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Route from Shiraz to Bam

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culminating ridge. He saw that several points just within the Dora Pass had been trigonometrically fixed at 16,500 feet.

Colonel WALKER said that these points were on an outer range, not on the main watershed, which was hidden from view by the outer range, so that it had not been possible to fix any trigonometrical points on this portion of the watershed.

The PRESIDENT said there was no doubt that the great range, which we called the Indian Caucasus, decreased in height as it stretched to the westward. The mountains north of Cabúl were not so high as those to the north of Chitrál. It was quite possible that the crest which the Havildar traversed might be lower than that further south. Still it was a point he should like to have verified: because glaciers certainly did exist on that watershed, the Chitrál River itself coming out of a glacier. Geographers, indeed, would remember that Macartney, sixty years ago, laid down a glacier on the north side of the range, from which the head-waters of the Oxus flowed; but he (the President) had never heard of glaciers south of Chitrál. The Havildar's journey was exceedingly important, because he was the first man who had determined the position of the Chitrál Valley astronomically. He seemed indeed to be a most remarkable man. Major Montgomerie, in a private letter to him (the President) had mentioned that the Havildar, on his return-journey, went into the presence of Amán-el-Múlk and Mir Walí, convinced that he would never come out alive; but he kept his hand on a loaded revolver in his pocket throughout the interview, with the full determination, should a signal be given to seize him, to despatch both of these redoubtable chiefs before yielding. He had presence of mind, however, to carry on the conversation with perfect calmness, and was ultimately allowed to come out in safety. He (the President) only hoped the Havildar would not retire from the work of surveying. He was pleased to hear that Major Montgomerie was training up other native explorers in the same field; for we looked to them, and to them only, to clear up those geographical problems that were still perplexing us beyond our frontiers, in regions that were inaccessible to British officers. Before closing his remarks, he wished to call attention to the gradual approach of Russia to the northernmost frontiers of India. They were now in possession of the province of Dzungaria, holding it vicariously for the Chinese, who, however, he should think, were not likely very soon to resume the occupation of their territory. At the same time, the Russians were doing good service, geographically, by extending our knowledge of Central Asia. Their frontier, at one point near Artúsh, was within 300 miles of the extreme limit determined by Colonel Walker's survey. So that it was possible, in fact probable, that, in a short time, triangulation would be carried across the interval; in which case we should have a continuous series of triangles from Cape Comorin to Siberia, across the entire continent of Asia.

3. *Route from Shiraz to Bam.* By MAJOR B. LOVETT, R.E.

[EXTRACTS.]

THERE are several roads that run between Shiraz and Kerman. The road I took leaves the Shiraz Valley to the north-east, passing by the Bagh-i-Dilkhusha and Saadi's tomb; and as far as the town of Niriz, is a very fair road, so that carts could proceed along it without the slightest difficulty. After arriving at Dodeh, our first stage, I found the road to Niriz lay in the Persepolis Valley, as

I shall call it for the sake of distinction, as the famed ruins are situated in it. In this valley is situated the famous salt lake known as the "Deria Numuk," and generally designated in the published maps as Lake Bakhtagan; why, I know not, as the inhabitants of its southern shore do not even recognise it by that name. When I passed by, the lake was quite dry, but its usual limits were well defined by a wide expanse of saline deposit. The axis of the lake, so to speak, partakes of the parallelism of the valleys and chains of mountains adjacent; and these, in all hitherto published maps of Persia, incline insufficiently to the south. I observed, to the south of the hills forming the southern boundary of the Persepolis Valley, that there existed a lofty snow-capped range running parallel with it. This lay between the valley of Rohniz and that of Fesa, but is not the "Khushnagan" hills of the maps, which are a distinct range nearer to Shiraz. The position of Niriz ascertained on this journey differs very considerably from that shown in even recently published maps.

The lofty range of hills, at the foot of which the town of Niriz is situated, is there locally termed the "Loirez" range; further to the north the same chain is called, from the villages and its southern slopes, the Koh-i-Deh Murd and the Koh-i-Kwaja Mali respectively. This range then runs on in a north-westerly direction past Boanat, Dehbid, and Isjdkhast, on the Teheran road. There are extensive forests of wild cherry-trees on the hills of Kwaja Mali, the wood of which forms a staple article of commerce. A thorough exploration of this chain of hills, from its culminating point, Padinah, to where it terminates near the shores of the Persian Gulf, would be most interesting geographically and geologically. Unfortunately, these hills are infested with robbers of the Lushani tribe, both summer and winter. Several times during our four days' journey in the Persepolis Valley their horsemen reconnoitred our party, which they evidently considered too strong to be worth an attack on the caravan.

The Kotro Valley beyond, with its solitary village, presents a picture of desolation that I have rarely seen equalled. It runs in a more southerly direction than the Persepolis one, and has no visible limit in that direction except the horizon. So far, indeed, does it extend, that the Collector of Kotro, Futh Ali Khan, repeating the popular tradition, told me it extended to the confines of Sind! This valley is famous for its herds of wild asses, or Ghur-i-Kher. There are in the neighbourhood, it is estimated, upwards of 2000 head. They may be seen browsing early in the morning; but, though I came across traces of them very frequently,

I was not fortunate enough to fall in with any. A good horse, if brought within a fair distance, can easily outrace them, but they have better wind. From Kotro there are two roads that lead to Saidabad, the chief town of the next valley to the east, called the valley of Sirjan. One path goes *viâ* Perpa and Mekabad to the south of Koh-i-Tung-Chal; the other *viâ* Bishni, Dasht, and Khairabad, by the route lying north of that mountain. I chose the latter. Bishni is a small village, nestled amongst some limestone-ridges, that form the northern boundary of the Kotro Valley. On the road I passed strata of slate and white marble. Crossing the watershed, we proceeded another stage on to Dasht or Sir-i-Dasht, a hamlet consisting of a cluster of wretched huts, and a solitary tower, with a not over-abundant supply of brackish water. The name of the place means "stone" in Turkish, from the fact of there being lead-mines here. I visited the works, if they can be so called. The seams containing the ore run parallel to the general strike of the hills. It is found both in the form of an oxide and associated with copper. It is reduced to a metallic state by pulverisation, washing, and heating in a blast-furnace; all of which operations are performed in the rudest and most primitive manner. The refuse copper-ore is thrown away, as the miners are not acquainted with the manner of reducing it to a metallic state. There are about forty miners here. The yearly out-turn is about 4500 mans, of which one-sixth is levied as a tax by the Fars Government. From Dasht I proceeded to Khairabad, which is situated at the foot of the Tung Chal range, and by the shores of another great salt lake. It was the frontier village of the province of Fars in this direction till lately; but now it pays revenue to the Government of Kerman. I here reached the valley separating the hills, which form a continuation of the Dehbid range, from those that are a continuation of the Koh Rud hills. This valley, therefore, extends from Ispahan, past Aberkoh-Shur Babek to Sirjan, and then onwards to the south-east past Baft, the Afshur, and Aktar districts, to that of Jiruft, and thence to Bampoor. The hills opposite to me at Khairabad are, so to speak, the backbone of the mountain-system of Iran.

Two stages further brought me to Kerman, where I stayed a week. This town is not well supplied with water, and there are many places in the Kerman Valley and near the town that would be preferable as the site for a large city. This spot, I suppose, was principally chosen for the sake of a rock of limestone, on which are the ruins at present of a fort, called the Koleh-i-dokhter, from which a capital view of the city is obtained. As I wished to ascertain the true position of Khabis with reference to Kerman, I pro-

ceeded to that town, reaching it in three stages. It is on the north-east side of Kerman, separated from it by a mass of mountain, mostly limestone, but having the highest peaks of granite probably, as in a river-bed near Gok I saw numerous boulders of that material. Khabis is the name of a district and town producing dates and oranges, and the terminus for kafilahs proceeding across the deserts to and from Seistan, Neh, Kain, and Meshed, and is therefore of considerable importance; it is about 1500 feet above the sea. At the season we visited it (December 22nd) the climate was delightful. The gardens are extensive and look very pleasing, as the dark and other green tints of the orange-trees relieve the monotony of the date-palms interspersed. The supply of good water is constant and abundant. No less than eleven varieties of fruit of the *Aurantiaceæ* are grown here. The Persian name for this kind of fruit is "murukhubat." The names are as follows:—

<i>Persian.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Batavi.	Shaddock.
Baling.	Ditto.
Turunj.	Citron.
Narinj.	Bitter Orange.
Naringi.	Sweet Orange.
Bukrai.	Ditto.
Limou Khariki.	Lemon.
Maidani.	Sweet Lime.
Limou Ab.	Sour Lime.

Sweet oranges were procurable at the rate of one hundred for one franc. I anticipated being able to proceed from Khabis direct to Bam across the desert, or, rather, along its borders, passing by Kushit. The authorities, however, dissuaded me from attempting this route, on the plea of want of water and long marches. As the habitual security of this part of Persia had been lately rudely disturbed by a large body of Belooch robbers, I have no doubt but that was the real reason. I had, therefore, to re-enter the hills and proceed south by a valley parallel to the direct road, and reached the main route proceeding from Kerman to Bam; but, as the remainder of my journey to Bam is over a road lately described, this part of my travels calls for no further remarks.