, and is tastefully decorated with ornamental plaster. We found the rooms in the upper story quite empty, but very clean and sweet. The servant in charge of the house spread some felt carpets on the floor; and I stretched me down, and went to sleep till our baggage arrived, and the noise of the men woke me.

We hear disquieting reports regarding the safety of the road ahead. The country about Pul Zuháb is said to be in possession of the Khaleva tribe, who are now in open rebellion against the authority of the Shah, by whom they were, to the number of a thousand families, transported a couple of years ago from the vicinity of Baghdad to their present settlements on this frontier. Their cause of dissatisfaction is the attempt to exact revenue from them. They are described as nomads of very unsettled habits, and predatory at all times. They possess valuable mares like the Baloch, and mounted on them, they now harass the country from Pul Zuháb to Hájí Cara. They are committed to this course of rebellion on account of a rupture with the Persian Government.

It appears that the governor of Karriud, Malik Nyáz Khan, went amongst their camps to collect the revenue;

in a dispute at some tents, he was set upon and killed. The Shah's troops were consequently brought out to operate against the tribe. They have captured some principal men and their families, and have dispersed the rest of the camps into the hills.

At 10.30 P.M., having made the guardian of our quarters happy, and requested him to convey our thanks to our absent host, Sartip Muhammad Hasan, Khalora, we set out from Hárúnabad, and after a march of twenty-four miles, at five A.M. arrived at Karriud. Here we found the *sarae* full; and after wandering about a while, hired a house on the skirts of the town for the day. Our route was W.N.W., by a good road over and between low hills covered with dwarf oak-trees. In the glens and hollows we passed many *ilyat* camps, and patches of rich corn.

Karriud is a charming spot, and its air is delightfully pure and refreshing. The town contains about two thousand houses, and is romantically situated in a deep hollow between two great hills of magnesian limestone. The elevation here is 5212 feet above the sea, and the night air is decidedly cold. Yet as we rode into the town we found the people sleeping on the house-tops, curled up in their coverlets. The tramping of our horses aroused some sleeping beauties, who, rubbing their eyes, stared at us with undisguised surprise, and shook their slumbering lords to take note of the new-comers.

Some of the young women—they were all fair complexioned, I observed—had very comely features, and fine turned limbs, which showed to advantage in contrast with their greasy and tattered attire. The town has a very flourishing look, and is crowded with a bustling population, who, notwithstanding their dirty habits and slovenly dress, appear comfortable and prosperous. We

have evidently left the land of misery and starvation, for we have not seen so thriving and happy a scene since we entered Persian territory.

The bread we got here was made from the newly-reaped corn, and was simply delicious, after the coarse, mouldy, and gritty stuff we had been eating during the past fortnight. We saw lots of cattle here, a new feature on the scene; and, yet more surprising, some veritable domestic pigs. One of them, indeed, scared away from its fellows by our appearance, trotted ahead of us into the town, heralding our approach by a succession of grunts.

26*th June.*—Pul Karriud to Zuháb, thirty-two miles. We left Karriud at 8.45 P.M. yesterday, and proceeded W.N.W. through a narrow valley, rising gently for eight miles. Here we descended by a rocky path into a deep winding defile, the sides of which are thickly covered with oak-trees. The road, everywhere rough and difficult, passes from side to side across a boulder-strewn ravine, in which are pools trickling from one to the other down the slope. At about half-way down the pass, we came to Myán Tágh, a village of about a couple of hundred houses. Here we found a regiment of Persian infantry or *sarbáz*, just returned from Pul Zuháb, where it appears they have had an encounter with the enemy. The men were scattered about the road for three miles beyond the village in great disorder, and without a semblance of discipline. Some of them chaffed our men, and asked what we had with us that we should go on when they were in retreat from Pul Zuháb, Their merriment and gibes, however, were at once silenced by Shukrullah Beg, who authoritatively announced that we were *mámúr i daulat i Inglisia* (on the service of the English Government). The words acted with magical effect. Those near

us stood at "attention," and others as we passed on touched their caps.

Shukrullah Beg now told me we should have trouble ahead. There was no doubt, he said, about the Khaleva rebellion. A party of four hundred of them had only yesterday plundered Pul Zuháb, and were still in force in the vicinity. He was telling me what he had heard from the *sarbáz* (that they were brought back to the shelter of these hills to wait for reinforcements to attack the enemy), when his story was verified by a long stream of people hurrying up the defile with their asses and oxen bearing their household goods and chattels.

At the steep descent of the pass where the road zigzags down to Páyín Tágh, we had some difficulty in passing the stream set uphill against us. The poor fugitives were driving their cattle and puffing and panting as if the enemy were in hot pursuit. Some of their bullocks, taking fright at our party, became obstreperous, threw their loads, and charged in amongst us, producing no small confusion, and considerable risk of a roll down the precipice.

There were about four hundred of these Kurds coming up the pass. Many of them expressed surprise at our going down the hill when we saw they were running away up it. One hardy old dame in particular, whose bullock with all her worldly goods had dashed up the hillside to escape our approach, was especially loud and garrulous, and harangued us from the turn at a zig in words I did not understand. Shukrullah Beg explained by saying the old lady was facetious, and asked if we thought ourselves lions that we were going down to face the robbers who had defeated even the *sarbáz?* These Kurds were very poor and dirty people; some of them were hideously ugly. Many of them had a sickly, un-

wholesome look, and in the light of dawning day, I saw that ophthalmia afflicted most of their children and young people.

The descent to Páyín Tágh is long and steep, by a stony road that zigzags down the mountain slope. Above the path to the right stands a solitary fire-temple, in a fairly preserved state of ruin. Away to the left of the descent is a very deep and narrow chasm, that drains the Myán Tágh defile and hills to the plain below. Seen in the waning moonlight on one side the descent, and in the growing gleams of a rising sun on the other, it looked a very remarkable natural phenomenon, and appeared like a great rent or fissure in the rocky barrier that closes the defile in this direction. *

Onwards from Páyin Tágh our road led along a gradually expanding valley, and at about ten miles brought us to Pul Zuháb. The view on looking back is peculiar and strikingly curious. The hills rise abruptly from the plain, and form a well-defined barrier, that extends west and east, a great buttress supporting the tablelands of Persia against the valley of the Tigris on the one hand, and the littoral of the Persian Gulf on the other.

We arrived at Pul Zuháb, or Saribul, as it is also called, from the bridge here over the Alwand river, at 7.30 A.M., and finding the *sarae* occupied by a regiment of *sarbáz*, pitched our tents on the bank of the river below the bridge. The height of this place is 2220 feet above the sea, and 2992 below that of Karriud. The change in the temperature was as great at it was sudden. At two P.M. the thermometer rose to 102° Fah. in my tent, and placed in the rays of the sun, went up to 140° Fah. At

* On descending this pass, we left the elevated plateaux of Persia behind us, and entered on the valley of the Tigris, quite a different country and climate. The change is sudden and complete, by a drop of three thousand feet from the cool breezes of Karriud to the hot blasts of Zuháb.

midnight it fell to 60° Fah. in the open air. At Karriud the midday temperature was only 79° Fah., and in the early morning only 50° Fah., though the sun's rays affected the mercury there as much as they did here, raising it to 134° Fah.

Soon after our arrival here I sent Shukrullah Beg with the passport received from the governor of Kirmanshah to the head man here, to arrange for an escort to proceed with my party in the morning. He returned an hour later saying the official here would have nothing to say to the passport, as it was addressed to the frontier officer at Zuháb, a town said to be two *farsakhs* distant in a north-west direction.

This was rather embarrassing intelligence, and I was in doubt as to what course I should adopt, when some further information elicited from Shukrullah Beg decided me in my line of action. He told me that the officer now in charge of the frontier at Zuháb, had only just been appointed by the Shah's government, in place of the local hereditary chief, who had been recently killed by the Khaleva (Arab) rebels, and that he was a Persian of Tehran. The commandant of the troops here was a brother of the murdered chief, and claimed to succeed him in the local government. But as he had been denied his right, he was not on good terms with the new incumbent, and would make a difficulty in carrying out any orders received from him, and that it was probable I might be detained here a week or more, till reference was made to Kirmanshah.

The very thought of this was more than I could bear. I therefore sent Shukrullah Beg to the commandant of the troops, who it seems was also governor of this place, with instructions to convey my compliments, and inform him that I was travelling on the service of Government,

that it was important I should not be unnecessarily delayed, and that it was my intention to march towards Casri Shirin at sunset. After considerable delay, Shukrullah Beg returned, and reported that the commandant had received and understood my message, that he said he had received no authority to escort my party, and could not let me proceed, as the road ahead was altogether unsafe, and that he would call on me in the course of the afternoon to explain how matters stood.

Shortly before sunset a messenger came across the river to announce that the commandant, Murád Ali Khan, was coming over to see me. I said he was welcome, and meanwhile ordered some tea to be prepared, and arranged my camp-stools and boxes as seats. He dismounted at the bridge, and attended by four or five others, walked over to where I was seated in front of my tent. I rose and shook hands with him, and thanked him for taking the trouble to come over, and gave him a seat. He then introduced his brother, Karím Khan, commandant of the cavalry stationed here, and motioned him to a seat; the others stood at the edge of the carpet spread before us. A pause followed, and then we bowed at each other politely, expressing much, but saying nothing. He then looked round, and observed that we were a large party, and had a good deal of baggage. "Yes," I said, "they are natives of India, and are returning to their country with me." Another pause followed, and the tea opportunely came round to fill a threatening hiatus. I apologised for the absence of the *calyán*, as I had none with me, but offered a cheroot in its place, and set the example in its use. He lighted one and his brother another, and then we began to talk more at ease. I then said that my *mirakhor* Shukrullah Beg had led me to understand that there would be some little delay in getting an escort

here, owing to an informality in the address of my passport, but that I was desirous of avoiding unnecessary delay, and purposed marching onwards this evening.

"Quite true," he said, "the passport is not addressed to me, but as I have received a letter by express messenger from the Wakiluddaula at Kirmanshah, requesting me to further your progress, and as he is a personal friend of mine, I am ready to take you across to the Turkish frontier, and I will there ask you for a letter certifying to my having done so."

"Certainly," I said, "this is very good. Agha Hasan," I added, "told me at Kirmanshah that he would write to you, and that I should be saved inconvenience thereby. Will the escort be ready to accompany me this evening? My camp is ready to march at an hour's notice."

"No," he said, "you cannot move this evening. You require a strong escort, and it will not be ready till morning. I myself and Karím Khan will come over for you at daybreak, and we must march together with every precaution. There are four hundred rebel Khaleva (Arabs) on the road. They plundered yonder village," pointing to a sacked and roofless hamlet a mile off, "only yesterday."

"Thanks," I said, rising; "I shall be ready for you at daybreak."

I shook hands with each, and they both retired with their attendants. They are both fair men, with good honest features, of simple manners and plain outspoken speech. After they left, Shukrullah Beg told me that my determination to go on had alarmed the commandant, for he did not like to stop me, and could not let me proceed unprotected, as the road was really dangerous; but he doubted his promise to start in the morning.

About noon, a caravan from Khánakín had arrived

here, escorted by a party of horsemen. They camped on the river bank alongside of ourselves, and from them our people heard all sorts of exaggerated reports as to the dangers of the road. But it was true they had been attacked yesterday beyond Casri Shirin, and a string of camels cut off from the *káfila* by these Khaleva rebels. I determined, however, to abide by the commandant's promise, and gave the order to march at daylight.

27th June.—Pul Zuháb to Casri Shirin, twenty-four miles. At three A.M. our camp was struck and all ready to start, but no sign of the escort appeared. I sent Shukrullah Beg over to the commandant to say I was ready, but he returned presently with a reply from some subordinate that he was asleep. I waited till four A.M., and then moved off, sending a Persian *sarbáz*, of whom six or seven had been standing sentry over our camp during the night, to inform the commandant that I was going on slowly, and the escort could follow.

We went west by north across the valley, passing *en route* the village plundered by the rebels yesterday, up to some low hill ridges. Here we were overtaken by a party of horsemen under Karím Khan. He galloped up, saluted in military fashion, and said the commandant was following with the infantry, and that we had better wait his arrival here. We dismounted, halted the baggage, and I gave the cavalry leader a cheroot to while away the time, whilst we watched the infantry coming along the plain. They were a very ragged-looking set, armed with long rifles, fired from a forked rest attached by a hinge to the barrel, and just like those used by Afghan mountaineers. They came along at a good pace, with no attempt at formation, but with a light springy step and very merry tempers. As they approached, the commandant urged his horse up the

slope, and saluting as his brother had done, laughingly observed that my punctuality had roused him an hour sooner than he intended. A proferred cheroot, however, turned the current of his thoughts from his curtailed slumbers, and remounting, we proceeded in the best of humours.

Our route led for twenty miles across a rough uninhabited country, traversed in all directions by low ridgy banks, here and there rising to the proportions of hillocks. The infantry trotted along on each side of our baggage; and the cavalry, from front and rear, sent out parties to the heights on either side to reconnoitre the country. At about seventeen miles we came to a great wall, built across the outlet of a small hollow. The stones were of large size, like those of the Pyramids. This structure, we were told, was originally an aqueduct from the river Alwand to Casri Shirin; and a little farther on we came to the river itself, a sprightly little stream, with a fringe of tall reeds on either bank. The sun was now shining hotly, and added to the thirsty sensations excited by the parched arid look of the land; so we turned aside to it to water our cattle and allow the men to slake their thirst. Frequent warnings from our escort hurried us on again; and we proceeded along the line of telegraph posts, here thrown down and the wires cut by the rebels. We passed through the ruins of a great fort and palace of very ancient date, and entered the village beyond. As we passed through these ruins, there was a commotion amongst our horsemen ahead, and several of them galloped off to the village beyond; and when we emerged from them, we found the *Sarbáz-Khána* or "barracks" overlooking the little town was covered with soldiers perched on the domes of its roof, eagerly scanning the country around.

Our party hastened their paces, and in a few minutes we entered Casri Shirin, or "the palace of Shirin," named after the ruins close by, and were accommodated in an empty house adjoining a *sarae*, in which our cattle and followers found shelter. We had hardly settled down for the day, when a party of *sarbáz* brought in a villager who had been shot through the lungs above the heart not an hour before. A party of Khaleva had swept past the village just as we arrived, and drove off the cattle some villagers were tending at graze. These men, though unarmed, attempted to resist, and one of them was shot. The advance of our party had caught sight of the rebels as they went off with their booty, and hence the commotion above alluded to.

I did what I could for the poor fellow brought to me, but he was fast bleeding to death, and I told his friends that he had not many hours to live. They bore him away to his home, only a few houses off, and later on towards the evening the sounds of women wailing and beating their breasts announced that he was out of his suffering in this world. In the afternoon, Murád Ali and his brother Karím came to see me, and congratulate us on having made the journey so far in safety. The former said that had he met these people he must have fought them; and as they were much stronger than his own force in numbers, he could not have driven them off without loss. His party with us consisted of sixty horsemen, and a hundred and twenty *sarbáz;* whilst the rebels were reckoned at four hundred, all mounted on hardy and active Arab mares.

Before leaving, Murád Ali produced a paper for me to sign. It was written in Persian, and was to the purport that he had escorted my party in safety and comfort from Pul Zuháb to the Turkish outpost at Khánakín. I

returned the paper, saying I was quite satisfied with the escort to this, and would sign it on arrival at Khánakín. He here explained that he could not enter the Turkish outpost with us, and I could not sign it on the road. To this I replied, that there could be no difficulty on that score, as I carried pen and ink with me, and would sign it on the road outside the Turkish post. He looked rather disappointed, so I told Shukrullah Beg to explain in a friendly way that I could not certify to a service as completed when it was only half accomplished.

I then presented him with a telescope, and his brother with a revolver, explaining that I should not have an opportunity on the road of offering these tokens of my thankfulness for his kindness, and also begged he would allow me to make a small present in money to each of the *sarbáz* who had formed our escort. This last arrangement was objected to on the score of its being contrary to custom, but the objection was readily withdrawn on my representing it as an exceptional case. They both seemed well pleased, and after arranging that we should start at midnight, took their leave, and as a last request begged that I would not move till they came for me, and I promised compliance.

28*th June*.—Casri Shirin to Khánakín, twenty-four miles. We were ready at the appointed hour, but our escort did not make their appearance till after one o'clock, and it was nearly two A.M. before our party was arranged in marching order and finally started. Our route at first was across a rough raviny tract along the course of the Alwand river, and then for several miles over a wild and hummocky country, which had frequently been raided by the rebels. We were hurried across this bit of the road very quickly, as it was feared the enemy might be concealed amongst the inequalities of the ground on

either hand, and it was as much as our *sarbáz* could do to keep pace with us, though they trotted along manfully.

Soon after the day had broken, and as the rising sun was slanting rays of light upon the country, dimly visible in the departing obscurity, we came upon the wreck of the *káfila* that had been plundered yesterday. The road was strewed with bits of paper and cardboard boxes, and on either side lay deal boxes smashed to pieces, and tin cases torn open. Our *sarbáz* hastily ransacked these, and ran along bearing cones of loaf-sugar under their arms and bottles of claret stowed away in their coat fronts. Some got hold of packets of letter-paper, and others of boxes of French *bonbons*. As we got on, tiring of their loads, they hid them away under roadside bushes, to take them up again on their return.

At about sixteen miles we came to the Turko-Persian boundary, marked by a bare gravelly ridge, slightly more elevated than the others, that form the most characteristic feature of the country. Here the commandant, Murád Ali, with the escort of *sarbáz*, took leave of us. He produced the paper he showed me yesterday, and asked me to sign it, saying his brother, Karím Khan, with the sixty horsemen, would see us safe into Khánakín. "Then," said I, "make the paper over to him, and I will sign it there." He readily assented, and accompanied us to the foot of the slope, and then shaking hands, galloped back to his *sarbáz* on the crest of the ridge.

We had proceeded about three miles over a gently falling country, thrown into mounds and ridges of bare gravel, and I was in interesting converse with some Bukhara pilgrims on their way to Karbalá, who had joined our party at Casri Shirin, when some signs made by our advanced horsemen from an eminence ahead of

our path made Karím Khan mass us all together and push on at a trot. "Has anything been seen?" I asked as we trotted along amidst the dreadful clatter of our mules, who seemed to scent danger instinctively, and quickened their pace with an alacrity I would not have given them credit for. "Yes," he said, "the enemy are on our flank. Their scouts have been seen." A little farther on we caught sight of them. "There they are," said Karím Khan, pointing to a knot of twelve or fourteen horsemen about a mile and a half off, as they passed across a bit of open ground from the shelter of one mound to the concealment of another. "There are only a dozen of them," I said; "they cannot harm us." "That 's all you see, but there are four hundred of them behind those knolls. There is a *káfila* coming out from Khánakín now, and they are lying in ambush for it. We shall not get back to Casri without a fight."

Farther on we saw another party of these robbers skulking behind the mounds a mile or two off the road to the left. But we had now come in sight of Khánakín. A party of five or six Turkish cavalry with their red caps stood out against the sky on a mound to the right, and a similar party did the same on a mound to the left. A mile or two ahead appeared the green gardens of Khánakín and Hájí Cara, and on the plain outside stood the snow-white tents of a regiment of Turkish infantry.

Karím Khan's horsemen reined up on some rising ground to the right to await the coming *káfila*, and the Khan himself, dismounting, said he would here take leave of me. I thanked him for his service, signed his paper, shook hands, and with a "*Khudá háfiz!*" ("God your protector!"), mounted and proceeded. As we entered Khánakín a large caravan filing out took the road we had come. Some of the camels were beautiful creatures,

and perfectly white. Behind them followed a long string of pannier-mules, with their freight of fair Persians, and on either side marched a gay cavalcade of Persian gentlemen. Bringing up the rear was a mixed crowd of more humble travellers, menials, and beggars.

They filed by, and we found ourselves before a great *sarae*. Here some Turkish officials took possession of us, ushered us within its portals, and informed us the quarantine would last ten days. We were prepared for this delay, although we had cherished the hope that a clean bill of health might pass us through without detention. But the rules were strict, and rigidly observed; we had come from an infected country, and were consequently pronounced unclean, and only the quarantine could cleanse us.

It was very cruel, and a sad disappointment, after our long and wearisome marches to catch a particular steamer, to be here baffled at the very threshold of our success. There was no hope of release. I saw the Basrah packet steaming away in the distance, and myself left on the shore; so resigned myself to the hard logic of facts, and heartily hoped that at least one of the members of that great congress of European medical men who met at Constantinople to devise these traps might some day be caught in this particular snare of his own setting.

Looking around our prison-house, we found three or four parties of wretched, half-starved pilgrims detained here on their way to Karbalá. In their dirt and rags they were the very embodiment of poverty and misery. Turning from them to the quarters at our disposal, the revelation was still more disgusting. The place had not been swept for ages, and the floor was inches deep in filth and stable litter. The torments of the Mydasht Sarae came back vividly to my mind. It was impossible

for us to live here, so I asked to see the doctor in charge of the quarantine. "He died of fever ten days ago," said our janitor, "and his successor has not yet arrived." I was about to move out of the *sarae*, and pitch my tent outside, when a Residency *khavass*, who had been kindly sent forward from Baghdad by the Resident, Colonel C. Herbert, to meet me here and attend me on the journey onwards, made his appearance with a letter from his master. Ilyás, for such was his name—*Anglicè* Elias—hearing my orders to pitch the tents, here interposed a representation that the heat and dust outside would be unbearable, and sure to make us all ill. If permitted, he would secure us quarters in one of the gardens adjoining. By all means; and away he went on his errand. Presently he returned with a couple of Turkish officials, who heard our objections to the *sarae*, and at once led us off to a nice garden at a little distance, where we pitched our tents under the shade of some mulberry-trees. A guard of Turkish soldiers was placed round us to prevent communication with the townspeople, except through the appointed quarantine servants, and we were left alone to ourselves.

The Bukhara pilgrims who had joined our party at Casri Shirin, and who had slipped out of the *sarae* with our baggage, in hopes of sharing the garden and proceeding onwards with us, were discovered by the quarantine people, and marched back to their durance. Poor fellows! they pleaded hard to remain with us, and appealed to me to befriend them; and the quarantine inspector, who, I must record to his credit, did his utmost to make his disagreeable duty as little offensive as possible, promised they should accompany us on our departure hence.

There were three of these Bukhariots. One of them, Hakím Beg, a very intelligent young man of pleasing

manners, gave me some interesting information regarding his country. He told me he had set out from Bukhara five months ago with four other friends and two servants. Two of his party and one servant had died on the road through sickness. The other two and the servant were those I saw with him. From Karbalá it was their intention to go to Bombay, and thence home by Peshawar and Kabul.

He spoke in most favourable terms of the Russian rule in Turkestan, and said their government was just and popular. The Russian officials he described as kind and liberal, yet stern when necessary, and declared the people preferred them to their own rulers. There are about twenty thousand of the people of the country employed in the Russian service, civil and military, and there is a strong Russian force at Samarcand—twelve thousand men, he thought. When he left, an expedition had started eastward to subdue Khokand and Yárkand; and it was generally given out that in three years' time the Amir of Bukhara would resign his country to the Russians. There were, he reckoned, thirty thousand Persian captives, all Shia Muhammadans, in the country, which is extremely populous and fertile. Hundreds had been purchased from their owners and set at liberty by the Russians. The whole country, including Khiva, would very soon come under the Russian rule, and then all the captives held as slaves would be at once liberated. They number between fifty and sixty thousand. In ten years' time, he said, the Russians would march to India.

Our quarantine quarters in the garden are insupportably dull and insupportably hot. The thermometer at noon—it is suspended from the branch of a mulberry-tree over a little stream of water—ranged from 100° Fah. to 108° Fah. during the eight days of our stay here.

In the sun's rays, the mercury rises to 150° Fah., and at night has fallen so low as 64° Fah.

On the 2d July, a flight of locusts settled on the garden. The townspeople turned out with drums, and shouts, and stones; but their host was not materially diminished. Their jaws worked steadily with a sawing noise all night and all the next day, and then they flew away, leaving the garden a forest of bare sticks, and the ground thick with the leaves they had nibbled off. Apricot, peach, plum, pomegranate, apple and mulberry trees are cleared to the bark; and their boughs were weighed down with the load of the destroying host. The damage done must be very great. Not a particle of shade is left for us, and the heat is something dreadful.

6*th July*.—We were to have set out on our way this evening, but at the last moment were informed that our health papers would not be ready till the morning, so our departure is fixed for to-morrow evening. The doctor of the Turkish regiment here came to see us. He tells me that typhus fever is very prevalent in the town, and that one hundred and eighty people have died of it during the last three months. The Turkish troops here are a remarkably fine set of men. There is nothing like them in Persia. They wear the Zouave-pattern jacket, and baggy trousers, with the red cap. The uniform is white cotton, thick and strong, and spotless clean; their arms, the Enfield-pattern rifle and a sword-bayonet.

8*th July*—Khânakîn to Shahrabad or Sherabad, forty-five miles. Our health papers were brought to us yesterday afternoon, and we were once more free. The march was fixed for sunset, and our mules and baggage and servants were all ready to start at the appointed time, but there was some delay in the arrival of our

escort. Shukrullah Beg, who had become as helpless and discontented as any one of our party in the quarantine, now recovered his liberty, but not his former activity and *savoir faire*. He was out of his element amongst the Turks, and willingly resigned his office to the *khavass* Ilyás. The latter went off to the Turkish commandant, who had soon after our arrival been furnished with my passport from the Turkish minister at the Persian court, and after a long absence, returned with a party of nine Georgian horsemen, fine handsome fellows, dressed and equipped in their national costume and armour.

It was eight o'clock before we set out on our long night-march. The evening air was close, still, and oppressive. We wound our way through the bazars of Hájí Cara, passing its many cafés with their crowds of solemn-looking, silent Turks, puffing their long pipes and sipping their black coffee—the first characteristic of the new country we had entered; and crossing the river Alwand a little below a broken bridge, struck across some rough stony ground, crossed by several irrigation cuts, towards the high road, which we reached at three miles. The river Alwand is a branch of the Dyalla, and, where we crossed, was about forty yards wide and two feet deep, flowing in a clear stream over a pebbly bottom.

After reaching the main road, our route led south by west, over an undulating country, apparently uninhabited. At 3.45 A.M. we reached Kizil Rabát, the land gradually falling all the way. Here we changed our escort, and found a large party of the Khaleva rebels, who had recently been captured by the Turkish troops, and were now being conducted to Baghdad, there to answer for their misdeeds. The escort which here joined us had

under their charge as prisoner one Hátim Khan, chief of the Khaleva tribe of Hamávand Arabs. He was captured some days ago, shortly after our passage, near the Casri Shirin frontier, and was now being conveyed, as they told us, for execution to Baghdad. He was a powerfully-built, handsome young man, of about twenty-five years of age; and was accompanied by a servant, who walked by the side of his mule, and from time to time eased his master's position as much as his fetters would allow. The captive chief was mounted on a mule, his hands were manacled together in front, and his feet fettered together above the ankles under the saddle-girths. The position must have been most tiresome, and the captive was sometimes so overtaken by sleep, that he nearly fell off his seat, and was several times waked up by a sudden fall on the mule's neck.

From Kizil Rabát the road leads S.S.W over an undulating alluvial plain, up to a range of sandstone hills that separate it from Shahrabad. We crossed this range by a fairly good road, here and there passing over rocks by deep and narrow paths worn into their surface, and at seven o'clock reached the plain on the other side. Another hour and a half across a plain covered with scrubby vegetation brought us to Shahrabad, where we alighted at the *sarae*. I was so exhausted by the effects of the heat and confinement at Khánakín, and so thoroughly fatigued by the tedium of twelve and a half hours' march in the saddle, that, without waiting for refreshment, I stretched myself on the floor, pillowed my head on my elbow, and immediately sunk into unconsciousness.

About noon our baggage arrived, and, to our satisfaction, the mules were not nearly as jaded as we expected; so I gave the order to march at sunset for Bácúba. During the afternoon, the governor called to say that he

could not give us an escort, as all his horsemen were out in the district, owing to the disturbed state of the country. He promised, however, that the Kizil Rabát escort with their prisoner should accompany us in the evening.

This is a dirty little village, in the midst of a wide, thinly-peopled, and mostly desert plain. It is only 750 feet above the sea-level, and 290 feet lower than Khánakín, and at this season is a very hot place. We had the floor of our rooms sprinkled with water in the hopes of the evaporation reducing the temperature, but it did not fall below 98° Fah. during the whole day. The walls of the *sarae* and adjoining houses are lined with great piled-up heaps of storks' nests. Towards sunset the parent birds returned from the marshes with the evening meal for their young. Each bird, as it alighted on its nest, threw back its head, and made a loud clattering with its beak, and then disgorged a quantity of roots and worms, which the young ones gobbled up. It was a very singular sight. They all kept up a sort of dance upon the flat surface of the nest, their lanky legs being kept in the perpendicular by the flapping of half-stretched wings.

Whilst our baggage was being laden this evening, the keeper of the *sarae,* who gave his name as Abdurrazzác, came up to me for the customary present. I gave it him, and was turning away when he asked, "Is Akhún Sáhib still alive?"

"Whom do you mean?" I said, quite taken aback.

"The Akhún of Swát, Abdulghafúr, the hermit of Bekí," he replied.

"What do you know of him, and why ask me?" I inquired.

"I am a disciple of his," he replied, "and your people

tell me you have come from Peshawar, and know all about him. It is reported here that he is dead, and has been succeeded by his son Sayyid Mahmúd Badsháh, whose *karámát* (miraculous powers) are even more strongly developed than those of the father."

"It is six months," I said, "since I left Peshawar, and this is the first time I have heard the Akhún's name mentioned."

He then told me that there were about a dozen of his disciples (*murid*) in this town, and upwards of a thousand in Mosul, whence a sum of two thousand rupees is annually sent to Swát as tribute to the saint.

Our baggage filing out, I now mounted my horse, whilst my strange acquaintance, holding on to the stirrup on the off side, in sonorous tones repeated the Akhún's creed, "*Aut ul hádi, aut ul hacc; lais ul hádi illahú!*" ("Thou art the guide, thou art the truth; there is no guide but God!") I bade the stranger good evening, and went on, wondering at the strange adventures travellers meet with.

9th July.—Shahrabad to Bácúba or Yácúbia, thirty-two miles. We set out at half-past eight o'clock yesterday evening, and passing through the town, struck across a plain country much cut up by dry watercourses. As we left the town, some people at the gate warned us to be on the alert, as a *káfila* had been attacked and plundered the night before at four miles from Bácúba. Our escort consists of only five horsemen, with two others in charge of the Hamávand prisoner. Our own party, which consists of twenty-three baggage-mules, and as many followers, and a couple of riding-camels, accompanied by the Bukhara pilgrims, was here joined by an Arab Shekh with a patriarchal beard of snowy whiteness—an ideal Abraham, in fact—and five or six

other travellers on foot, who seized this opportunity of a safe conduct to Baghdad.

We had proceeded very quietly for about three hours, our eyelids becoming gradually weighed down by the weight of sleep, when we came to a deep water-cut. We followed the course of this for half an hour up to a bridge thrown across it. A gentle *whiseet-whiseet* was now and again heard to proceed from the bushes on the other side of the canal.

"That's an odd sound," I observed to Mr Rozario, who was riding by my side; "larks, I suppose, disturbed by the tinkling of our mule-bells."

"Yes, sir, it sounds like the voice of birds. There it is again, farther off."

The sounds ceased, we crossed the bridge and clearing a patch of thin brushwood, got on to a bit of plain country. It was just midnight, my horse was very tired, and his rider was very sleepy. So I drew aside to let the baggage get on, and dismounted to await my riding-camel in the rear of the column. Its saddle required a little adjusting, and all meanwhile went ahead except myself, the camel-driver, the *khavass* Ilyás, and one of our escort.

"All is ready," said Hydar Ali, the driver, and I took my seat behind him. The camel had just risen from the crouch, when there came the sound of a confused buzz of voices, and a quick rustling of footsteps on the hard plain behind us.

"Bang! bang!" from my attendants as they shot ahead full speed, shouting, "To the baggage!—quick! quick! to the baggage!" "Bang! bang!" again as they turned in their saddles and fired into our pursuers. And amidst a din of shouts and guttural sounds, I found myself joggled along at a pace equal to that of the horses. Two minutes

brought us to the baggage, all halted and clustered together in a packed mass. The escort came to the front, and with threats followed by shots, kept the robbers at bay, whilst their *cháwash* or officer had the baggage unladen and the loads piled in a semicircular breastwork, the mules ranged outside and the followers inside. All this was done with the rapidity of lightning, and in less time than it has taken me to describe it, we found ourselves, half a dozen horsemen, arms in hand, at either end of the breastwork, facing a party of thirty or forty Arab robbers at the edge of some brushwood not as many yards of.

"I know them," said the *cháwash*. "This is our only chance. If we move, they will shower their javelins amongst us and then rush in with their knives." "Bang! bang!" "Have a care! we mean to fight," shouted some of our party; and Ilyás answered their demands for the *zawwár Ajam* (Persian pilgrims) to be made over to them as their lawful prize, by the bold intimation that we were not pilgrims at all, but thirty Englishmen, all armed with rifles. The venerable old Shekh too put in a word, or rather many words, in a horribly harsh and savagely energetic language. What he said I don't know, but it led to a noisy and confused discussion amongst the robbers, who suddenly disappeared, leaving an ominous silence to puzzle us.

The night had now become dark, and the figures in front of us could no longer be traced, either by their movements or voices. Presently, whilst we were intently peering into the dim belt of bushes in front of us, a suppressed *whiseet-whiseet* was heard on the plain to our right. "Look out!" shouted our *cháwash* as he rushed from side to side to encourage his men; "they are on both our flanks. Don't fire now; wait till they come close,

and then shoot and use your swords." Another silence, and then faint sounds in front. "They are here," said two or three voices, and immediately a couple of shots turned our attention towards them, and we stood, pistols in hand, ready to meet a rush.

And so it went on for three hours, the *cháwash* now and again warning us to be on the alert, as the robbers reckoned on our becoming sleepy and careless in the silence. "They are not gone," he would shout, "let them see you are awake." And the warning seemed necessary, for our followers who were unarmed had quietly rolled themselves up in their blankets, and disposed themselves to sleep under the shelter of the baggage—a strange instance of oriental indifference and resignation to fate.

About three in the morning day began to dawn, and we found the bushes in our front empty, and discovered the cause of our safety in a dry water-cut running along their front. Two or three of our escort were sent out to reconnoitre the land, and finding all clear, we loaded the baggage and proceeded, after standing at bay upwards of three hours. "I see no signs of our firing having taken effect," I said to the *cháwash*. "No, thank God," he replied, "we did not wound any of them. If we had, they would have got reinforcements from the Arab camps around, and we should not have escaped their hands."

After proceeding a little way, we came to a deserted roadside *sarae*. "There," said the *cháwash*, "that's the place where these very robbers plundered a *káfila* only last night." A dead donkey with its pack-saddle lay under the shade of its walls, and we went past congratulating ourselves on our providential escape. Onwards our road went across a level country, well cultivated, and covered with villages and date-groves, the last a feature in the scene we had not before now met with.

We arrived at Bácúba at 8.30 A.M., and found quarters in the *sarae*, which we found full of bales of merchandise, mules, and travellers, Indians and Arabs, Persians and Turks, with African slaves not a few.

10*th July*.—Bácúba to Baghdad, forty miles. We set out from the *sarae* at 7.30 P.M. yesterday, and passing through the town, crossed the Dyalla river by a bridge of boats. On the farther side we were delayed a while for the completion of our escort, which is increased by two horsemen in addition to those who joined us at Shahrabad. On their arrival, our party was formed up into a close column, as the first sixteen miles of the road were considered dangerous. We came successively on three or four deep dry canals, and near each we were halted a few minutes whilst the horsemen went ahead to see there was no ambush.

A little after midnight we came to the Sarae Beni Sad. Here we found a party of twenty Hamavand horsemen, with some Turkish officials, going to Baghdad to answer for the misconduct of their tribe on the Casri Shirin frontier. Our escort with their prisoner joined them, and we proceeded with only two horsemen as escort and guides.

We passed several long strings of camels going on towards Bácúba, and three or four small parties of travellers. It was too dark to distinguish who they were, but the familiar sounds of Pushto so unexpectedly falling on my ears, roused me from the heaviness of an overcoming sleep, and I started into wakefulness just in time to satisfy myself that a party of Afghans of the Peshawar valley were passing us.

Later on, the day dawned, and the country gradually unfolded itself to our view. A vast plain, bare and uninhabited, spread before us, and a long green line of date-groves bounded the monotonous prospect ahead. The

fatigues of our long march now overburdened me with its accumulated load. Minutes seemed hours, and the last bit of our road seemed to grow longer the more we advanced upon it, and I thought we should never get over this ever-increasing plain.

At length the mud walls of Baghdad, its domes and its towers, came into view, and our flagging energies revived at the prospect of rest. The gilded dome and minars of the mosque of Kázamín overtopping an emerald bank of date-groves away to the right, had not for us the attraction that a couple of horsemen clad in white approaching from the city claimed. They were officials attached to the British Residency here, and came to announce that the Resident and a party of gentlemen had come out to meet us. Our fatigue vanished, and we pushed on with enlivened spirits to meet a hearty welcome from the Resident, Colonel C. Herbert, and the Residency Surgeon, Dr Colville, and the other gentlemen who were with them. It was the most agreeable incident of the whole march, and fittingly came in at its close.

We stayed six days at Baghdad, enjoying the kindest hospitality at the Residency. Its memory comes back with feelings of gratitude as the pleasantest interval in the whole of my long journey. We visited the "city of the Khalifs," its bazars and its public buildings, and in the salutations and friendly looks of Jew and Turk, Arab and Armenian, had ample evidence of the popularity of at least the British Resident. We witnessed a review of the Turkish troops—splendid men, admirably equipped and armed with the Snider pattern-breech-loader. Through the polite consideration of His Excellency Muhammad Kaúf Pasha, the governor of the province, we were enabled to visit the Admiralty workshops, the Ordnance stores, barracks, hospitals, and other military

establishments. The discipline, organisation, and thorough order pervading all departments took me completely by surprise; and but for the red cap everywhere, I might have thought myself in Europe inspecting the barracks of a French or German garrison town.

The barracks, a handsome pile fronting the river, had been built on the European model by a Belgian architect. The hospital, a commodious double-storied building on the opposite shore, was furnished with all the modern appliances of the Western institutions, under the supervision of French and Italian doctors. The messing and dieting of the men in barracks and in hospital were assimilated to the European system, and attracted my special attention, as so much simpler than, and superior to, the complex and inefficient arrangements that, subservient to the caste prejudices of the natives, are in vogue amongst the troops of our Indian army.

In the Ordnance department we were shown their breech-loading cannon and the arms of the cavalry—the Spencer rifle—and a six-shooting revolver on a new American principle, all turned out of the Government manufactory at Constantinople. We visited the School of Industry, in which nearly three hundred homeless boys are fed and clothed and sheltered by the profits on their own industry. And certainly the specimens of their handiwork shown to us spoke well as to their proficiency in the arts of weaving, printing, and carving. Some of the cabinetwork was of really superior finish, and the shoes made by them were not to be distinguished from those made in European shops.

We visited the jail, too, and saw a number of Hamavand and Arab prisoners, brethren of the ruffians through whom we had run the gantlet scathless, all heavily laden with chains—veritable chains, weighing sixty or

seventy pounds, coiled round their loins and limbs. The light of Western improvement had not yet shed its rays on this department; and we found the criminal savage, uncared for and filthy, crowded together in an open yard, weighed down by the load of their chains, and guarded by military sentries posted on the overlooking walls.

We left Baghdad, its delightful Residency and agreeable associations, on the 16th July, and steamed away at daylight down the river Tigris on board the *Dujla*. As the city disappeared behind us, with all I had seen fresh on my mind, I thought, "Surely 'the sick man of Europe' is convalescent; his neighbour, 'the sick man of Asia,' may ere long need the physician's aid."

At breakfast-time we passed the ruins of Ctesiphon; and at nightfall anchored midstream, owing to the shallowness of the river. At daylight we were away again down-stream, but two hours later stuck on a sand-bank. Got off at noon, to stick again a little lower down; and so on till nightfall, making very little progress. Heat intolerable, thermometer declines to come down below 110° Fah. upstairs or downstairs. Next day as bad as the day before. Sandbanks and heat equally obstructive and troublesome. At midday passed a town called Kút—the monotony of the journey relieved by Arab camps on either bank, and floating pelicans on the stream. Went ahead all night, and in the morning passed Azia, and during the day several other stations with Turkish garrisons, also Ezra's tomb, surmounted by a conspicuous blue-tiled dome.

River banks very low, and land beyond marshy and apparently below water-level, but covered with Arab camps, and vast herds of kine and buffaloes. Naked Arabs, boys and girls, disport on the shore, and plunge into the river to our amusement. Melon-rinds thrown

from the boat create frantic efforts for possession. Their mothers on the shore instantly slip out of their long loose shifts, and *in puris naturalibus* rush into the contest, to land some hundred yards below their clothing, with or without a prize.

Lower down the river, date-trees line the shores in never-ending succession, and seem to grow out of the water. At nightfall arrived at Márjil, and warped alongside a wharf built up of date-logs. Took in cargo all day, and in the evening steamed down to Basrah, and cast anchor near the mail-steamer *Euphrates*. Here we transhipped to the mail-steamer, and proceeding down the Persian Gulf, in due course arrived at Bombay. The heat in the Gulf! its bare recollection is enough to provoke a moisture of the skin. Happily I need not dwell on its memory. It is beyond the limits of my journey from the Indus to the Tigris.

APPENDIX.

A.

SYNOPTICAL GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY OF THE BRAHOE LANGUAGE.

THIS language is spoken throughout Balochistan as far west as Kej, Panjgúr, and Jalk, up to the borders of Sistan, and is written in the Persian character.

There is no inflection for gender or case. The plural is formed by the addition of *ák* if the singular ends in a consonant, as *kasar*, a road, *kasarák*, roads; of *k* alone if the singular ends in a vowel, as *urá*, a house, *urák*, houses—*húlí*, a horse, *húlík*, horses—*are*, a man, *arek*, men—*dú*, the hand, becomes *dík*, the hands; and of *ghák* if the singular ends in the mute *h*, as *bandah*, a man, *bandahghák*, men.

The cases are formed by the addition of certain distinguishing particles to the nominative, as is shown in the following typical forms of declension :—

SINGULAR.			PLURAL.		
Nom.	kasar	*a road.*	*Nom.*	kasarák	*roads.*
Gen.	kasarná	*of a road.*	*Gen.*	kasarákná	*of roads.*
Dat.	kasar e	*to a road.*	*Dat.*	kasarák e	*to roads.*
Acc.	kasar	*a road.*	*Acc.*	kasarák	*roads.*
Abl.	kasaryán	*from a road.*	*Abl.*	kasarakyán	*from roads.*
Voc.	ore kasar	*O road!*	*Voc.*	ore kasarák	*O roads!*

SINGULAR.			PLURAL.		
Nom.	urá	*a house.*	*Nom.*	urák	*houses.*
Gen.	uráná	*of a house.*	*Gen.*	urákná	*of houses.*
Dat.	uráte-e	*to a house.*	*Dat.*	urák e	*to houses.*
Acc.	urá	*a house.*	*Acc.*	urák	*houses.*
Abl.	urátyán	*from a house.*	*Abl.*	urákyán	*from houses.*
Voc.	ore urá	*O house!*	*Voc.*	ore urák	*O houses!*

SINGULAR.			PLURAL.		
Nom.	húlí	*a horse.*	*Nom.*	húlík	*horses.*
Gen.	húlíná	*of a horse.*	*Gen.*	húlíkná	*of horses.*
Dat.	húlíte-e	*to a horse.*	*Dat.*	húlík e	*to horses.*
Acc.	húlí	*a horse.*	*Acc.*	húlík	*horses.*
Abl.	húlítyán	*from a horse.*	*Abl.*	húlíkyán	*from horses.*
Voc.	ore húlí	*O horse!*	*Voc.*	ore húlík	*O horses!*

The dative affix of the last two declensions *te* really means *into;* the

simple affix *e* means *at, to*, and the forms *úráe* and *húlíe* are also used in this case.

	Singular.		Plural.	
Nom.	bandah	*a man.*	bandahghák	*men.*
Gen.	bandahná	*of a man.*	bandahghákná	*of men.*
Dat.	bandah e	*to a man.*	bandahghák e	*to men.*
Acc.	bandah	*a man.*	bandahghák	*men.*
Abl.	bandahyán	*from a man.*	bandahghákyán	*from men.*
Voc.	ore bandah	*O man!*	ore bandahghák	*O men!*

The singular *bandah* is often pronounced *bandagh*, and the plural *bandaghák.*

	Singular.		Plural.	
Nom.	arwat	*a woman.*	arwaták	*women.*
Gen.	arwatná	*of a woman.*	arwatákná	*of women.*
Dat.	arwat e	*to a woman.*	arwaták e	*to women.*
Acc.	arwat	*a woman.*	arwaták	*women.*
Abl.	arwatyán	*from a woman.*	arwatákyán	*from women.*
Voc.	ore arwat	*O woman!*	ore arwaták	*O women!*

There are several exceptions to these rules for forming the plural. Thus *már*, a boy, becomes *mák* for *márák*, boys—*bángo*, a cock, becomes *bángák*, cocks—*kochak*, a dog, becomes *kochaghák*, dogs, &c.

Nouns are qualified by an adjective set before them, and then declined as a compound word, as *chuno már*, a little boy—*chuno már ná*, of a little boy—*chuno mák*, little boys—*chuno mák e*, to little boys, &c., *sharo masar*, a good girl—*sharo masarák*, good girls, &c.

Degrees of comparison are expressed by the use of the ablative case with the positive, as *e juwán húlí are* (or *e*), that is a handsome horse—*dá juwán húlí asite*, this is a (more) handsome horse—*dá kul húlíyán juwán are* (or *e*), this is the handsomest of all the horses—*are arwatyán balo e* (or *are*), the man is larger than the woman—*arek arwatákyán balo arer*, men are larger than women—*bandaghák zorak arer, vale dá bandagh kulyán zorak asite*, the men are strong, but this man is stronger than all—*dáfk arwaták zorak arer, vale bandaghák zorak asitur*, these women are strong, but men are stronger—*hísun álhinyán khuben e*, gold is heavier than iron.

PRONOUNS.

The personal pronouns are *í*, I—*ná*, thou—*o*, he, she, or it ; their plurals are *nan*, we—*num*, ye—*ofk*, they.

The demonstrative pronouns are, proximate, *dá*, this—plural *dáfk*, these ; and remote, *e*, that—plural *efk*, those.

They are declined as follows :—

Personal Pronouns.

	Singular.		Plural.	
Nom. & Acc.	í	*I, me.*	nan	*we, us.*
Gen.	kaná	*of me, my.*	nanná	*of us, our.*
Dat.	kane	*to me.*	nane	*to us.*
Abl.	kanyán	*from me.*	nanyán	*from us.*

	Singular.			Plural.	
Nom. & Acc.	ní	*thou, thee.*	*Nom. & Acc.*	num	*ye, you,*
Gen.	ná	*of thee, thy.*	*Gen.*	numá	*of you, your.*
Dat.	ne	*to thee.*	*Dat.*	nume	*to you.*
Abl.	nyán	*from thee.*	*Abl.*	numyán	*from you.*

	Singular.			Plural.	
Nom. & Acc.	o	*he, she, it, him, her, it.*	*Nom. & Acc.*	ofk	*they.*
Gen.	oná	*of him, his, etc.*	*Gen.*	oftá	*of them, their.*
Dat.	ode	*to him, her, etc.*	*Dat.*	ofte	*to them.*
Abl.	odán	*from him, her, etc.*	*Abl.*	oftyán	*from them.*

Examples—*Urá kaná mur are*, my house is far off—*oná tuman khurk e*, his village is near—*húlík numá aráng arer?* where are your horses?—*iragh oftyán hallak*, take the bread from them—*nane dír hatbo*, bring us water.

The demonstrative pronouns are similarly declined.

	Singular.			Plural.	
Nom. & Acc.	dá	*this.*	*Nom. & Acc.*	dáfk	*these.*
Gen.	dáná	*of this.*	*Gen.*	dáftá	*of these.*
Dat	dáde	*to this.*	*Dat.*	dáfte	*to these.*
Abl.	dádán	*from this.*	*Abl.*	dáftyán	*from these.*

	Singular.			Plural.	
Nom. & Acc.	e	*that.*	*Nom. & Acc.*	efk	*those.*
Gen.	ená	*of that.*	*Gen.*	eftá	*of those.*
Dat.	ede	*to that.*	*Dat.*	efte	*to those.*
Abl.	edán	*from that.*	*Abl.*	eftyán	*from those.*

Examples—*Dá masar ená areghas íy e*, this girl is that man's sister—(the word *areghas* is here an inflected form of *are*, a man. In composition, where the nominative ends in a vowel, the particle *ghas*, and where in a consonant, the particle *as*, is added to distinguish the oblique case, or the accusative only)—*dáfk darakhták eftyán burzo asitur*, these trees are taller than those.

The possessive pronoun is expressed by the adjective *ten* or *tenat*, own, self, added to the several personal pronouns, and is regularly declined, singular and plural being the same, as *í ten*, I myself, *nan ten*, we ourselves, *ní ten*, thou thyself, *num ten*, you yourselves, *o ten*, he himself, *ofk ten*, they themselves.

	Singular.			Plural.	
Nom. & Acc.	í ten	*myself.*	*Nom. & Acc.*	nan ten	*ourselves.*
Gen.	í tenná	*of myself.*	*Gen.*	nan tenná	*of ourselves.*
Dat.	í tene	*to myself.*	*Dat.*	nan tene	*to ourselves.*
Abl.	í tenyán	*from myself.*	*Abl.*	nan tenyán	*from ourselves.*

And so on with the other personal pronouns above mentioned.

Examples—*Ílum kaná tenat kárem kare*, my brother did the work himself—*í tenná zaghm are*, it is my own sword—*efk bandaghák tenpa-ten jang kerá*, those men are quarrelling amongst themselves.

The interrogative pronouns are *der*, who?, the same in the singular and plural, and applied only to animate objects, and *ant*, which? and *ará*, what? used in both numbers, but only applied to inanimate objects. The first is declined regularly. The others are indeclinable.

SINGULAR AND PLURAL.

Nom. & Acc.	der	*who? whom?*	*Dat.*	dere	*to whom?*
Gen.	dinná	*of whom? whose?*	*Abl.*	deryán	*from whom?*

EXAMPLES—*Dá bandagh der are?* who is this man?—*dinná már are?* whose son is he?—*ní ant cóm asitus?* of which tribe are you?—*dá kasar ará tuman te káek?* to which camp does this road go? *Ará* is also used as a relative pronoun, with *hamo* as its correlative, as *ará ki sharo e hamo halbo, ará ki gando e hamo gum kar,* whichever is good, that bring; whichever is bad, that throw away.

There are besides a number of adjective pronouns. Those in common use are the following:—*Pen,* another, *har pen,* every other, *ant pen,* which other. Example—*kaná ílum afas pen bandagh asite,* he is not my brother, he is some other man. *Ákhadr,* as much as, *hamo khadr,* so much, *dá khadr,* this much. Example—*ákhadr ki darkár e hamo khadr haltak,* as much as is necessary, so much take. *Hamdún,* like as—so. Example—*hamdún ní us hamdún í ut,* like as thou art so am I. *Hamro,* what sort, as *dá hamro húlí are,* what sort of horse is this?

ADJECTIVES.

The adjectives precede the nouns they qualify, and undergo no change for gender or number of case, as *húlan are,* a stout man—*húlan arwat,* a stout woman. Some adjectives are modified by the addition of certain particles denoting either increase or diminution, as *sharo bandagh,* a good man; *sharangá bandagh,* a very good man—*chuno masar,* a little girl; *chunaká masar,* a very little girl.

VERBS.

The verbs appear to be more or less irregular in their paradigms. I had not sufficient opportunity to examine their structure on an extended scale, so as to reduce them to some form of classification, and the natives from whom I gathered my information regarding the language had no knowledge whatever of the rules guiding their speech. The different tenses offered in the following forms of conjugations have been derived from the replies to questions requiring answers in the present, past, and future respectively, through the medium of the Persian language, and I trust they may be found generally correct.

The infinitive ends in *ing,* and is often used as a verbal noun. Example—*jang kaning sharaf,* quarrelling is not good (or proper)—*rást páning shar e,* speaking the truth is good (or right). The infinitive sign is generally added to the root, which is the same as the imperative, as *hin,* go; *hining,* to go—*haraf,* ask; *harafing,* to ask. But there are many exceptions to this, as *bar,* come: *banina,* to come—*kar,* do: *kaning,* to do, &c.

Some verbs form the past tenses on a different root to that from which the present tenses are formed, as will be seen by the list of verbs given at the end of this paper. The rules might be easily worked out with a little leisure for their study.

Transitives are formed from intransitives by interposing *f* between the root and infinitive sign, as *khuling*, to fear; *khulfing*, to frighten —*harsing*, to change; *harsfing*, to alter—*túling*, to sit; *túlfing*, to seat, &c.

Causals are formed from these transitives by changing the *f* to *íf* or *ef*, as *khulfing*, to frighten; *khulífing*, to cause to frighten—*túlfing*, to seat; *túlífing*, to cause to seat, &c.

The paradigms of the substantive verb, and two intransitive and two transitive verbs, are here given as models for all other verbs. Irregularities are only to be ascertained by a practical acquaintance with the language, but they do not seem to be numerous.

The substantive verb *maning*, "to be or become," is thus conjugated:—

Infinitive Mood—maning—*to be.* *Agent*—manok—*becomer.*
Present Participle—are e—*being.* *Past Participle*—mas—*been.*

Imperative Mood.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
ní mares	*be thou.*	num mabo	*be you.*
o mare	*let him be.*	ofk marer	*let them be.*

Indicative Mood.

Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í ut	*I am.*	nan un	*we are.*
ní us	*thou art.*	num ure	*you are.*
o are-e	*he, she, it is.*	ofk arer-or	*they are.*

Aorist.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í asitut	*I may be.*	nan asitun	*we may be.*
ní asitus	*thou mayest be.*	num asiture	*you may be.*
o asite	*he, etc. may be.*	ofk asitor	*they may be.*

Imperfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í asut	*I was.*	nan asun	*we were.*
ní asus	*thou wast.*	num asure	*you were.*
o asak	*he, etc. was.*	ofk asor	*they were.*

Continuative Imperfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í masut	*I was being.*	nan masun	*we were being.*
ní masus	*thou wast being.*	num masure	*you were being.*
o masak	*he, etc. was being.*	ofk masor	*they were being.*

Perfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í masasut	*I have been.*	nan masasun	*we have been.*
ní masasus	*thou hast been.*	num masasure	*you have been.*
o masas	*he, etc. has been.*	ofk masasor	*they have been.*

Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í masunut	*I had been.*	nan masunun	*we had been.*
ní masunus	*thou hast been.*	num masunure	*you had been.*
o masune	*he, etc. has been.*	ofk masunor	*they had been.*

Future Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í marew	*I will be.*	nan maren	*we will be.*
ní mares	*thou wilt be.*	num marere	*you will be.*
o marek	*he, etc. will be.*	ofk marer	*they will be*

Future Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í marot	*I will have been.*	nan maron	*we will have been.*
ní maros	*thou wilt have been.*	num marore	*you will have been.*
o maroe	*he, etc. will have been.*	ofk maror	*they will have been.*

The intransitive verbs "to come" and "to go" are thus conjugated :—

Infinitive Mood—baning—*to come.* *Agent*—barok—*comer.*
Present Participle—bare—*coming.* *Past Participle*—bas—*come.*

IMPERATIVE MOOD.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
ní barak-bar	*come thou.*	num babo	*come you.*
o bare	*let him come.*	ofk barer	*let them come.*

INDICATIVE MOOD.

Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í bareva	*I am coming.*	nan barena	*we are coming.*
ní baresa	*thou art coming.*	num barere	*you are coming.*
o baro	*he, etc. is coming.*	ofk barera	*they are coming.*

Aorist.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í barew	*I may come.*	nan baren	*we may come.*
ní bares	*thou mayest come.*	num barere	*you may come.*
o barek	*he, etc. may come.*	ofk barer	*they may come.*

Imperfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í basut	*I came.*	nan basun	*we came.*
ní basus	*thou camest.*	num basure	*you came.*
o basak	*he, etc. came.*	ofk basor	*they came.*

Perfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í basasut	*I have come.*	nan basasun	*we have come.*
ní basasus	*thou hast come.*	num basasure	*you have come.*
o basas	*he, etc. has come.*	ofk basasor	*they have come.*

Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í basunut	*I had come.*	nan basunun	*we had come.*
ní basunus	*thou hadst come.*	num basunure	*you had come.*
o basune	*he, etc. had come.*	ofk basunor	*they had come.*

Future Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í barew	*I will come.*	nan baren	*we will come.*
ní bares	*thou wilt come.*	num barere	*you will come.*
o barek	*he, etc. will come.*	ofk barer	*they will come.*

Future Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í barot	*I will have come.*	nan baron	*we will have come.*
ní baros	*thou wilt have come.*	num barore	*you will have come.*
o baroe	*he, etc. will have come.*	ofk baror	*they will have come.*

The verb "to go":—

Infinitive Mood—hining—*to go.* *Agent*—hinok—*goer.*
Present Participle—káe—*going.* *Past Participle*—hiná—*gone.*

IMPERATIVE MOOD.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
ní hinak-hin	*go thou.*	num hinbo	*go you.*
o káe	*let him, etc. go.*	ofk kára	*let them go.*

INDICATIVE MOOD.

Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í káwa	*I am going.*	nan kána	*we are going.*
ní kása	*thou art going.*	num káre	*you are going.*
o káe	*he, etc. is going.*	ofk kára	*they are going.*

Aorist.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í káw	*I may go.*	nan kán	*we may go.*
ní kás	*thou mayest go.*	num káre	*you may go.*
o káek	*he, etc. may go.*	ofk kár	*they may go.*

Imperfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í hinát	*I went.*	nan hinán	*we went.*
ní hinás	*thou wentest.*	num hináre	*you went.*
o hinák	*he, etc. went.*	ofk hinár	*they went.*

Perfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í hinásut	*I have gone.*	nan hinásun	*we have gone.*
ní hinásus	*thou hast gone.*	num hinásure	*you have gone.*
o hinásas	*he, etc. had gone.*	ofk hinásor	*they have gone.*

Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í hinánut	*I had gone.*	nan hinánun	*we had gone.*
ní hinánus	*thou hadst gone.*	num hinánure	*you had gone.*
o hináne	*he, etc. had gone.*	ofk hinánor	*they had gone.*

Future Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í káw	*I will go.*	nan kán	*we will go.*
ní kás	*thou wilt go.*	num káre	*you will go.*
o káek	*he, etc. will go.*	ofk kár	*they will go.*

Future Past.

Singular.		*Pural.*	
i kot	*I will have gone.*	nan kon	*we will have gone.*
ni kos	*thou wilt have gone.*	num kore	*you will have gone.*
o koe	*he, etc. wilt have gone.*	ofk kor	*they will have gone.*

The above may be taken as examples of all intransitive verbs. But the different roots for the present and past tenses can only be acquired by practice.

The transitive verbs "to do" and "to beat" are thus conjugated.

The verb "to do or make."

Infinitive Mood—kaning—*to do, make.* *Agent*—karok—*doer, maker.*
Present Participle—ke—*doing.* *Past Participle*—kar—*done.*

Imperative Mood.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
ni karak-kar	*do thou.*	num kabo	*do you.*
o ke	*let him, etc. do.*	ofk kera	*let them do.*

Indicative Mood.

Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
i keva	*I am doing.*	nan kena	*we are doing.*
ni kesa	*thou art doing.*	num kere	*you are doing.*
o ke	*he, etc. is doing.*	ofk kera	*they are doing.*

Aorist.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
i kev	*I may do.*	nan ken	*we may do.*
ni kes	*thou mayest do.*	num kere	*you may do.*
o kek	*he, etc. may do.*	ofk ker	*they may do.*

Imperfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
i karet	*I did.*	nan karen	*we did.*
ni kares	*thou didst.*	num karere	*you did.*
o karek	*he, etc. did.*	ofk karer	*they did.*

Perfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
i karesut	*I have done.*	nan karesun	*we have done.*
ni karesus	*thou hast done.*	num karesure	*you have done.*
o karesas	*he, etc. has done.*	ofk karesor	*they have done.*

Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
i karenut	*I had done.*	nan karenun	*we had done.*
ni karenus	*thou hadst done.*	num karenure	*you had done.*
o karene	*he, etc. had done.*	ofk karenor	*they had done.*

Future Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
i kev	*I will do.*	nan ken	*we will do.*
ni kes	*thou wilt do.*	num kere	*you will do.*
o kek	*he, etc. will do.*	ofk ker	*they will do.*

Future Past.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
í karot	*I will have done.*	nan karon	*we will have done.*
ní karos	*thou wilt have done.*	num karore	*you will have done.*
o karoe	*he, etc. will have done.*	ofk karor	*they will have done.*

The verb "to beat or strike."

Infinitive Mood—khaling—*to beat.* *Agent*—khalok—*beater.*
Present Participle—khale—*beating.* *Past Participle*—khalk—*beaten.*

Imperative Mood.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
ní khalt	*beat thou.*	núm khalbo	*beat you.*
o khale	*let him beat.*	ofk khalera	*let them beat*

Indicative Mood.

Present.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
í khaleva	*I am beating.*	nan khalena	*we are beating.*
ní khalesa	*thou art beating.*	num khalere	*you are beating.*
o khale	*he, etc. is beating.*	ofk khalera	*they are beating.*

Aorist.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
í khalev	*I may beat.*	nan khalen	*we may beat.*
ní khales	*thou mayest beat.*	num khalere	*you may beat.*
o khalek	*he, etc. may beat.*	ofk khaler	*they may beat.*

Imperfect.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
í khalet	*I beat.*	nan khalken	*we beat.*
ní khalkes	*thou beatest.*	num halkere	*you beat.*
o khalk	*he, etc. beat.*	ofk khalker	*they beat.*

Perfect.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
í khalesut	*I have beaten.*	nan khalesun	*we have beaten.*
ní khalesus	*thou hast beaten*	num khalesure	*you have beaten.*
o khalesas	*he, etc. has beaten.*	ofk khalesor	*they have beaten.*

Past.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
í khalenut	*I had beaten.*	nan khalenun	*we had beaten.*
ní khalenus	*thou hadst beaten.*	num khalenure	*you had beaten.*
o khalene	*he, etc. had beaten.*	ofk khalenor	*they had beaten.*

Future Present.

	Singular.		*Plural.*
í khalev	*I will beat.*	nan khalen	*we will beat.*
ní khales	*thou wilt beat.*	num khalere	*you will beat.*
o khalek	*he, etc. will beat.*	ofk khaler	*they will beat.*

Future Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í khalot	*I will have beaten.*	nan khalon	*we will have beaten.*
ní khalos	*thou wilt have beaten.*	num khalore	*you will have beaten.*
o kaloe	*he, etc. will have beaten.*	ofk khalor	*they will have beaten.*

The passive voice of transitive verbs is formed by conjugating the past participle with the substantive verb *maning*, "to be." Thus :—

Infinitive Mood—khalk maning—*to be beaten.*
Present Participle—khalk are—*being beaten.*
Past Participle—khalk mas—*been beaten.*

IMPERATIVE MOOD.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
ní khalk mares	*be thou beaten.*	num khalk mabo	*be thou beaten.*
o khalk mare	*be he, etc. beaten.*	ofk khalk marer	*be they beaten.*

INDICATIVE MOOD.

Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í khalkut	*I am beaten.*	nan khalkun	*we are beaten.*
ní khalkus	*thou art beaten.*	num khalkure	*you are beaten.*
o khalk are-e	*he, etc. is beaten.*	ofk khalkarer	*they are beaten.*

Imperfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í khalk asut	*I was beaten.*	nan khalk asun	*we were beaten.*
ní khalk asus	*thou wast beaten.*	num khalk asure	*you were beaten.*
o khalk asak	*he, etc. was beaten.*	ofk khalk asor	*they were beaten.*

Perfect.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í khalk masasut	*I have been beaten.*	nan khalk masasun	*we have been beaten.*
ní khalk masasus	*thou hast been beaten.*	num khalk masasure	*you have been beaten.*
o khalk masas	*he, etc. has been beaten.*	ofk khalk masasor	*they have been beaten.*

Past.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í khalk masunut	*I had been beaten.*	nan khalk masunun	*we had been beaten.*
ní khalk masunus	*thou hadst been beaten.*	num khalk masunure	*you had been beaten.*
o khalk masune	*he, etc. had been beaten.*	ofk khalk masunor	*they had been beaten.*

Future Present.

Singular.		*Plural.*	
í khalk marew	*I will be beaten.*	nan khalk maren	*we will be beaten.*
ní khalk mares	*thou wilt be beaten.*	num khalk marere	*you will be beaten.*
o khalk marek	*he, etc. will be beaten.*	ofk khalk marer	*they will be beaten.*

The other tenses can be supplied from the paradigm of the substantive verb. Negation is expressed by interposing *f* or *af* between the first two syllables of the verb, as *bafarew*, I will not come—*kafarek*,

he did not do it—*í khor afut*, I am not blind—*dá kárem o hech gáhas kafarot*, he will never have done this deed—*ní tifes*, thou wilt not give? Prohibition is expressed by *na* or *ma*, don't, placed before the imperative, as *na kar*, do not—*ma khalt*, do not beat. But the *f* is also used in an imperative sense, as *nájor mafarew*, may you not be ill—*pa*, speak; *paf*, don't speak—*ka*, do; *kafa* or *kapa*, don't.

With nouns negation is expressed by *afak* added to the word, as *jor-afak*, not well, sick—*nyám-afak*, not justice, unjust—*zor afak*, not strong, weak.

ADVERBS.

The adverbs are very numerous, and include interjections and prepositions. The adverbs of time are the following and others:—

dásá, *now.*
gurá, *then.*
gáhas, *never.*
padá, *again.*
zú, *quickly.*
madá, *slowly.*
wakhtí, *early.*
madáná, *late.*
uá gumán, *suddenly.*
har-vakht, *always.*
hech-vakht, *at no time.*
gáhas, *ever.*
chi-vakhtas-ki, *when.*
hamo-vakht, *then.*
asi-asi-vakht, *sometimes*
harde, *every day.*
asit-jár, *once.*
irat-jár, *twice.*
musit-jár, *thrice.*
báz-jár, *often.*
ewáde, *formerly.*
awal, *at first.*
ákhir, *at last.*
begáh, *this evening.*
ano, *to-day.*
pagáh, *to-morrow.*
palme, *day after to-morrow.*
kúde, *three days hence.*
daro, *yesterday.* [*day.*
mulkhudo, *day before yester-*
kúmulkhudo, *three days ago*
ano-nan, *to-night.*
manjan, *midday.*
ním-shab, *midnight.*
peshín, *forenoon.*
dígar, *afternoon.*

The adverbs of place are the following and others:—

burzá, *above.*
shef, *below.*
mustí, *before*
padáe, *behind.*
tahtí, *inside.*
peshán, *outside.*
khurk, *near.*
mur, *far.*
dáde, *here.*
ede, *there.*
jáaski, *where.*
ere, *there.*
aráde, *where?*
hamangi, *there.*
haráng, *as far as.*
aráká, *so far.*
moní, *opposite.*
to, *with.*
te, *in, up to.*
kátum, *on, upon.*
dápárán, *this side*
epárán, *that side.*
chármán, *all sides.*
antmur, *how far?*

The adverbs of quantity are the following and others:—

báz, *much, very many.*
machit, *little, few.*
hech, *none.*
girá, *some.*
bas, *enough.*
at, *how much?*
akhadr, *as much as.*
dákhadr, *so much.*
har, *every.*
bíra, *only, merely.*
har-ant, *whatever.*
hechrá, *nothing.*

Other adverbs are the following, conjunctions and interjections:—

antai, *why?*
ho-hán, *yes.*
ahá, *no.*
vale, *but.*
hamhon, *perhaps.*
ki, *that.*
are, *holloa!*
háeháe, *alas!*
wáwáh, *wonderful!*
armán, *pity!*
ham, *also.*
lekin, *but.*
gwáchání, *indeed!*
jágai, *instead of.*
mat, *leave off! don't!*
paráe, *for sake of.*
agar, *if.*
baghair, *except.*

The days of the week are the same as in Persian, and so are the cardinal numbers, with the exception of the first three. These are

asit, one; *irat*, two; *musit*, three. The rest are *chár*, four; *panj*, five, &c.

The ordinals and fractions are as follows :—

awal	*first.*	miscálí	*a quarter.*
elo	*second.*	ním	*half.*
mustímíko	*third.*	sihsháli	*three-quarters.*
chármíko	*fourth*, and so on.	panjpáo	*one and a quarter.*

BRAHOE VOCABULARY.

List of nouns in common use :—

Parts of the Body and Secretions.

kátum, *head.*
khopri, *skull.*
mili, *brain.*
chugh, *nape.*
gardan, *neck.*
likh, *throat.*
peshání, *forehead.*
khush, *temple.*
khaf, *ear.*
khan, *eye.*
bhirwá, *eyebrow.*
khannúsil, *eyelid.*
michách, *eyelash.*
did, *pupil.*
bámas, *nose.*
gránz, *nostril.*
kalak, *cheek.*
bá, *mouth.*
jur, *lip.*
zanú, *chin.*
duví, *tongue.*
gutulú, *gullet.*
dandán, *tooth.*
dandánnású, *gum.*
mon, *face.*
badan, *body* (*also* ján).
churoh, *urine.*
kiriftí, *dung* (*also* phí).
kísh, *matter, pus.*
tús, *flatus.*

nargat, *windpipe.*
sína, *chest.*
khad, *breast.*
gwar, *nipple.*
kopá, *shoulder.*
pitakh, *bladebone.*
tarkh, *armpit.*
pahlú, *rib, flank.*
baj, *back.*
mukh, *loin.*
saghas, *buttock.*
phid, *belly.*
phút, *navel.*
land, *penis.*
gund, *testicle.*
phundú, *anus.*
phús, *vulva.*
rán, *thigh.*
kach, *hip.*
khond, *knee.*
dhakan, *kneecap.*
pinní, *leg.*
phenj, *calf.*
nat, *foot.*
kurí, *heel.*
mijol, *ankle.*
had, *bone.*
ríish, *beard.*
burút, *mustache.*
píshkav, *ringlet.*

talaf, *sole.*
dú, *arm.*
surosh, *elbow.*
tút, *cubit.*
chamba, *wrist* (*also* kar)
dú, *hand.*
talaf, *palm.*
úr, *finger, toe.*
zíl, *nail.*
phif, *lung.*
ust, *heart.*
phid, *somach.*
rotíng, *intestines.*
jagar, *liver.*
zák, *gall bladder.*
zardoí, *gall, bile.*
diloí, *spleen.*
gurda, *kidney.*
pujhá, *hair.*
sil, *skin.*
sú, *flesh.*
tuzmí, *fat.*
ditar, *blood.*
páhlt, *milk.*
túfing, *spittle.*
kháríngk, *tears.*
khet, *sweat.*
khel, *fever.*
zindá, *alive*
kask, *dead.*

Nouns of Relationship, &c.

bandagh, *man.*
zá'ífa, *woman.*
are, *husband.*
arwat, *wife.*
már, *son.*
masar, *daughter.*
khadyá, *babe.*
chunaká, *child.*

báv, *father.*
lummá, *mother.*
ílum, *brother.*
ír, *sister.*
bává, *father!*
ái, *mother!*
adá, *brother!*
adí, *sister!*

brázát, *brother's child.*
khwárzát, *sister's child.*
pejhzát, *cousin.*
illa, *paternal uncle and aunt.*
táta, *maternal uncle and aunt.*
píra, *grandfather.*
balla, *grandmother.*
nwása, *grandchild.*

Names of Ornaments, Clothing, &c.

saht, *ornament.*
tábíz, *charm.*
chhalav, *signet-ring.*
tik, *seal.*
panra, *ear-ring.*
lik, *ear-drop.*
phulo, *nose-ring.*
durr, *pearl ring.*
jamak, *gold ring.*
dáwaní, *frontlet.*
tauc, *necklet.*
chandanhár, *necklace.*
daswána, *armlet.*
báhínk, *bracelet.*
kanganr, *wristlet.*
pádínk, *anklet.*
khál, *mole.*
surma, *eye-black.*
shefk, *eye-black pin.*
món-rukh, *mirror.*
zulf, *curl.*
gesú, *ringlet.*
rez, *plait.*
gud, *clothes.*
kús, *shirt.*
kás, *blanket felt.*
sharwál, *trousers.*
chokhá, *cloak.*
postín, *fur coat.*
khyrí, *waist mantle*
mukhtá, *waist sash.*
top, *cap.*
dastár, *turban.*
mocharí, *shoe.*
litar, *slipper.*
moza, *boot.*
chhawat, *sandal.*
dasgala, *glove.*
khout, *blanket.*
thappur, *rug.*
khat, *bed.*
lehf, *coverlet.*
cudh, *sheet.*
bálisht, *pillow.*
bhop, *mattress.*
shál, *shawl.*
katúr, *mat.*
kónt, *carpet.*
berum, *bedding.*
urú, *house.*
kúdí, *shed.*
biht, *wall.*
bám, *roof.*
darich, *door.*
daricha, *window.*
hawelí, *court.*
barám, *marriage.*
dishtár, *bride.*
náo-zámás, *bridegroom.*
mahr, *dowry.*

Household Stores and Domestic Utensils.

ghalla, *corn.*
nut, *flour.*
pirísh, *lentils.*
birinj, *rice.*
bat, *cooked rice.*
kholum, *wheat.*
sá, *barley.*
makaí, *Indian corn, maize.*
zúrat, *millet.*
júárí, *millet.*
phug, *wheat straw.*
karab, *maize straw.*
liz, *rice straw.*
tambákh, *tobacco.*
dár, *wood.*
khushád, *cow-dung.*
pogh, *charcoal.*
kulf, *lock.*
kilíd, *key.*
zamzír, *chain.*
chirágh, *candle.*
hedr, *turmeric.*
beh, *salt.*
pilpil, *pepper.*
pímáz, *onions.*
thúm, *garlic.*
lawang, *cloves.*
zíra, *caraway.*
mavíz, *raisins.*
tel, *oil.*
hormag, *dates.*
íragh, *bread.*
khassí, *butter.*
sí, *fat, tallow.*
gharesh, *melted butter.*
páhlt, *milk.*
dahí, *curds.*
purwáhlt, *whey* (?)
pachíruk, *cream* (?)
panír, *cheese.*
cúrút, *hard cheese.*
khásun, *buttermilk.*
khúlí, *corn-bin.*
nuskhal, *hand-mill.*
túra, *basket.*
loth, *bag.*
khárí, *hamper.*
gothrí, *sack.*
chhara, *bucket.*
dillo, *water-jar.*
khallí, *jar.*
kunza, *flagon.*
kásagh, *bowl.*
bhatal, *big bowl.*
tás, *cup.*
símí, *copper tray.*
karsán, *wooden dish.*
loí, *pot.*
kuno, *large pot.*
kho, *saucepan.*
garoh, *earthen jar.*
kúlik, *pail or pan.*
kalind, *earthen pot.*

Domestic Animals and Implements.

húli, *horse.*
mádyán, *mare.*
naryán, *stallion.*
kurra, *colt.*
litík, *tail.*
buchk, *mane.*
búz, *muzzle.*
lidh, *dung.*
húch, *camel.*
bísh, *ass.*
khachar, *mule.*
dhaggí, *cow.*
rorh, *calf.*
kárígar, *bull.*
kharás, *ox.*
mehí, *buffalo cow.*
gosála, *buffalo calf.*
sánda, *buffalo bull.*
máe-khad, *udder.*
mat, *he-goat.*
het, *she-goat.*
daggar, *kid* (*also* bahí).
bakhta, *ram.*
mir, *ewe.*
súr, *lamb.*
khur, *sheep.*
shwánagh, *shepherd.*
ramagh, *herd, flock.*
ged, *sheepfold.*
surumb, *horse-hoof.*
shankala, *cloven hoof.*
kás, *wool.*
drasam, *goats' hair.*

bángo, *cock.*
kukur, *hen.*
chúrí, *chicken.*
byda, *egg.*
para, *feather* (also *path*).
bánzil, *wing.*
haddí, *spur.*
súnt, *beak.*
panja, *claw.*
gunjí, *crop.*
ojarink, *gizzard.*

kóchak, *dog.*
kútrí, *pup.*
pishí, *cat.*
hal, *rat.*
kapot, *pigeon.*
gunjishk, *sparrow.*
hílt, *fly.*
pasha, *musquito.*
munghí, *wasp* (?)
makish, *bee.*
shahd, *honey.*

angumen, *honeycomb.*
mom, *wax.*
kak, *flea.*
bor, *louse.*
rishk, *a louse-nit.*
mangur, *bug.*
jolágh, *spider.*
phú, *worm.*
poghut, *frog.*
telt, *scorpion.*
morink, *ant.*

Agriculture and Implements.

curda, *field.*
dagár, *land.*
mish, *earth.*
lichakh, *mud.*
khal, *stone.*
phud, *clod.*
chhib, *turf.*
langár, *plough.*
khamir, *share* (*also* phalí).
jugh, *yoke.*
bel, *spade.*
lashí, *sickle.*
khen, *harrow.*
chárchak, *pitchfork.*
mála, *roller.*
dhún, *well.*

sálí, *rice field.*
kholum, *wheat.*
sá, *barley.*
makaí, *maize.*
zúrat, *millet.*
pirísh, *millet.*
kunjid, *sesame.*
karpás, *cotton plant.*
gogra, *cotton pod.*
kakra, *cotton seed.*
pumba, *cotton wool.*
uspust, *lucerne.*
roding, *madder.*
rambí, *hoe.*
khashád, *manure* (?)
jal, *rivulet.*

hilár, *date tree.*
ták, *vine.*
angúr, *grape.*
sóf, *apple.*
bihí, *quince.*
zardálu, *apricot.*
alúcha, *plum.*
shalgam, *turnip.*
gázir, *carrot.*
turb, *radish.*
karam, *cabbage.*
ság, *potherbs.*
kotíkh, *melon.*
pímáz, *onion.*
thum, *garlic.*
kárez, *aqueduct.*

Arms and Armour.

zaghm, *sword.*
ispar, *shield.*
nezagh, *spear.*
pát, *stick.*
lath, *club.*
hízak, *leather milk-churn.*

bil, *bow.*
sum, *arrow.*
kamánchol, *sling.*
katár, *knife.*
much, *fist.*
chágal, *leather water-bottle.*

tufak, *musket.*
kundágh, *stock.*
palíta, *match.*
bárút, *powder.*
mukh-taf, *belt.*
síkh, *ramrod.*

Elements and Minerals.

dharatí, *earth.*
hawá, *air.*
khákhar, *fire.*
dír, *water.*
hiss, *ashes.*
jhamjal, *flame.*
molh, *smoke.*
duhun, *soot.*
deí, *sun.*
túbe, *moon.*
istár, *star.*
jhamar, *cloud.*
phir, *rain.*
jur, *mist.*
barf, *snow.*
barfichk, *hail.*
shaonamba, *dew.*
yakh, *ice.*

pae, *thunder.*
breshná, *lightning.*
subh, *morning.*
manjan, *noon.*
shám, *evening.*
haft-de, *week.*
túwas, *month* (*also* tú)
sál, *year.*
attam, *spring.*
ahár, *summer.*
iricha, *autumn.*
suhel, *winter.*
sekha, *shade.*
phudí, *cold.*
basúní, *heat.*
mash, *mountain.*
lak, *mountain pass.*
darra, *defile.*

hísun, *gold.*
píhun, *silver.*
ahin, *iron.*
mis, *copper.*
surf, *lead.*
jist, *zinc.*
birinj, *brass.*
kalái, *tin.*
surma, *antimony.*
gokurt, *sulphur.*
phitkí, *alum.*
shora, *nitre.*
beh, *salt.*
totí, *blue vitriol.*
mush-kush, *arsenic.*
hartál, *orpiment.*
feroza, *turquoise.*
likh, *glass bead.*

táho, *wind.*
shamál, *north wind.*
uttar, *storm.*
lúr, *sand storm.*
shikh, *hill peak.*
talár, *hill slope.*
putáo, *hill skirt.*
chur, *gulley.*
símáb, *mercury.*
istar-khal, *flint.*
folád, *steel.*
chun, *lime.*

Arts and Instruments.

drakhan, *carpenter.*
tash, *adze.*
mekhchú, *hammer.*
ara, *saw.*
mochínak, *tweezers.*
kház, *shears.*
síla, *needle.*
dask, *thread.*
rez, *cord.*
cáynchí, *scissors.*
chit, *leather strap.*
áhingar, *blacksmith.*
zargar, *goldsmith.*
degdán, *furnace.*
dhamok, *bellows.*
sindán, *anvil.*
kudína, *hammer.*
mekh, *nail.*
para, *wedge.*
charkh, *grindstone.*
anbúr, *forceps.*
tafar, *hatchet.*
kumbár, *potter.*
lichak, *clay.*
charkh, *potter's wheel.*
mishí, *pottery.*
korí, *weaver.*
razán, *loom.*
iras, *comb.*
lorí, *musician.*
damáma, *drum.*
sittok, *dancer.*
shutár, *pipe.*

Natural Objects and Sentiments.

de, *sun.*
istár, *star.*
nokh, *new moon.*
túbe, *full moon.*
mash, *mountain.*
dan, *plain.*
chuk, *bird.*
darakht, *tree.*
khal, *rock.*
karod, *ravine.*
tang, *strait.*
jal, *river.*
chol, *desert.*
dam-diringun, *fatigue.*
khulisun, *fear.*
kuskun, *death.*
bíngun, *hunger.*
mulás, *thirst.*
phúdí, *cold.*
basúní, *heat.*
cahar, *anger.*
pashemání, *regret.*
gham, *sorrow.*
armán, *grief.*
pachár, *helplessness.*
faryád, *complaint.*
diláwarí, *courage.*
khúshí, *joy.*
lagorí, *cowardliness.*
thap, *wound.*
múch, *blow.*
dakka, *shove.*
ghut, *prod.*
chapánt, *slap.*
búz-halk, *kiss.*
tawár, *call.*
marán, *shout.*
hoghínk, *sobbing.*
makhínk, *laughing.*

Names of Trees and Plants.

tút, *mulberry.*
gwan, *pistacia.*
húpurs, *juniper.*
khat, *olive.*
písh, *dwarf-palm.*
hilár, *date-palm.*
kirrí, *tamarisk.*
kabbar, *salvadora.*
pissí, *jujube.*
khaler, *capparis.*
kharag, *calotropis.*
jawar, *oleander.*
jag, *poplar.*
marr, *mimosa.*
anjír, *fig.*
shark, *rhazzia.*
zámur, *mezereon.*
hom, *ephedra.*
nároin, *ephedra.*
musunduk, *liquorice* (?)
shámpastír, *indigo-fern*
shinz, *hedysarum.*
kotor, *wild almond.*
khardarnao, *artemisia.*
kisánkúr, *peganum.*
mungali, *salsola* (?)
lána, *caroxylon.*
búndí, *anabis* (?)
gomáz, *arundo.*
khásum, *andropogon.*
rítáchk, *spurge.*
shenálo, *caryophyllum.*
piplí.
panírband, *withiana.*
byh, *grass.*
mora, *dry lucerne.*

Names of Birds and Beasts.

chuk, *bird.*
kuttám, *nest.*
wacáb, *eagle.*
báz, *hawk.*
hil, *rook.*
kulágh, *crow.*
sher, *tiger.*
khalegha, *leopard.*
búm, *owl.*
kirkashí, *swallow.*
charz, *bustard.*
kapot, *pigeon.*
ginjishk, *sparrow.*
shákuk, *magpie.*
sínkúr, *porcupine.*
jajak, *hedgehog.*
kakáo, *partridge, Greek.*
hanj, *wild duck.*
murdárkhor, *vulture.*
bárú, *quail.*
cú, *swan*
kapínjar, *partridge.*
kúkam, *wild pig.*
harraf, *wild goat.*

kharmá, *wolf.*
kaftár, *hyena.*
tola, *jackal.*
shok, *fox.*
rich, *bear.*
bolú, *monkey.*
murrú, *hare.*
gorpat, *badger.*
nor, *mungoose.*
hal, *rat.*
sarkúk, *tortoise.*
shab-pirik, *bat.*
malakh, *locust.*
dúshá, *snake.*
kirráú, *lizard.*
tehlt, *scorpion.*
gorkhar, *wild ass.*
khazmú, *gazelle.*
math, *male márkhor.*
het, *female márkhor.*
khár, *wild sheep, male.*
gad, *wild sheep, female.*
shák, *horn.*
sil, *skin.*

Adjectives Commonly in Use.

mon, *black.*
píhun, *white.*
kharun, *green.*
khísun, *red.*
pushkun, *yellow.*
sámo, *grey.*
míl, *blue.*
chot, *crooked.*
rást, *straight.*
básun, *hot.*
phuden, *cold.*
bárun, *dry.*
pálun, *wet.*
murghun, *long.*
gwand, *short.*
kuchá, *broad.*
tang, *narrow.*
húlon, *thick.*
ushkon, *thin.*
tez, *sharp.*
kunt, *blunt.*
hukmatí, *obedient*
rást, *right.*
cháp, *left.*
mallók, *opener.*
sakht, *hard.*
khulkon, *soft.*
durusht, *rough.*
awár, *smooth.*
bíngún, *hungry.*
malás, *thirsty.*
wasum, *full.*
sun, *empty.*
khuben, *heavy*
subuk, *light.*
zaft, *quick.*
madám, *slow.*
báz, *much.*
machit, *little.*
balo, *large.*
chuno, *small.*
pír, *old.*
warná, *young.*
khad, *deep.*
shef, *shallow.*
arzán, *cheap.*
girán, *dear.*
jor, *well.*
nájor, *sick.*
taffók, *shutter.*
mutkun, *old.*
puzkun, *new.*
tárma, *dark.*
roshtírak, *bright.*
mur, *far.*
khurk, *near.*
sharo, *good.*
gando, *bad.*
bahádur, *bold.*
lagor, *timid.*
hanen, *sweet.*
kháren, *sour.*
talkh, *bitter.*
turun, *acrid.*
burzo, *tall.*
mandar, *short.*
khor, *blind.*
kar, *deaf.*
gánuk, *mad*
gung, *dumb.*
shifárk, *lean.*
húlan, *fat.*
mand, *lame.*
leláwí, *greedy.*
dhakkók, *hider.*

VERBS.

The verbs in common use are here given in alphabetical order. As a guide to conjugation on the paradigms already given, the forms of the root and present and past tenses are added. The imperative is in the second person plural, and the present and past tenses in the third person singular.

English.	Infinitive.	Imperative.	Present.	Past.
abandon	íling	ílbo *or* ílabo	íle *or* ílate	ílene *or* íl
abound	báz-maning	báz-mabo	báz-are	bás-mas
abuse	kiring	kiribo	kirite	kir
accept	haling	halbo	hale	halk
adhere	liching	lichibo	liche	lich
adorn	zeb-tining	zeb-tibo	tire	tis
allot	bakhshing	bakhshbo	bakhshe	bakhsh
alter	harsing	harsibo	harse	hars
arrive	rasing	rasibo	rase	ras
ask	harafing	harafebo	harafe	haraf
assault	hrúsh-kanning	hrúsh-kabo	hrúsh-ke	hrúsh-kar

ENGLISH.	INFINITIVE.	IMPERATIVE.	PRESENT.	PAST.
awake	bash-maning	bash-mabo	bash-are	bash-mas
await (*seek*)	húning	honbo	hore	hor
become	maning	mabo	are-e	mas
beat	khaling	khalbo	khale	khalk
beg	pin*d*ing	pin*d*bo	pin*d*e	pin*d*
begot, to be	vadí-maning	vadí-mabo	vadí-are	vadí-mas
begin	shurú-kaning	shurú-kabo	shurú-ke	shurú-kar
bend	*d*ol-kaning	*d*ol-kabo	*d*ol-ke	*d*ol-kar
bind	tafing	tafbo	tafe	taf
bite	daling	dalbo	dale	dal
bleat	laláring	lalárbo	laláre	lalár
blow	laging	lagbo	lage	lag
boil, a.	básing	básbo	báse	bás
boil, n.	joshing	joshbo	joshe	josh
braid	gofing	gofbo	gofe	gof
bring	hataring	hatbo	hate	hes
break	piraghing	pirabo	pire	piragh
breathe	uf-kaning	uf-kabo	uf ke	uf-kar
bring	haling	halbo	hale	halk
burn	hoshing	hoshbo	hoshe	hosh
burst	chiling	chilbo	chile	chil
bury	cabr-kaning	cabr-kabo	cabr-ke	cabr-kar
buy	saudá-haling	saudá-halbo	saudá-hale	saudá-halk
call	tawár-kaning	tawár-kabo	tawár-ke	tawár-kar
carry	daning	danbo	dare	dar
cast	bi*t*ing	bi*t*ibo	bi*t*e	bi*t*
carve	kishking	kishbo	kishe	kishk
catch	haling	halbo	hale	halk
clothe	berfing	berbo	berfe	berf
collect	much-kaning	much-kabo	much-ke	much-kar
come	baning	babo	bare	bas
conceal	dhaking	dhabo	dhake	dhak
cook	bising	biribo	bire	bis
copulate	haning	hanbo	hane	han
cough	jhaking	jhakabo	jhake	jhak
count	hisáb-kaning	hisáb-kabo	hisáb-ke	hisáb-kar
cover	dhaking	dhakbo	dhake	dhak
cry	hoghing	hoghbo	hoye	hogh
cut	haring	harbo	hare	har
dance	nách-kaning	nách-kabo	nách-ke	nách-kar
deceive	refing	refbo	refe	ref
die	kahing	kahbo	kahe	kah
dig	kad-khaling	kad-khalbo	kad-khale	kad-khalk
divide	bakhshing	bakhshbo	bakhshe	bakhsh
draw	kashing	kashbo	kashe	kash
dream	túgh-khaning	túgh-khanbo	túgh-khane	túgh-khan
drink	dír-kuning	dír-kubo	dír-kune	dír-kun
drop	chaking	chakbo	chake	chak
dwell	já-maning	já-mabo	já-are	já-mas
do	kaning	kabo	ke	kar
eat	kuning	kubo	kune	kun
endure	kashing	kashbo	kashe	kash
enter	tahtí-baning	tahtí-babo	tahtí-bare	tahtí-bas
escape	chhuting	chhutbo	chhute	chhut
empty	musun-kaning	musun-kabo	musun-ke	musun-kar
fall	taming	tambo	tame	tam
fear	khuling	khulbo	khule	khul
flee	nering	nerbo	nere	ner
fly	bál-kaning	bál-kabo	bál-ke	bál-kar
fight	jang-kaning	jang-kabo	jang-ke	jang-kar

English.	Infinitive.	Imperative.	Present.	Past.
fill	pur-kaning	pur-kabo	pur-ke	pur-kar
forbid	rad-kaning	rad-kabo	rad-ke	rad-kar
forget	yád-hining	yád-hirbo	yád-hire	yád-hir
forgive	bashking	bashkbo	bashke	bashk
forsake	íling	ílbo	íle	íl
frighten	khulífing	khulífbo	khulífe	khulíf
fry	bhugí-kaning	bhugí-kabo	bhugí-ke	bhugí-kar
follow	randat-hining	randat-hinbo	randat-káe	randat-hin
gallop	dudefing	dudefbo	dudefe	dudef
gather	much-kaning	much-kabo	much-ke	much-kar
get up	bash-maning	bash-mabo	bash-are	bash-mas
give	tining	tinbo or tibo	tire	tis
go	hining	hinbo	kae	hin
graze	khwáfing	khwáfbo	khwáfe	khwáf
grind	nusing	nusbo	nuse	nus
growl	báshághing	básházbo	báshághe	básházh
guess	samá-kaning	samá-kabo	samá-ke	samá-kar
hang	laronj-kaning	laronj-kabo	laronj-ke	laronj-kar
happen	taming	tambo	tame	tam
have	toning	tonbo	tore	ton
hear	bining	binbo	bire	bin
hide	dhaking	dhakbo	dhake	dhak
hold	toning	tonbo	tore	ton
hug	gwar-haling	gwar-halbo	gwar-hale	gwar-halk
inquire	harafing	harafebo	harafe	haraf
itch	kháring	kházbo	kháre	kházr
join	much-tining	much-tibo	much-tire	much tis
keep	nigáh-toning	nigáh-tonbo	nigáh-tore	nigáh-ton
kick	laghat-khaling	laghat-khalbo	laghat-khale	laghat-khalk
kill	kasfing	kasfebo	kasfe	kas
kiss	pak-tining	pak-tibo	pak-tire	pak-tis
kiss	buz-haling	buz-halbo	buz-hale	buz-halk
knead	much kaning (?)	much-kabo	much-ke	much-kar
know	sháhing	sházbo	sháhe	sházh
laugh	makhing	makhbo	makhe	makh
lay	túlfing	túlfebo	túlfe	túl
lead	duning	dunbo	dure	dur
leak	chutfing	chutfebo	chutfe	chut
learn	hífing	hífbo	hífe	híf
leave	íling	ílbo	íle	íl
let go	íla-kaning	íla-kabo	íla-ke	íla-kar
lie	drogh-páning	drogh-pabo	drogh-pare	drogh-par
lick	chating	chatebo	chate	chat
lift	hefing	hefbo	hefe	hef
light	roshtínk-tining	roshtínk-tibo	roshtínk-tire	roshtínk-tis
listen	khafing	khafbo	khafe	khaf
live	zind-maning	zind-mabo	zind-are	zind-mas
loathe	gando-daning	gando-danbo	gando-dare	gando-dar
lodge	jáeti-maning	jáeti-mabo	jáeti-are	jáeti-mas
look	khaning	khanbo	khane	khan
lose	gohing	gohebo	gohe	goh
make	kaning	kabo	ke	kar
marry	barám-kaning	barám-kabo	barám-ke	barám-kar
measure	dághing	dághebo	dághe	dágh
meet	huning	hunbo	hure	hur
mend	jor-kaning	jor-kabo	jor-ke	jor-kar
melt	dír-kaning	dír-kabo	dír-ke	dír-kar
milk	bhíring	bhírbo	bhíre	bhír
miss	rad-kanig	rad-kabo	rad-ka	rad-kar
mix	awár-kaning	awár-kabo	awár-ke	awár-kar

ENGLISH.	INFINITIVE.	IMPERATIVE.	PRESENT.	PAST.
move	surfing	surfebo	surfe	sur
open	maling	malbo	male	mal
open	ithing	ithibo	ithe	ith
pass	gidring	gidirebo	gidire	gidar
pinch	chundik-tining	chundik-tibo	chundik-tire	chundik-tis
place	túlfing	túlfebo	túlfe	túl
plant	tikhing	tikhbo	tikhe	tikh
play	makhing	makhbo	makhe	makh
pluck	bening	benbo	bere	ber
poke	ghut-khaling	ghut-khalbo	ghut-khale	ghut-khalk
possess	daning	danbo	dare	dar
pour	shághing	sholbo	shághe	shol
pull	kashing	kashbo	kashe	kash
push	dhakka-tining	dhakka-tibo	dhakka-tire	dhakka-tis
quarrel	jang-kaning	jang-kabo	jang-ke	jang-kar
question	harfing	harfbo	harfe	haraf
rain	dasing	dasbo	dase	das
raise	hefing	hefbo	hefe	hef
reach	rasing	rasbo	rase	ras
read	khwáning	khwánbo	khwáne	khwán
reap	rútíng	rútbo	rúte	rút
recline	túgh-maning	túgh-mabo	túgh-are	tugh-mas
recognise	cháning	chánbo	cháne	chás
recollect	yád-tíling	yád-tilbo	yád-tile	yád-tilk
remind	yád-tining	yád-tibo	yád-tire	yád-tis
release	chhutfing	chhutfebo	chhutfe	chhut
reject	rad-kaning	rad-kabo	rad-ke	rad-kar
rest	dam-daning	dam-danbo	dam-dare	dam-dar
remain	manzil-maning	manzil-mabo	manzil-are	manzil-mas
rinse	píling	pílbo	píle	píl
repel	hy-kaning	hy-kabo	hy-ke	hy-kar
respire	dam-kashing	dam-kashbo	dam-kashe	dam-kashk
return	harsing	harsebo	harse	hars
ride	suwár-maning	suwár-mabo	suwár-are	suwár-mas
rise	bash-maning	bash-mabo	bash-are	bash-mas
rob	duzdí-kaning	duzdí-kabo	duzdí-ke	duzdí kar
roll	redeting	redetebo	redete	redet
rub	mushking	mushkbo	mushke	mushk
run	halma-kaning	halma-kabo	halma-ke	halma-kar
say	páning	pábo	páre	pár
scatter	khasing	khasbo	khase	khas
scrape	tráshing	tráshbo	tráshe	trásh
scratch	khárfing	khárfebo	khárfe	kháraf
search	pating	patbo	pate	pat
see	khaning	khanbo	khane	khan
seek	huning	hunbo	hure	hur
seize	phuling	phulbo	phule	phul
sell	saudá-kaning	saudá-kabo	saudá-ke	saudá-kar
send	ráhí-kaning	ráhí-kabo	ráhí-ke	ráhí-kar
sew	múghing	múghbo	múghe	múgh
shave	sholfing	sholfebo	sholfe	sholaf
shine	rosh-tining	rosh tibo	rosh-tire	rosh-tis
shiver	larzing	larzbo	larze	larz
shout	marám-kaning	marám-kabo	marám-ke	marám-kar
shut	tafing	tafbo	tafe	taf
sing	sha'ir-páning	sha'ir-pábo	sha'ir-páre	sha'ir-pár
sit	túling	túsbo	túse	tús
sleep	túgh-kaning	túgh-kabo	túgh-ke	túgh-kar
slip	lughusht-haling	lughusht-halbo	lughusht-hale	lughusht-halk
seat	túlfing	túlfebo	túlfe	túlaf

English.	Infinitive.	Imperative.	Present.	Past.
sneeze	nich-tining	nich-tibo	nich-tire	nich-tis
sow	dasfing	dasfebo	dasfe	dasaf
speak	hít-kaning	hít-kabo	hít-ke	hít-kar
spill	sholing	sholbo	shole	shol
stumble	leting	letbo	lete	let
spin n.	harsing	harsbo	harse	hars
spin, a.	harsefing	harsefebo	harsefe	harsef
spit	túf-kaning	túf-kabo	túf-ke	túf-kar
split	trakhing	trakhbo	trakhe	trakh
spread	tálán-kaning	tálán-kabo	tálán-ke	tálán-kar
sprinkle	chateting	chatetebo	chatete	chatet
stand	saling	salbo	sale	sal
stay	maning	mabo	are	mas
stoop	shefming	shefmabo	shefe	shef
strain	chhán-kaning	chhán-kabo	chhán-ke	chhán-kar
strike	khaling	khalbo	khale	khalk
strip	laghar-kaning	laghar-kabo	laghar-ke	laghar-kar
suck	chusfing	chusfebo	chusfe	chusaf
sweat	khet-kaning	khet-kabo	khet-ke	khet-kar
swell	pirsing	pirsbo	pirse	pirs
sweep	rofing	rofbo	rofe	rof
swim	tár-khaling	tár-khalbo	tár-khale	tár-khalk
swing	jhuluṫ-kaning	jhuluṫ-kabo	jhuluṫ-ke	jhuluṫ-kar
take	haling	halbo	hale	halk
take away	harf-hining	harf-hinbo	harf-káe	harf-hin
talk	hít-kaning	hít-kabo	hít-ke	hít-kar
tap	tak-khaling	tak-khalbo	tak-khale	tak-khalk
taste	chaking	chakebo	chake	chak
teach	sarpan-kaning	sarpan-kabo	sarpan-ke	sarpan-kar
tear	haring	haribo	hare	har
throw	harabing(biṫing)	harabebo	harabe	harab
tickle	gudulú-kaning	gudulú-kabo	gudulú-ke	gudulú-kar
till (*plough*)	langár-kaning	langár-kabo	langár-ke	langár-kar
tire	dam-daning	dam-danbo	dam-dare	dam-dar
trip	tháb-kaning	tháb-kabo	tháb-ke	tháb-kar
turn, n.	harsing	harsebo	harse	haras
twine	peching	pechebo	peche	pech
twist	res-tining	res-tibo	res-tire	res-tis
tumefy	padám-kaning	padám-kabo	padám-ke	padám-kar
turn, a.	harsefing	harsefebo	harsefe	harsef
understand	sarpan-maning	sarpan-mabo	sarpan-are	sarpan-mas
upset	musun-kaning	musun-kabo	musun-ke	musun-kar
wait	jáeti-maning	jáeti-mabo	jáeti-are	jáeti-mas
walk	kasar-hining	kasar-hinbo	kasar-káe	kasar-hin
wander	charing	charbo	chare	char
want	aling-baṫing	albo-baṫbo	ale-baṫe	al-baṫ
wash	siling	silbo	sile	sil
wear	bening	benbo	bene	ben
weave	báfing	báfbo	báfe	báf
weep	hoghing	hoyibo	hoye	hogh
weigh	tol-kaning	tol-kabo	tol-ke	tol-kar
wink	khan-khaling	khan-khalbo	khan-khale	khan-khalk
wish	árzú-takhing	árzú-takhbo	árzú-takhe	árzú-takh
whistle	shutár-kashing	shutár-kashbo	shutár-kashe	shutár-kash
work	kárem-kaning	káram-kabo	kárem-ke	kárem-kar
wound	thaḋing	thaḋbo	thaḋe	thaḋ
wrap	much-kaning	much-kabo	much-ke	much-kar
wring	píling	pílbo	píle	píl
write	nabisht-kaning	nabisht-kabo	nabisht-ke	nabisht-kar

The materials from which the above Grammar and Vocabulary are compiled were collected during a rapid journey through the territories of the Khan of Calát—the Brahoe country—and tested, so far as opportunity offered, by reference to natives in different parts of the country, and by comparison with Eastwick's "Epitome of the Grammars of the Brahuiky, Balochky, and Panjabi Languages." It was my intention to have added some dialogues and phrases as a conclusion to the work. But to do so would extend the limits of this book to undue proportions, and delay its appearance indefinitely. I have therefore left this part of the work unfinished, and only offer the above synopsis in the hope that it may prove useful to the officers serving on the Sind Frontier; and if it should happily stimulate one amongst them to correct its errors, supply its deficiencies, and enlarge its scope, then the object of my labour will have been gained.

H. W. B.

APPENDIX.

B.

RECORD OF METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS AND ALTITUDES ON THE MARCH FROM THE INDUS TO THE TIGRIS, THROUGH BALOCHISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, SISTAN, KHORASSAN, AND IRAN.

Locality.	Date, 1872.		Thermometer.			Distance—Miles.	Barometer.			Altitude—Feet.	Wind.	Weather.
	Month.	Day.	Max	Mean.	Min.		Max.	Mean.	Min.			
Sakkar,	Jan.	5		52				29·99				Fair.
Shikárpur,	,,	5	64	53	42	24		30·00				do.
Jacobabad,	,,	7	64	61	59	26	30·02	29·81	29·42			do.
Barshori,	,,	8	76	54	38	35	29·46	29·40	29·36	90		do.
Sanjarani,	,,	9	78	56	41	13	29·41	29·35	29·30	160		do.
Kotra,	,,	10	76	60	39	30	29·36	29·32	29·27	166		do.
Pirchhalta,	,,	11	88	64	39	9	29·03	28·94	28·89	520		do.
Kuhaw,	,,	12	76	62	56	12	28·71	28·63	28·59	810		do.
Hatáchi,	,,	13	63	53	42	16	27·73	27·72	27·71	1710		do.
Narr,	,,	14	72	53	36	16	26·74	26·71	26·68	2710		do.
Gorú,	,,	15	78	44	25	13	25·78	25·73	25·67	3725	NW.	Cloudy.
Khozdár,	,,	16	70	50	40	16	25·70	25·59	25·50	3870	do.	do.
Bághwána,	,,	18	68	58	48	16	25·51	25·20	25·05	4290	do.	do.
Lákuryán,	,,	19	56	45	38	26	24·45	24·18	24·00	5420	do.	Rain & sleet.
Súrab,	,,	20	49	32	23	20	23·90	23·87	23·85	5770	do.	Cloudy.
Gandaghen,	,,	21	44	20	10	13	23·87	23·71	23·60	5950	do.	do.
Rodinjo,	,,	22	64	40	14	15	23·21	23·13	23·09	6625	do.	do.
Calát,	,,	23	53	25	8	23	23·09	23·00	22·94	6780	do.	do.
Mungachar,	,,	25	56	32	21	26	23·90	23·84	23·77	5700	do.	do.
Amánullah,	,,	26	58	32	19	26	24·00	23·99	23·96	5630	do.	Slight rain.
Mastung Fort,	,,	27	49	39	32	9	24·04	23·10	23·95	6662	do.	Cloudy.
Nishpa Pass,	,,	28		32		18		23·67		6000	do.	Sleet & hail.
Sariáb,	,,	28	53	43	38	11	23·94	23·88	23·80	5760	do.	Sleet & rain.
Shál Kot,	,,	29	56	41	29	13	24·00	23·96	23·92	5660	do.	Cloudy.
Murghi Pass,	,,	30		32		11		24·16		5440	do.	Sleet & hail.
Cushlác,	,,	30	29·	17	5	5	24·50	24·44	24·35	5125	do.	Snow.
Hykalzai,	Feb.	1	42	32	22	18	24·75	24·73	24·70	4800	do.	do.
Arambi,	,,	2	44	32	19	15	24·59	24·54	24·51	4960	do.	do.
Churgah Khojak,	,,	3	49	38	31	13	22·84	22·82	22·81	7000	do.	do.
Khojak Pass,	,,	4		40		1½		22·47		7410	N.	Mist & sleet.
Cháokat Khojak,	,,	4		40		1½		23·15		6600	do.	do.
Chaman,	,,	4	46	37	26	4	24·10	24·05	24·00	5560	do.	Hail & sleet.
Gátay,	,,	5	50	37	28	22	25·50	25·48	25·45	3990	do.	Cloudy, hail.
Mel Mándah,	,,	6	47	26	11	14	25·45	25·21	25·29	4100	do.	Fair.
Mákú,	,,	7	50	37	31	18	25·94	25·92	25·90	3520	do.	Cloudy.
Mund Hissár,	,,	8	50	38	32	16	26·19	26·15	26·12	3280	NW.	Cldy., snow.
Kandahár,	,,	9	54	36	30	12	26·30	26·21	26·12	3220	do.	Cloudy, fair.
Kokarán,	,,	14	62	44	31	7	26·25	26·22	26·20	3210	do.	Fair.
Hauz Maddad,	,,	15	76	45	30	18	26·48	26·37	26·29	3050	do.	do.
Chashma,	,,	16	68	47	29	22	26·69	26·64	26·59	2780	do.	do.

Locality.	Date, 1872.		Thermometer.			Distance—Miles.	Barometer.			Altitude—Feet.	Wind.	Weather.
	Month.	Day.	Max.	Mean.	Min.		Max.	Mean.	Min.			
Balakhán,	Feb.	17	64	47	36	23	26·75	26·62	26·54	2700	NE.	Cloudy, rain.
Cala' Búst,	,,	18	84	46	29	28	27·00	26·90	26·85	2510	N.	Fair.
Hazárjuft,	,,	20	74	45	31	40	27·10	27·06	27·02	2350	NW.	do.
Mian Pushta,	,,	21	80	47	30	14	27·27	27·20	27·15	2210	do.	Cloudy.
Sufár,	,,	22	74	55	42	18	27·21	27·19	27·16	2220	do.	Fair.
Banádir Juma,	,,	23	82	59	46	15	27·26	27·23	27·19	2180	do.	do.
Landí,	,,	24	70	54	46	14	27·30	27·27	27·24	2140	W.	Cloudy, rain.
Cala' Sabz,	,,	25	86	63	52	22	27·24	27 22	27·18	2190	do.	Fair.
Mel Gudar,	,,	26	74	60	50	23	27·28	27·28	27·24	2130	do.	Cloudy.
Landi Barech,	,,	27	64	53	46	36	27·54	27·44	27·38	1975	NW.	Rainy.
Rúdbár,	,,	28	68	52	40	17	27·60	27 58	27·56	1830	do.	Cloudy, fair.
Cala' Ján Beg,	,,	29	70	55	40	28	27·66	27·62	27·60	1790	do.	Fair.
Chárburjak,	Mar.	1	73	54	40	14	27·75	27·69	27·65	1720	do.	do.
Bandar Tráká,	,,	2	77	57	42	13	27·68	27·67	27·66	1740	do.	do.
Daki Dela,	,,	3	80	65	55	14	27·56	27·55	27·54	1860	S.	Cloudy.
Cabri Hájí,	,,	4	84	69	55	12	27·61	27·52	27·46	1890	do.	do.
Burj 'Alam,	,,	5	80	62	50	19	27·60	27·58	27·56	1830	SW.	Fair, cloudy.
Wásilan,	,,	6	76	60	40	7	27·59	27·55	27·51	1860	NW.	Cloudy.
Nasírabad,	,,	7	78	63	51	12	27·75	27·64	27·59	1770	N.	Cldy.&gusty.
Banjár,	,,	8	74	46	43	6	28·04	27·88	27·65	1540	do.	do.
Bolay,	,,	11	74	55	46	7	27·90	27·84	27·80	1680	do.	Cloudy.
Silyán,	,,	13	70	54	39	28	27·79	27·76	27·70	1650	do.	Cloudy, fair.
Lash,	,,	15	96	54	34	18	27·79	27·69	27·60	1720	do.	do.
Panjdih,	,,	18	83	62	50	6	27·69	27·59	27·50	1820	NW.	Cloudy.
Khushkrodak,	,,	19	83	63	50	16	27·50	27·49	27·49	1920	do.	Fair.
Cala' Koh,	,,	20	94	65	52	15	27·40	27·39	27·38	2020	do.	do.
Harút Rúd,	,,	21	92	76	65	15	27·39	27·30	27·22	2110	SW.	Cloudy.
Chahi Sagak,	,,	22	78	66	56	24	26 25	26·23	26·22	3200	NW.	do.
Chahi Pass,	,,	23		54		5		25·59		3870	do.	Cloudy, rain.
Duroh,	,,	23	66	57	50	23	25·50	25·48	25·45	3990	do.	do.
Husenabad,	,,	24	66	50	38	27	25·09	25·01	24·96	4500	W.	do.
Sarbesha,	,,	26	54	40	28	29	23·70	23·68	23·60	5990	NW.	do.
Múd,	,,	28	71	46	31	22	23·61	23·58	23·57	6100	do.	Cloudy.
Birjand,	,,	29	80	56	37	25	24·79	24·66	24 56	4880	N.	Cloudy, fair.
Ghíbk,	April	2	61	41	32	18	23·12	23·11	23·10	6650	do.	Cloudy, rain.
Sihdih,	,,	4	64	46	33	18	24·07	24·03	24·00	5586	NW.	do.
Rúm,	,,	5	60	48	36	10	23·90	23·90	23·90	5735	do.	do.
Kharbáj Pass,	,,	6		43		7		23·20		6550	do.	Cloudy.
Ghayn,	,,	6	70	52	35	15	24·76	24·68	24·61	4860	do.	Cldy.&stmy.
Girimunj,	,,	9	52	44	37	22	24·50	24·50	24·50	5060	W.	Fair.
Dashti Pyaz,	,,	10	80	53	35	15	24·26	24·18	24·11	5420	N.	Cloudy, rain.
Kakhak,	,,	13	64	49	45	16	24·24	24·22	24·20	5375	do.	Fair.
Zihbad,	,,	14	88	67	57	16	24·55	24·51	24·48	5050	do.	Cloudy.
Bijistan,	,,	15	84	65	47	28	25·24	25·18	25·13	4310	NW.	Rainy.
Yrínasi,	,,	17	80	59	45	26	26·61	26·56	26·48	2860	N.	Fair.
Abdullahabad,	,,	18	89	61	51	25	26·20	26·11	26·05	3325	NW.	Cloudy.
Turbat Hydari,	,,	20	82	56	40	32	25·04	24·95	24·90	4562	do.	Rainy.
Baidar Pass,	,,	23		46		10		23·74		5920	do.	Rain.
Gudari Baidár,	,,	23		40		7		22·70		7134	do.	do.
Asadábád,	,,	23	49	43	40	11	23·89	23·85	23·82	5790	do.	do.
Gudari Rukh,	,,	24		42		6		22·85		6962	do.	Cloudy, rain.
Rabáti Sufed,	,,	24		50		6		23·82		5825	do.	Cloudy.
Káfir Cala'	,,	24		50		6		24·53		5025	do.	do.
Sharífabad,	,,	24	62	49	44	16	24 70	24·68	24·63	4860	do.	Rain.
Mashhad,	,,	25	94	54	43	24	26·40	26 25	26·07	3180	do.	Rainy.
Jágharc,	May	3	64	54	46	20	24·90	24·87	24·83	4650	do.	do.
Nishabor Pass,	,,	4		50		14		20·90		9390	W.	Fair, cloudy.
Dihrúd,	,,	4	62	61	59	10	24·34	24·29	24·22	5290	do.	Cloudy.
Nishábor,	,,	5	75	56	49	22	25·60	25·47	25·37	4000	do.	Rainy.
Záminabad,	,,	7	80	52	40	16	25·96	25·90	25·80	3540	SW.	Cloudy.

Locality.	Date, 1872. Month.	Date, 1872. Day.	Thermometer. Max.	Thermometer. Mean.	Thermometer. Min.	Distance—Miles	Barometer. Max.	Barometer. Mean.	Barometer. Min.	Altitude—Feet.	Wind.	Weather.
Shoráb,	May	8	69	50	45	9	25·47	25·45	25·42	4020	S.	Fair.
Záfaráni,	,,	9	82	73	60	18	26·12	25·88	25·90	3562	SE.	do.
Sabzwár,	,,	11	82	67	59	25	26·20	26·12	26·04	3312	do.	Fair, cloudy.
Mihr,	,,	13	84	74	69	33	26·09	26·02	25·98	3380	do.	Fair.
Mazinán,	,,	14	74	67	58	20	26·64	26·61	26·60	2810	SW.	do.
Abbásabad,	,,	15	86	74	56	23	26·54	26·51	26·49	2910	do.	do.
Miandasht,	,,	16	75	63	54	22	25·40	25·37	25·32	4110	W.	Storm & rain.
Miánmay,	,,	17	76	58	54	24	25·90	25·83	25·75	3620	NW.	Rain.
Shahrúd,	,,	18	82	63	51	41	25·20	25·64	24·85	3820	do.	Cldy., rainy.
Dihmulla,	,,	24	70	63	58	16	25·90	25·87	25·83	3575	W.	Fair.
Dámghán,	,,	25	86	62	50	26	25·80	25·77	25·75	3680	do.	do.
Khúsha,	,,	26	85	65	53	23	25·25	25·23	25·20	4260	do.	Cloudy.
Ahúán,	,,	27	73	58	47	24	23·30	23·24	23·25	6500	do.	Cloudy, fai
Samnán,	,,	28	92	70	60	24	25·51	25·46	25·38	4010	NW.	Fair, cloud
Lásjird,	,,	30	84	73	68	22	25·32	25·24	25·22	4150	W.	Fair.
Dih Namak,	,,	31	91	84	76	25	26·55	26·47	26·43	2950	do.	Gusty&dust
Kishlác,	June	1	88	76	80	24	26·52	26·46	26·42	2960	NW.	do.
Aywáni Kyf,	,,	2	88	75	56	21	25·81	25·70	25 60	3760	do.	Fair.
Khátunabad,	,,	4	82	72	56	27	26·10	26·04	25·98	3400	W.	do.
Gulahak,	,,	5	76	72	55	18	24·69	24·62	24·53	4925	do.	do.
Tahrán,	,,	8	76	72	69	8	25·64	25·61	25·60	3850	do.	do.
Rábút Karím,	,,	9	88	78	70	29	25·87	25·85	25·81	3600	do.	do.
Khánábád,	,,	10	96	75	59	33	25·23	25·19	25·15	4300	NE.	Warm, fair
Khushkak,	,,	11	72	64	56	26	24·23	24·19	24·15	5410	W.	Cl'dless sky
Novarán,	,,	12	73	61	54	36	24·08	24·06	24·04	5550	None	Warm, fair
Zárah,	,,	13	94	58	50	32	24·20	24·15	24·10	5450	do.	do.
Mílagard,	,,	14	90	64	48	20	24·06	24·05	24·05	5562	do.	do.
Hamadán,	,,	15	81	71	60	36	23·60	23·53	23·50	6162	do.	do.
Asadabad,	,,	17	83	71	60	32	24·05	24·04	24·01	5575	do.	do.
Kangawár,	,,	18	78	65	51	25	24·49	24·44	24·41	5125	do.	do.
Sahnah,	,,	19	87	70	52	23	24·87	24·84	24·80	4680	do.	do.
Besitún,	,,	20	88	66	52	18	25·10	25·04	25·00	4462	do.	do.
Kirmanshah,	,,	21	94	68	40	28	24·75	24·70	24·66	4837	do.	do.
Mydasht,	,,	23	71	64	48	23	24·68	24·66	24·64	4880	do.	do.
Hárúnábád,	,,	24	79	68	50	28	24·90	24·88	24·85	4640	W.	Gusty day
Karrind,	,,	25	79 Tent	72	56	24	24·46	24·36	24·30	5212	None	Fair.
Pul Zuháb,	,,	26	102	76	60	32	27·22	27 19	27·16	2220	W.	Fair, hot.
Casri Shirin,	,,	27	103	86	68	24	27·84	27·79	27·76	1625	do.	Hot day.
Hájí Cara,	,,	28	108	84	64	24	28·49	28·39	28·30	1040	WN.	do.
Sherabad,	July	8	102	98	92	45	28·70	28·70	28·70	750	None	Fair, hot.
Bácúba,	,,	9	106	98	92	32	29·20	29·20	29·20	270	do.	do.
Baghdad,	,,	10	109	92	76	40	29·42	29·36	29·30	130	W.	do.

N.B.—The indications of the thermometer were recorded from an instrument placed against the wall of a tent.

The distances have been reckoned at the pace of our riding-horses, at the rate of four miles an hour.

The altitudes have been calculated approximately from the mean of the daily indications of an aneroid barometer, usually suspended in the shade of a tent.

H. W. B.

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