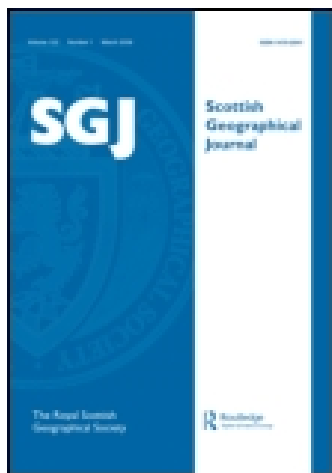


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UK



Scottish Geographical Magazine

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsgj19>

Twenty years' travel in Persia

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Published online: 30 Jan 2008.

To cite this article: Lt. -Col. P.N. Sykes C.M.G. C.I.E. (1914) Twenty years' travel in Persia, Scottish Geographical Magazine, 30:4, 169-191, DOI: [10.1080/14702541408555166](https://doi.org/10.1080/14702541408555166)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14702541408555166>

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THE SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE.

TWENTY YEARS' TRAVEL IN PERSIA.¹

By Lt.-Col. P. N. SYKES, C.M.G., C.I.E., Gold Medallist of the Royal Geographical Society, etc. etc. : Author of *Ten Thousand Miles in Persia* and of *The Glory of the Shia World*.

(With Map and Illustrations.)

THE ancient empire of Persia, in which I have resided for more than twenty years, and in which I have travelled almost as many thousand miles, is among the most interesting countries in the world. To Europeans it appeals strongly, as Persians were the first Aryans to be civilised, and their influence on modern civilisation, both directly and indirectly, has been enormous.

If we have not all studied the account given by Herodotus of the history and customs of this illustrious people, we have at all events read of Cyrus the Great in the Book of Isaiah. In the Book of Daniel, too, we have been thrilled by the story of "the Writing on the Wall" in connection with the capture of Babylon by the same mighty conqueror. Later again, Ahasuerus, the Xerxes of the Greeks, appears on the stage and metes out dramatic justice to Haman. In short, both in Holy Writ and in the Classics, the rôle played by this historical country is one of great importance.

Persia occupies the larger and western half of an elevated plateau which lies between the Indus and the Shatt-ul-Arab, the eastern section being Afghanistan and Baluchistan. It stretches from east to west for, perhaps, one thousand miles, and from north to south for eight hundred miles. Everywhere on the plateau the dominant note is dryness, the

¹ A lecture delivered before the Society in Edinburgh on February 6, 1914.

rainfall being ten inches in the north, and perhaps five inches in the centre. Consequently, nowhere are there forests as in more favoured lands; and the cultivated area, which mainly depends on irrigation, is comparatively small. The area of grazing, on the other hand, is enormous. Everywhere there are ragged ranges, with wide intervening

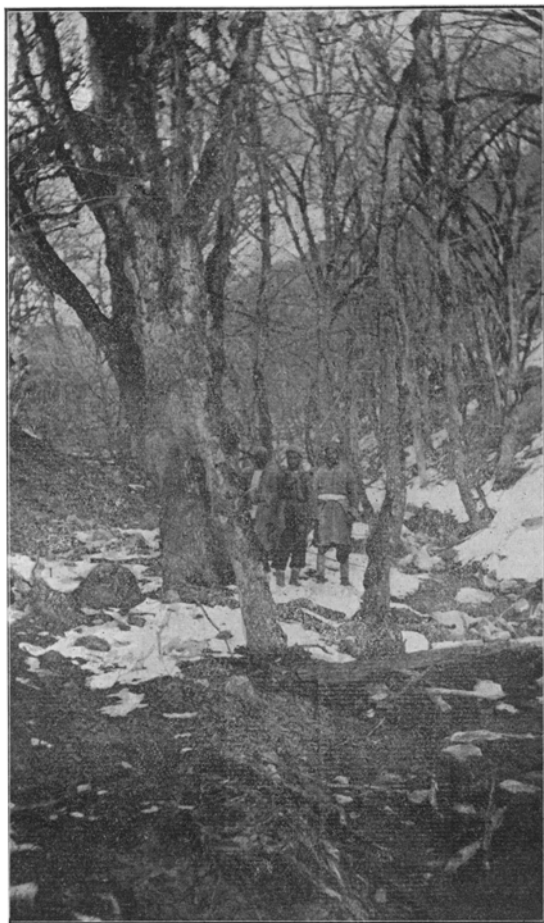


FIG. 1.—The Hyrcanian forest.

valleys, parts of the country closely resembling the Karroo in Cape Colony with its similar steppe vegetation, backed by the jagged Oudtshoorn range.

North of the plateau the Caspian provinces present an entirely different aspect. There the rainfall is abundant, forests flourish, and the teeming fertility of the soil is so rich that classical Hyrcania, the modern province of Astrabad, was famous for the wealth of its natural products.

FIRST JOURNEY, 1893.

My first journey was undertaken in 1893. Like Hanway, in the eighteenth century, I landed in Astrabad Bay and rode through the mud to Astrabad. From that centre I was anxious to travel up the River Atrek, which, in its lower reaches, constitutes the Russo-Persian boundary. This district is inhabited by Turkoman of the Yamut and Goklan tribes, who were practically independent of the Persian Government; and consequently I experienced the greatest difficulty in passing through the country, apart from the intense cold of the snow-covered steppe in January.

For a long time the chief of the Ak Ata Bai would not allow me to cross the River Gurgan,¹ much less visit the Atrek; and after a discus-



FIG. 2.—Bujnurd.

sion lasting two days it seemed that I should fail in my undertaking. However, playing my last card, I said to my host that by refusing the request of a guest, his reputation for hospitality in Europe would suffer; and this portentous threat decided the powerful chief to pass me through his district. Riding day after day first northwards to the Atrek, and then eastwards close to its left bank, I sighted the Russian posts of Yagli Olum and of Chat² across the Atrek, which above this point ceases to be the frontier. For three days my guide was *Mulla Hak Nafas* of the Gan Yokmaz tribe, who made a plan to rob me, which I was fortunate enough to defeat.

When I crossed into Bujnurd territory I was safe, as the doughty

¹ This word contains the same root as Hyrcania.

² Chat signifies the junction of two rivers, in this case the Sumbar and the Atrek.

Kurd chief had a long arm, and the Goklan Turkoman were much afraid of him. From this interesting district, which I revisited many years afterwards, I rode to Kuchan and Meshed, the Sacred City of Persia. My objective, after leaving the capital of Khorasan, was Kerman. Fortunately, from my point of view, the route lay across a section of the great desert of Persia, which had not been traversed by a European since the journey of the illustrious Marco Polo in the thirteenth century.¹

The Lut, as it is termed, occupies the entire centre of Iran. I have visited it on almost every side, and crossed it in several parts. Consequently a short description of this "dead heart" is called for. I have already referred to the aridity of Persia; and the Lut is but the central and most arid portion or, in other words, the most forcible expression of a generally arid country. In more favoured lands rivers cut channels to the sea, but between the Indus and the Shatt-ul-Arab, no considerable river flows into the Persian Gulf; and from the Hari Rud, on the eastern border of Khorasan, to the Polvar north of Shirez, a distance of six hundred miles, no river is crossed. Instead, the water-courses wither away before forming trunk river systems; and the scanty streams are lost in basins known as *Haman*, within which are immense gravel slopes and square miles of dreary sandhills.

To return to my journey—from Meshed the route south lay through Turbat-i-Haydari to Tun, where the northern edge of the great palsyng waste was reached. A few donkeys were engaged to carry water and forage, and leaving this oasis we entered the silent desert, where gradually all bird-life ceased. At the first stage of Khushab the water was undrinkable; and the following morning I found that my water-skin had leaked, and that I had only a pint left. That day's march was very trying, and at the stage the water was sea-green and quite undrinkable so far as I was concerned.

I had, however, espied a lofty snow-clad range in the distance. As the map was a blank, this fact fully compensated for my difficulties, which were ended by making a night march to Duhuk, a village lying on the slopes of the range. There the water was delicious, and was fully appreciated. A halt was imperative, as the muleteers and servants were very ill for two days from drinking the salt water.

Duhuk is situated at a point where the main range, which is in reality an easterly prolongation of the Tabas Range, swings from an east to a south-south-east direction; the latter range, which was also not on the map, is known as Mur Kuh.

A second long waterless stretch had to be traversed before reaching Naiband, a considerable village. This time we ran entirely out of water, through my inexperience, and I rode ahead to send help to the caravan. Mile after mile passed, and I feared that I had taken a wrong direction, when suddenly I turned a corner and came upon a vision of fairyland. The hillside was covered with date-palms, underneath which were glimpses of the bright green crops, and at the summit was an old fort in

¹ The subject is dealt with in the *Geographical Journal*, vol. xxvi. (1905), p. 462, under the heading of "Did Marco Polo visit Tabas?"

a state of picturesque decay. Upon entering the grove I enjoyed the sight of running streams, and I soon sent off two donkeys laden with water to the caravan, which wearily crawled in at night.

Naiband is situated in the centre of the Lut at a point where the track from Birjand joins that from Khorasan. To the west rises a splendid mountain called Kuh-i-Naiband, which I saw from Tabas in 1905. My onward experiences were less trying, as I made more elaborate arrangements for water. Passing Darband, with its ruined forts and the little town of Rawar, in due course of time I rode into Kerman, where two years later I was destined to found a consulate.

From Kerman my objective was Shiraz. As there were several large blanks on the map, provided that a line north of the main road was followed, I decided to make for the ruins of Pasargadae some sixty miles north of the capital of Fars. Near the little town of Pariz I met His Highness the *Farman Farma*, governor-general of the province, who invited me to travel with him, and thus afforded me an excellent opportunity of studying Persian administration. I finally quitted my kind host at Rafsinjan after receiving a warm invitation to meet him in Baluchistan in the autumn.

From Rafsinjan I entered the Shahr-i-Babek district, and then traversed the great *Kavir* of southern Persia, which is only passable in a few places. It is white with salt and very dangerous off the track, men and animals being frequently engulfed in its ocherous slime. From a distance it resembles a frozen lake. West of this great drain we reached the fertile district of Khara and then marched to Aravirjun. Curiously enough "Vargan" is mentioned by Josafa Barbaro, the Venetian traveller of the fifteenth century. Baonat, which separated us from the main Isfahan-Shiraz route, was a blank on the map. It is a fertile district, but I especially recollect it owing to a band of robbers who followed us for three days without plucking up sufficient courage to attack.

At length I struck the main route and sighted the magnificent Indo-European telegraph lines. After visiting Pasargadae and Persepolis, I hastened on to Shiraz, which was in the throes of disturbances. When these were ended I turned night into day and traversed the famous *Kotals* or tracks down the mountains to Bushire, where my first journey ended.

SECOND JOURNEY, 1893-4.

My second journey was undertaken with a view to the exploration of Persian Baluchistan, which had been only partially explored at that date. Captain (now Colonel) Jennings in 1885 had seen in the distance what was said to be an active volcano in the district of Sarhad; and in making my plans I never forgot my ambition to climb this great peak.

In October 1893, Chahbar on the Arabian Sea was the starting-point,¹ and for a week the heat and the lack of water were very trying.

¹ The party included Major Brazier Creagh of the R.A.M.C., an Indian surveyor and two sowars of the Corps of Guides.

The traveller in Baluchistan should possess much patience, as the Baluchi camel-owners are most difficult people to deal with. For instance, they object to even the lightest weight; they have no ropes, and they refuse to load their camels. Add to these drawbacks their reluctance to march by night, the fact that their camels will only graze by day, and their readiness to decamp if discontented, and the trials of the traveller may be realised.

We all suffered from fever, the horses obtained nothing but barley to eat, and so we moved very slowly inland to Geh, a lovely village situated at the fork of a little river. It is the Bih of the medieval Arab travellers. Most of our party being unable to move, we decided to leave them to recuperate while we surveyed the unexplored block of country to the west. Our objective was Fanooh, which we reached on the third day. At the village of Mokht we found a manufactory of glass bangles, specimens of which excited considerable interest at the British Museum. The Fanooh pass which we traversed was filled with boulders of every hue, and merited the epithet "gorgeous." It was very trying to both man and beast. From Fanooh we climbed a neighbouring peak and saw across northern Bashukird to the west, which I explored in 1898. At our feet we could trace the five separate streams which form the Fanooh River, and thereby disposed of the theory of older travellers that the Bampur River reached the sea. Finally to the north we were thrilled by catching a glimpse of stately Bazman, which we also hoped to ascend.

We returned to Geh by another route, and then travelled north to the source of the Geh River by the worst track I have ever experienced. Our horses when led could hardly scramble over the boulders, and the fact that laden camels executed the same feat struck me as marvellous until I was informed that only Lashari camels could do it. The range which we traversed formed the northern boundary of Makran, and descending through Oghin and Pip we reached explored country at Bampur and Fahraj.

The Persian governor of Baluchistan, thanks to the influence of His Highness the *Farman Farma*, received us most politely, although he was somewhat suspicious as to our intentions. He strongly deprecated our plan of exploring Sarhad, but finding us determined he yielded, and aided us to engage camels for the journey.

Sarhad had been traversed on its eastern and western sides by Captain Jennings, but its centre was unexplored. To penetrate its heart we travelled east to the district of Magas, climbing the Kuh-i-Hamant, a serrated mountain on the way. From its summit we enjoyed a superb view, mainly across unexplored country to the east and south, but we caught no glimpse of the great volcano to the north.

At Magas we again left a known district, and travelling north reached Paskuh in two stages. The inhabitants of this isolated village were much darker than those we had previously met; and it would appear that this inaccessible tract is the refuge of the possibly Turanian race which preceded the Aryan invaders.

The capital of Sarhad is Kwash, where the Persian Government had recently posted a garrison. Its population was confined to one hundred

families of nomads and a small number of Persian troops. But for the kindness of the governor we should have almost starved, as no supplies could be bought in this barren land.

We were at last within sight of our goal, Kuh-i-Taftan (the Boiling Mountain) rising up in splendid majesty to the north-west. Although it was mid-December we determined to attempt it, and camped in a valley to the south-west at an altitude of 6550 feet in intense cold. The weather looked threatening when we started up the valley which, at seven miles from camp, terminated in an extraordinary fissure termed the Band-i-Gelu. Scrambling up this we entered an upper valley where the going was easy until the main peak was reached. Then commenced a climb over boulders, succeeded by soft lava ash, and at 2 P.M. the summit of *the* mountain of Baluchistan was attained at 13,268 feet. The



FIG. 3.—Kuh-i-Taftan.

famous peak consists of a plateau about 400 yards square, the northern portion of which is termed Ziaret Kuh (Hill of Sacrifice); and separated by a slight depression to the south is the Madar Kuh (Mother Hill). The volcano, which was belching out clouds of smoke, consisted of two apertures, each 9 feet in circumference, which apparently united a few feet below the surface. Specimens of the sulphur and sal-ammoniac were extracted with difficulty and are in the British Museum.

Needless to say the view was superb, ranging to Sistan northwards, westwards to graceful Kuh-i-Bazman, eastwards to the desert of Kharan, and southwards across the country traversed. This great peak has, since our ascent, been attempted by more than one party of Englishmen from the east: but it is inaccessible on that side; and so far as I know it has not been scaled again, a proof not of its difficulty, but of its utter remoteness.

A heavy fall of snow delayed us for some days after the ascent of the great volcano, although we were able to examine some of the neigh-

bouring valleys, and discovered a lake covering what was possibly a disused crater.

On New Year's day we resumed our journey in intense cold to find the village of Bazman, which had been visited by Pottinger at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the exact position of which was unknown. This interesting country was unexplored, except that we crossed Jennings' return route from Sistan. The supply question was acute. We had almost run out of forage and flour. On the other hand partridges were shot in large numbers. Our only guide quarrelled with the camelmen and absconded; the camelmen too were continually attempting to run away as they had earned quite a large sum of money, and were homesick. Consequently it was anxious work finding our way across a maze of mountains, for trodden routes did not exist in this deserted No Man's land.

On the fifth day we had run out of everything, but we calculated that Bazman was only forty miles distant, and as it proved, we were right. Crossing a wide plain we made for a valley to the south of the peak, and followed it for hour after hour, hoping to find a guide or some hamlet where we could halt. Night fell, the camels were exhausted, and every one clamoured to stop: but I said that by my calculation we were close to Bazman, and that we must push on or suffer from hunger. Fortunately I was not mistaken, and an hour after dark we reached the little village, where flour and barley were procurable, and were fully appreciated by us and our horses respectively.

The five marches in which we had covered the distance to Bazman concluded my first exploration in Sarhad. Probably owing to the intense cold we were not troubled by any raiding parties, which were and still are such a feature of the country. It is this terrible lack of security which has retarded all development in what is a comparatively well-watered district, and one which shows signs of a much larger population in ancient times.

As we expected, our camelmen left after receiving their pay. This, however, did not trouble us as we had decided to explore the surrounding country while awaiting news of His Highness the *Farman Farma*. After two days' rest we engaged local transport, and marched north to the peak. There the cold precluded sleep, and so we started off very early with two most unwilling guides. The snow lay deep at about 8000 feet, and we had to crawl slowly round a ridge where a fall would have been dangerous. The guides, encumbered with clothes, wished to give in: but we lightened them and ourselves and moved slowly, with snow up to our armpits at times, to the foot of the great cone. This we reached at noon, and two hours later we had scaled the second of the virgin peaks of Baluchistan, which rises to an altitude of 11,475 feet. The actual apex of the cone is a huge boulder resting on three or four others.

The view was again superb. The Taftan range covered with snow presented a splendid appearance, and as the day was exceptionally clear the view across the Lut gave an impression of boundless distance. The descent was comparatively easy, and we reached our bivouac in the

highest spirits, as to have been able to climb two such peaks in mid-winter was a piece of exceptional good fortune. The shapely peak, perhaps the most beautiful in Persia, rises in a perfect cone from the low-lying level Lut. Its local name is Kuh-i-Khidr-i-Zinda, or "The Hill of the Living Khidr (or Khizr)." This prophet, who plays a great part in Moslem legend, drank of the spring of immortality, and this explains the epithet of "living."

From Bazman we marched back to Bampur, where we were entertained with the utmost hospitality by the *Farman Farma*. In his company we followed the Bampur River to where it commingles with the Halil Rud in a swamp known as the *Jaz Morian* or "Haunt of Birds," which is some fifty miles long. In this section of our travels, we were the first Europeans to tread in the footsteps of Alexander the Great.¹

In Rudbar we were once again in explored country, and we accompanied the *Farman Farma* to Kerman. There our party broke up, Brazier Creagh returning to India via Bandar Abbas. I augmented my knowledge of Persia by travelling via Yezd and Kashan to Tehran and Resht. From the point of view of exploration this was the most fruitful of my journeys.

THIRD JOURNEY, 1894-7.

In the autumn of 1894 I was appointed to found the Kerman consulate. On this occasion I was fortunate enough to persuade my sister to accompany me to south-east Persia; and her work, *Through Persia on a Side Saddle*, deals with these two and a half years.

To Kashan the same route was followed as in my second journey: but by keeping to the west of the main route and travelling via Natanz and Kuhpa, a large blank on the map was traversed; it proved to be an exceptionally fertile district. After settling down at Kerman we made an expedition to explore Sardu, partly with a view to the elucidation of Marco Polo's route across it. In this we were entirely successful.²

In the following winter I was appointed assistant-commissioner on the Perso-Baluch Boundary Commission, and on this occasion traversed Baluchistan, both Persian and British, from west to east. The section to be delimited was about three hundred miles in length from the dis-



FIG. 4.—Kuhak, on Perso-Baluch boundary.

¹ This question is dealt with in *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, ch. xiv.

² Vide Yule's *Marco Polo* (Cordier's edition), vol. i.

puted village of Kuhak on the south to Kuh-i-Malik-i-Sia, where the British Empire now touches Afghanistan and Persia, to the north.

We travelled from Kerman to Kuhak, a distance of six hundred miles, in forty days. There the British camp under Colonel (now Sir Thomas) Holdich was joined, and we slowly travelled to Jalk, with its curious tombs, which are attributed to Kayanian *Maliks* or chiefs. It is somewhat difficult to explain the origin of the word "Kayanian," which is that of the oldest semi-historical dynasty of Persia: but it is known that the Saffar dynasty of Sistan claimed descent from this illustrious house; and scions of this family ruled in Baluchistan.¹ After the termination of the mission we marched to Panjgur and then across a waterless land, littered with remains of towns and villages which had apparently been deserted owing to the failure of the rainfall. We finally reached civilisation at Quetta, and my sister can claim to be the first English lady to have ridden from the Caspian Sea to India.

After passing a few weeks at Simla, orders were received for me to proceed to the Karun Valley to settle some thorny cases, and to report generally on the somewhat complicated Karun question.² This completed my third journey, during the course of which I had steadily added to my knowledge of Persia.

FOURTH JOURNEY, 1897-1901.

Towards the end of 1897, after spending a few months on leave, I was sent on special duty to the Persian Gulf. Incidentally I came in for a little expedition against a tribe termed the Karwanis—the name resembles the Karaonas of Marco Polo—who had murdered a telegraph official at a point half way between Jask and Chahbar. Early in 1898 I was dispatched from Bandar Abbas inland with instructions to co-operate with the Governor-General of Kerman, and effect the capture of the murderers.

This journey was carried out entirely on camels, as forage for horses was not procurable in the country. Considerable difficulty was experienced in engaging camel drivers, as Bashakird, where the murderers had taken refuge, was a land of terror; and as it was quite impossible to hire camels, a number had to be purchased.

From Bandar Abbas we marched to Minab, a picturesque village situated near the ancient Harmozia, at which port Nearchus left his fleet, and proceeded inland, to find Alexander the Great in the valley of the Halil Rud.³ From Minab we followed up the classical Anamis to Manujan, where it was hoped to meet the Governor-General, but his excellency had already reached Bampur.

Consequently I sent him a letter and informed him that I intended to march across northern Bashakird, and hoped that he would send troops to meet me at Ramishk, of which I knew the approximate situation. I then set out across a large blank on the map, my direction running parallel to my more northerly route of 1894. Throughout the

¹ Vide *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 229.

² *Ibid.*, ch. xxi.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

journey of 120 miles, an open plain was traversed. Not a single human being was met throughout. Upon reaching this town, situated at the junction of two valleys, I ran a great risk of being killed at the instigation of the Karwanis, who had retreated into this inaccessible district. Fortunately I was able to point out that a Persian force was soon coming; and upon rumours of its arrival, my position became less delicate.

From Ramishk I continued my journey eastwards, still traversing unexplored country, and at Fanooh I reached a centre visited by me in 1893, after successfully traversing northern Bashakird. I then marched down to Chahbar, where I was once again in touch with civilisation. The Karwanis, attacked on two sides, were obliged to surrender their chief, Shai Mohamed, who was duly hanged at Jask. Malik Jind, who was also implicated in the murder, was shot when trying to escape.

My next piece of exploration was in connection with the foundation of the Sistan consulate. After spending the summer at Shiraz I travelled to Isfahan, which, owing to its splendid Safavi buildings, is by far the most interesting city in Persia. There I was overtaken by Mr. King Wood of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, who was instructed to make a survey for the Central Persia Telegraph Line, which he afterwards constructed. From Isfahan to Yezd and Kerman we were on well-known routes, which need not be described. From Kerman we proceeded to Bam and Narmashir, where we reached the western edge of the Lut. Kuh-i-Bazman, of which we had caught a glimpse from the fort at Bam, was left to the south on this occasion. Throughout the desolate marches which followed, we were undoubtedly in a volcanic area; and the fact that one of the stony gorges was termed Dahana-i-Bulbulak, or "Volcano Gorge," added corroboration to this view. At a stage due north of Kuh-i-Bazman we discovered a sluggish salt river flowing north-west. So bitter was its water that no duck haunted its reed-beds. Sweet or drinkable¹ water had to be fetched from a distance: so we halted a day and tried for a wild ass. However, we only saw two of this timid quarry in the distance, and were told that even grazing camels drive them off.

We crossed the well-named Sia Band, or "Black Range," which holds up Sarhad some thirty miles north of the line we had followed in 1894; and three days later entered remote Kwash, where after having met no human beings for eight days, we rather felt as if we had come unto port after a sea voyage.

The supply question was urgent, and was complicated by a drought; and unable to halt, we moved round the eastern base of the great Taftan volcano to Sangun, where we saw a gigantic cypress, whose perimeter 6 feet above the ground was 25 feet. Sangun was in the centre of a belt of unexplored country, and was inhabited by Kurds, who stated that they had been settled in the district as "Wardens

¹ Upon analysis the water at every stage was pronounced to be "utterly unfit for human use."

of the Marches." By a more probable account they are descended from a party of travelling wrestlers. The head of the village Abdul Karim was friendly, although we were the first Europeans he had met. Shortly after our visit he was killed by a cousin in pursuance of a blood feud.

At Ladis we crossed Captain Jennings' route. The little district consisted of seven hamlets, from which forage and flour were only purchasable at famine rates and in infinitesimal quantities. Its water supply is good, and given security it would be a prosperous district.

We halted a day for Christmas celebrations; and we shot black and hill partridges, snipe, pigeon, teal, and a woodcock for our dinner. From Ladis the march lay north-east, my immediate objective being Kacha Kuh, one of the posts on the Nushki-Sistan route which was being opened up by the indomitable energy and perseverance of Major Webb Ware. The difficulty of his task may be estimated by the fact that between Nushki, then a small village, and Sistan there was not even a hamlet in the 500 miles of desert. By a fortunate coincidence an escort of the sixth Bombay Cavalry reached me on the day following my arrival at Kacha; and early in January 1899 the black naked peak of Kuh-i-Malik-i-Sia was reached. Thus ended my second journey across Sarhad, which had been traversed from end to end, and ceased to be a blank on the map.

The foundation of the consulate in Sistan excited much opposition. The fanatical religious element threatened an attack on my camp, unless I hauled down the British flag, and for some days the situation was strained. Finally, however, the innovation was accepted.

I then travelled all over Sistan, accompanied by the late *Khan Bahadur* Asghar Ali, a most able planetabler. The Kuh-i-Khoja, a flat-topped hill of volcanic origin, was first visited.¹ To reach it we engaged *tutins*, or rafts constructed of reeds, seated on which we were punted across the shallow *hamun* or lagoon. We landed close to the ruins of Kakkar, which consisted of numerous buildings erected round a square and protected by a fort built on the summit of the hill. Kuh-i-Khoja is connected in legend with Rustam, the famous champion of Iran, and the capture of Kakkar was his first exploit.

The wild fowl on the lagoon were a wonderful sight, in which connection I may mention that Sistan is a half-way house between the Volga and the Indus. In parts, the number of birds was so great that when they rose off the water, the sound resembled that of surf beating on a rock-bound shore. The stately Helmand, the classical Etymander, was speedily visited; and after weeks spent in arid wastes with a brackish water-supply, it was delightful to drink its delicious water. Its width was about 400 yards at the Sistan dam.

The new course cut out by the Helmand, known as the Rud-i-Parian, or "River of Fairies," was crossed with some difficulty as it was in flood; and this desertion of the ancient bed by the wayward river subsequently necessitated a Boundary Commission.

¹ At Buluwayo there is an identically shaped hill termed the Thabas Induna.

Among the many ancient cities which were examined, Zahidan, stormed by Tamerlane, was the most interesting. Touching it, ruined villages stretched for miles along the course of another ancient bed of the Helmand, known as the Rud-i-Nasru; and this fact induced a later traveller to declare that Zahidan covered a larger area than London!

In April the survey of the district was completed, and I marched north into the Kainat. This province had only been explored so far as its two main north and south routes were concerned. Consequently the tireless Asghar Ali was able to make the great square blocks of survey which are so satisfactory to the traveller and the cartographer alike.

We moved slowly up the undelimited Perso-Afghan frontier to Duruh and then to Tabas Sunnikhana. There we heard of a legend of Alexander the Great who undoubtedly passed through this province. From Tabas Sunnikhana we marched due west across the mountains to the capital of the province. Lying in a sterile valley Birjand was a most unsuitable site for a capital: but it has gradually ousted Kain, and is the centre of a large distributing trade, a part of western Afghanistan being supplied by its merchants. After spending a few weeks in official duties and ceremonies, the survey work was resumed. Two months were spent at Durukhsh, the centre of the carpet industry, which was situated to the east-north-east of Birjand in the middle of a large block of unexplored country. In August, as we slowly moved northwards, the town of Kain, famous for its saffron, was visited; and Nimbuluk, the northern district of Kain, was also surveyed. We then moved back towards Birjand passing through Sehdeh, the home of a colony of the sect of the Ismailis.

From Birjand I decided to return to Sistan. In the first place I travelled south-east to visit a famous cave at Chinishk. We finally found the little town, and after some demur were allowed to scramble down into the cave, which was lined with skeletons. At one point a round hole had to be traversed, which I managed with difficulty; and beyond it steps zigzagged down until the air became too foul to be safe.

On the edge of the Lut we examined some ancient copper mines termed Kala Zarri, or "Fort Golden." They have been worked from time immemorial, so the guide said, but no mention is made of them by Moslem writers.

Neh was visited on the resumption of the journey. Near it I discovered its interesting old town, which may be the city mentioned by Isidoros of Charax, the traveller in the reign of Augustus. From the neighbourhood of Neh we were able to see points fixed from Sistan; and our joy was intense to find that some 30,000 square miles of survey had been completed with remarkable accuracy.

Only a few weeks were spent in Sistan, and I then marched across the Lut to Narmashir and Bam by the route followed by the Sistan Mission of 1871. Thanks to the history of the Seljuks of Kerman, I was able to prove that the beacon pillars termed the "Columns of Nadir" and other public works which were passed, were constructed by

Malik Kaward, the Seljuk ruler of Kerman, and a contemporary of William the Conqueror. Finally, at the end of 1899, after having been constantly on the move for sixteen months, I reached Kerman, where I busied myself in dispatching a pioneer carpet caravan across the desert to Quetta. It proved a distinct success.

To the south-west of Kerman lay an unexplored triangle of country which I was able to explore in April 1900. The first town of interest was Nagar, where are ruins which Bishop Stileman was the first to identify as those of a Nestorian church. The great range termed Lalazar and then Bid Khan was crossed by the Kafanu or "Shroud" pass, and on the southern slopes lay Baft. West of this little town we

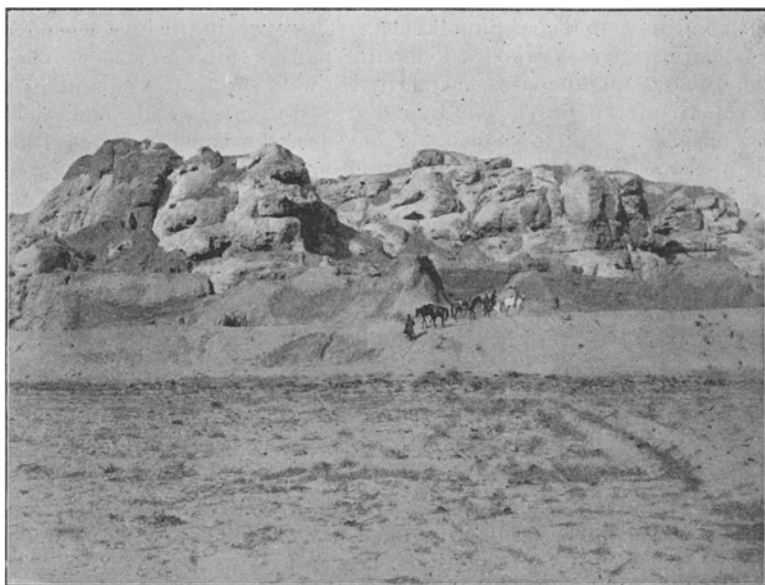


FIG. 5.—Kala-i-Beiza.

entered the unexplored tract, and after marching for two stages crossed the watershed dividing the drainage area of the Halil Rud from that of the great *Kavir* of southern Persia referred to in my first journey. Entering the district of Sirjan we rode downhill into the little town of Saïdabad, where our reception was most friendly.

A few miles to the east I made a discovery. The site of the ancient capital of Kerman was unknown, and its identification was of some importance in connection with the itineraries of the Arab travellers.¹ This ancient capital, known as Kala-i-Sang, or "Stone Fort," and also as Kala-i-Beiza, or "White Fort," is a splendid limestone crag which rises some 300 feet above the level plain. Approached from the east, it is surrounded by a ruined mud wall inside which was a beautiful stone

¹ Vide Le Strange's *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, p. 300.

pulpit. On it was cut an inscription dated A.H. 789 (1387) in honour of Sultan Ahmad, better known as Imad-u-Din, who was a prince of the Muzaffar dynasty of Fars, and was put to death by Tamerlane.

On the summit of the crag there were only a few shapeless ruins, but facing the pulpit is a fine grotto known as the "King's Seat"; below it was situated yet another grotto termed the *Anderun*, or "Women's Apartments." This successful tour was completed by returning to Kerman across a district inhabited by wild Buchakchi tribesmen, with whose chief I became acquainted. After adding this unexplored district to the map we returned to Kerman.

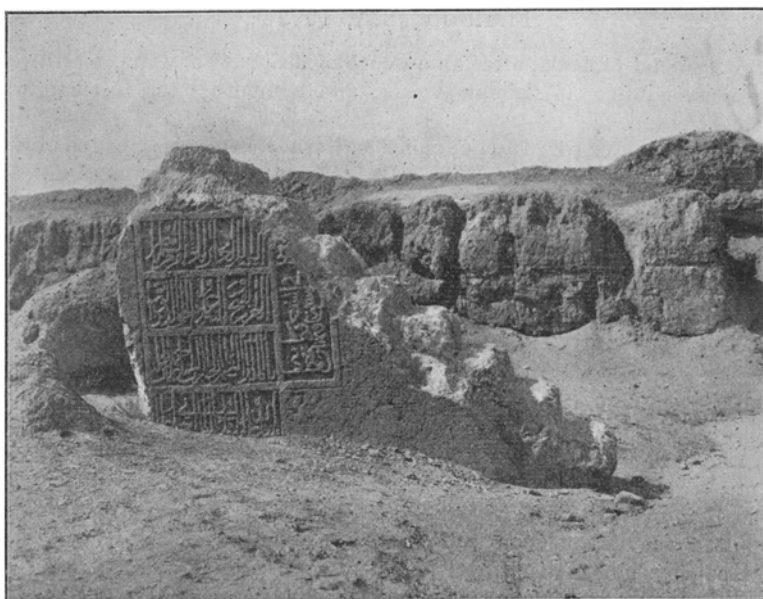


FIG. 6 —Stone pulpit with inscription at Kala-i-Beiza.

In the early autumn the small district of Khinaman to the west of Kerman was explored. Its governor, a friend of mine, had informed me that when trenching some land he had discovered a number of bronze weapons. This find proved to be of exceptional interest. It included two beautiful ceremonial axe-heads, pins, wristlets: also vessels of various shapes and some pottery. Canon Greenwell wrote a paper on the collection, which contains a detailed description of it, and to this I would refer.¹

In the late autumn I travelled in the district to the south of the Halil Rud Valley. In the course of this journey I was fortunate enough to find a Greek unguent vase of Oriental alabaster of the fourth

¹ *Notes on a Collection of Bronze Weapons, Implements and Vessels, etc.*, published by the Royal Anthropological Institute, 1906.

century B.C. It was undoubtedly left behind by the army of Alexander the Great, and now constitutes one of the most prized treasures in my collection.

After travelling for some months I proceeded to Bandar Abbas and Karachi. From this port I travelled to South Africa, where, until wounded, I served in command of a Yeomanry regiment. I was also able to notice the remarkable similarity between South Africa and Persia, which has more recently been commented on by Sir Mortimer Durand, who is also acquainted with both countries.

FIFTH JOURNEY, 1902-6.

At the end of 1902, after an absence of nearly two years, I returned to Persia, landing at Bandar Abbas; and a month later Kerman was reached.

In the winter of 1904-5, south-eastern Persia was visited by a Commercial Mission which I met in the district of Sirjan and conducted to Kerman. On New Year's Day 1905 we started off to Khabis, the "Riviera" of the province. To reach it range after range had to be crossed in considerable cold. During the course of one march we entered a grim and gloomy defile, shut in by beetling cliffs which towered thousands of feet above. When dawn lightly touched the peaks while we pursued our way below in gloom, it was impossible to exaggerate the beauty of the delicate shading of these old-time cliffs.

From the summit of the last steep pass we enjoyed a superb view across the Lut, which resembled a sea covered with great rolling billows. We were almost opposite Kala Zarri, which I had visited in the course of my fourth journey; and I was able to identify a sharp-cut peak termed Shuh Kuh, which I had seen from the copper mines. This mountain was distant quite 200 miles, and yet it was clearly visible.

Khabis is an ancient town embowered in palm groves. Its export of dates, oranges, lemons and limes is considerable. Like Nagar it possesses ruins which may have belonged to Nestorian Christians. From Khabis, situated at an altitude of 1800 feet, we rode to the large village of Gok with an altitude of 7000 feet, these two elevations showing the large scale of Persia. We halted a day at this village to allow the main camp a day's start, as a waterless stretch of forty miles had to be traversed. Fortunately the weather kept fine, and to my intense relief the party all reached Tahrud in safety.

At Bam, in spite of its date palms which pointed to a warm climate, the weather was bitterly cold and stormy; and even in Narmashir we had snow, to the huge delight of the Sikh escort of the Central India Horse who hitherto had only heard of it. In this district we explored the deserted cities built by the Arabs. They were four in number, and were termed the *Arba* or "Four" of Bam. Their names were Darzin, Nisa, Chugukabad and Jezan Khas, all of which we found and examined. The ruins of Nisa were specially striking, the walls being enormously thick and 70 feet high. Chugukabad was the ancient

capital of Narmashir and a great trade centre. The Arab writers refer to it as being a resort for merchants trading with India.¹

From Narmashir we crossed the main range to the south by the Gudar-i-Gishu, which was traversed by 'Krateros bringing the rest of the army and the elephants two thousand years ago.² If a railway line be constructed from Bandar Abbas to Sistan or Kerman, this pass, which is much lower than any other in the range, will be important. To the south we camped near a conical limestone rock, which is one of the wonders of the province, and is termed Mil-i-Farhad, or "The Column of Farhad." Two long stages west brought us to Bijenabad in Rudbar where at first supplies were refused, because the district was in rebellion. However, upon my explaining that such incidents did not concern us, forage and flour were brought in. We subsequently returned to Kerman by the Jabal Bariz range which I had already traversed.

Hardly had I reached Kerman after this journey than I was appointed to Meshed, and preparations had to be made for a fresh journey to the capital of Khorasan. As I had previously travelled by the direct route it was decided to go to Yezd and thence cross the Lut to Tabas, the great desert narrowing to about 200 miles at this point.³ The crux of this journey, which was trying to man and beast alike, consisted of a belt of sandhills in which we rescued some men unconscious from thirst.

After 200 miles of sun-scorched desert the palm-trees and gardens of Tabas appeared lovely; and the onward journey to Meshed, albeit for some stages we skirted or crossed the *Kavir*, or Salt desert, was pleasurable. After Kerman, everything in Khorasan, not only the people but the animals, appeared to be both larger and better fed. The flocks of sheep, too, were much bigger than in arid Kerman. My first journey was struck at Turbat-i-Haydari, and Meshed was entered, after a journey exceeding 700 miles, in early May, when the golden dome and the golden minarets appeared at their best in a sea of greenery.

In the autumn of 1905 I was fortunate enough to be permitted to penetrate Kalat-i-Nadiri, one of the wonders of Asia. This historical natural fortress is formed by the conjunction of inaccessible ranges; and the only entrances are through five narrow gorges which are easily defended. In shape the fortress exactly resembles a wild boar in profile, with the northern natural ramparts constituting its back and the Darband-i-Arghawan Shah its mouth. Through this entrance a river runs down the valley, and, following its course between high cliffs, a guarded gateway is passed and a fertile valley is entered. The life of Kalat centres in this narrow valley 12 miles long, which is inhabited by descendants of Jalayr and Gerashlu Turks, of Khivans, and of Arabs whom Nadir Shah settled in the valley.

We felt deeply interested at the sight of the Treasure House of Nadir Shah. It consists of a central dome some 90 feet in height, constructed of a variety of stone resembling Devonian sandstone. This

¹ Vide *Lands, etc.*, p. 313.

² Vide *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 174.

³ This is the route followed by the pilgrims in *The Glory of the Shia World*.

central dome is covered externally with fluted columns, and is surrounded by four sets of rooms. The whole was cased externally with

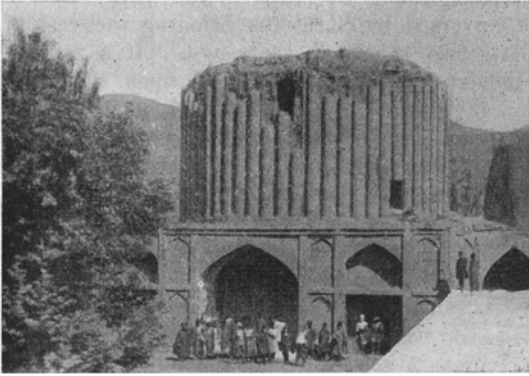


Fig. 7.—The treasure house of Nadir Shah.

marble, the panels being decorated with exquisitely cut trees and birds chiselled in relief, but some of the panels were plain, showing that the work was unfinished. The extensive vaults were situated beneath. This was the famous treasury of Nadir Shah, and these cellars about a century and a half ago contained the spoils of India, including the

famous Peacock Throne described by Bernier. We scaled the northern ramparts and looked across the immense plain of Turkestan, which stretches north in unbroken monotony to the Arctic tundra, and is perhaps the widest in the world. At our feet ran the Central Asian Railway, and the smoke of a train reminded us of home. The Deh Nafta entrance is most impressive. Nowhere have I seen titanic cliffs to match those of this impregnable defile whose natural difficulties defeated grim Tamerlane. Indeed, Kalat-i-Nadiri has stamped ineffaceable recollections on my mind.

In the late autumn of 1905 a tour was undertaken to the Afghan frontier. We left Meshed by the Herat road, and the first halt was made at Sangbast. There we examined ruins of a tomb and college, built early in the eleventh century by Ayaz, the favourite of Mahmud of Ghazni, in honour of his religious leader. A lofty column of burnt brick contained a Kufic inscription in an almost perfect state of preservation.¹

The second stage from Meshed was Fariman, situated on a fertile plain. The cultivated land was dotted with Turkoman towers. The custom was for cultivators to fly to these little towers when an alarm was raised, to close the entrance with a stone, and then to stand at bay with their matchlock sticking out of the only aperture.

We crossed the range to the south by a pass termed Kalla-i-Minar, or "Pillar of Skulls." It appears that in the last century a Turkoman robber levied blackmail on all travellers. Any who proved to be recalcitrant were killed, and their skulls *more persico* were built into a pillar. In the valley below our objective was Shahr-i-No, the chief centre of the frontier district of Bakharz. Curiously enough its inhabitants are the descendants of Arabs from Medina. From Shahr-i-No we crossed a second range to the frontier town of Khaf. It is noted for its

¹ Dr. Dietz, the Austrian archæologist, whom I advised to visit these ruins, considers them to be of great importance from the architectural point of view.

pinus, which are said to be grown from seeds brought from the Himalayas.

A few miles to the east is situated the famous college of Khusrugird. It is a double-storied square, with outside measurements of 160 feet by 150 feet. The main gateway is a noble piece of work, inlaid with coloured bricks, and decorated with a blue mosaic inscription. Of this, the right half, consisting of verses from the Koran, was defaced and illegible, but the left half was copied, and is to the effect that Shah Rukh, aided by Ahmad of Khaf, constructed the college in A.H. 848 (1444). The interior is built round a court with four open arches. The coloured bricks are still intact, but the mosaics, which are exquisite, are almost all defaced. Their colours are sapphire-blue, with yellow, green and white, the motive of the pattern being conventional Kufic letters. Fine dark blue mosaic tiles, with conventional flowers in light blue, white and gold originally covered the interior of the arches, but most of these had been stripped off. The names of the two architects were recorded in an inscription. One of them, Kawam-u-Din, built the superb Gauhar Shad mosque at Meshed, which perhaps is the finest in Central Asia.

From Khaf we moved east to Karat, which boasts of a column with a Kufic inscription; and at Karez we struck the main Meshed-Herat road. The little frontier village possesses considerable interest from being the birthplace of Hakim Burkai, celebrated by Moore as "The Veiled Prophet of Khorasan."

We visited the Hari Rud, another of the historical rivers of Central Asia. It was 120 feet wide and its waters were extremely salt. Both banks were covered with tamarisk. Lower down, under the name of Tejen, it divides Persia from Russia for a few miles, and is finally lost in the sands near the oasis of Tejen.

Turbat-i-Shaykh Jam was next visited. It is chiefly known as being the birthplace of Jami, the last classical poet of Persia. Shah Abbas built a handsome shrine in honour of the Shaykh, whose name was Ahmad, an Arab of the twelfth century, and of this we took photographs.

Leaving the old-world shrine with its nonogenarian guardian who claimed descent from the Saint, we travelled north to Zorabad. There across the Hari Rud lay the Zulfikar pass, and on the summit of the cliff we could see two white pillars, which are the actual point where the Indian and Russian empires meet. They were set up nearly thirty years ago by an Anglo-Russian Commission. We first came opposite the pass in the white glare so familiar to frontier officers, but when the setting sun shone on it, each sombre crag was lighted up and the stern beauty of the evenly serrated cliffs was most impressive.

From Zorabad we struck the lower reaches of the Kasnaf Rud, and after securing specimens of *Phasianus principalis* for the Natural History Museum we followed up the valley to Meshed. This completed my fifth journey.

SIXTH JOURNEY, 1906-10.

Ever since my appointment to Khorasan I had been contemplating a journey down the Gurgan Valley to Astrabad, but it was not until the

autumn of 1908 that this long-cherished project was carried out. Major Watson, acting consul of Turbat-i-Haydari, accompanied me, and to him I am indebted for assistance in many ways.

We first marched up the valley of the Kasnaf Rud and then crossed the main range westwards to the renowned turquoise mines. These are situated some hundreds of feet up the hillside, which is of a magenta hue. The mine we visited was entered by a tiny grille, and, after descending perhaps 100 feet, we crept along a low lateral gallery and reached a cavern. There by the dim light of earthenware lamps, two parties, each consisting of three men, were cutting off pieces of the rock with chisels and hammers, and this was the extent of the operations! The blocks were roughly broken up and carried by boys to the surface in bags. In the village the contents of these bags were poured into shallow pans, into which water was run. The fragments were then treated by boys, who worked them with their feet for an hour or more. This process was repeated three times, when the pieces of turquoise were collected, made up into small sealed bags and dispatched to Meshed, where the *hakkak* or cutters are established. To resume, west of the mines we were in an unexplored belt of country, the last of any size in Khorasan. The districts were termed Safiaband, then Juwayn, a sub-district of Sabzawar. Bearing northwards we forded a salt river, and crossing a low pass entered the fertile district of Isfarayin. Its ancient city was examined, and a plan made. Near the south-west corner was a very strong fort, situated on a mound. Yakut termed this *Kala-i-Zar*, or "Gold Castle." To-day it is known as "The City of Bilkis," Bilkis being the name given to the Queen of Sheba in the Koran.

Separating us from Bujnurd lay the main Elburz range, and crossing it we were warmly welcomed by the young chief whom I had met



FIG. 8.—The Gurgan defile.

during the course of my previous visit, when his father was alive. From this Kurdish centre we marched west across the fertile Semalghan plain through unsurveyed country to the low hills at the head of the Gurgan defile. There we spent some days, stalking the superb wild sheep and the magnificent stags until both supplies and time ran

short. The Kurds have a blood-feud with the Goklan Turkoman, and the beautifully wooded country is deserted by both parties, only shikarees risking the chance of being shot at sight by their neighbours. Consequently no Kurd could act as guide during the onward journey.

We rode down the superb gorge with the autumnal tints of the trees backed by the stupendous cliffs. At the nearest Turkoman village the entire population took to the jungle. Gradually, however, they returned, and good relations were quickly established, much to my relief, as we had only one day's forage in reserve. On the following day we rode through a very fertile district, past ruined villages which had formerly belonged to the dispossessed Geraili Turks, who still maintain themselves in the mountains. The chief of the Goklan Turkoman, Mohamed Geldi by name, invited us to an entertainment at his *atachik*, or round tent, which was most interesting. A few years later our host was caught by the governor of neighbouring Nardin, and, in spite of offers of his weight in money as a ransom, was blown from a gun.

During three marches we rode down the rich valley, which is only cultivated in tiny patches by the savage Goklan; and it was pitiable to see thousands of acres of rich well-watered land wasted in a country where the rainfall is, as a rule, so scanty.

From the ancient site of Paras we had espied the conical tower of Gunbad-i-Kabus, and, riding out into the open steppe, we suddenly found ourselves close to a Russian cantonment, where we were welcomed with true Russian hospitality. The Gunbad-i-Kabus was erected, as the Kufic inscription shows, by Kabus, son of Washmgir, in his lifetime in A.H. 375 (997). He was a well-known prince of the local Ziyarid dynasty, and was deposed and put to death by his nobles. Termed *gunbad*, or dome, the monument is, in reality, a high fluted tower with ten sides, and a perimeter of 180 feet. Its height is also perhaps 180 feet. It constitutes a wonderful landmark, and is one of the most remarkable monuments of the period in Persia.

From Gunbad-i-Kabus we crossed the river Gurgan to examine the great wall known as the *Sadd-i-Iskandar*, of which faint traces remain. According to Rawlinson it was constructed to keep the White Huns out of Persia. To the south-west lay the extensive ruins of Gurgan. Mukadassi, in the fourth (tenth) century described the fine mosques and gardens, and expatiated on the superb olives, oranges, lemons and other fruit; he also referred to the output of silk, and to the river-borne trade. To-day there is simply a dreary area covered with bricks, the city apparently having never recovered from the Mongol cataclysm. Continuing our journey we entered the forest zone at Ramian, and finally reached Astrabad.

The return journey was made across the Elburz to Shahrud. There we struck the main road, followed by conquerors and travellers alike from Rei and Tehran to Khorasan and High Asia. Passing through Sabzawar and Nishapur we reached Meshed, after concluding a journey of 900 miles in ancient Parthia and Hyrcania.

In 1909 a journey was undertaken to the south-west of Meshed. My chief object was to examine the site of what was believed to be Sasanian Nishapur; and after that to visit ruins said to be those of ancient Turshiz. The range was crossed to Darrud and Kadangah—the latter a stage to the east of modern Nishapur; and we camped at Ishakabad, the nearest village to the ruins.

Upon riding towards our goal we crossed a salt river flowing west, and found the ruins of a stone bridge which appeared to be of Sasanian work, but of this I could not be sure. We rose very slightly and reached our goal on a bare gravelly plain. There was a wall which had almost sunk down level with the ground, but which had evidently enclosed an area of 310 yards from north-east to south-west by 260 yards. At the northern angle were the ruins of a fort raised on a mound. To the south-west of the city was a second similar line, of which only the north-eastern side, measuring 720 yards, could be distinctly traced. Fragments of reddish and of blue glazed pottery were found on the site first described.

To turn to what we know of Nishapur, the word is undoubtedly derived from Niv-Shahpur, signifying "the good deed of Shahpur." According to Arab historians it was founded by Shapur I., son of the founder of the Sasanian dynasty. After his death it fell into ruins; and was rebuilt by Shapur II. It is mentioned that Nishapur was small, and of no importance at this period. Taking the above facts into consideration, and the universal consensus of opinion in the neighbourhood that these ruins represent the first and second Sasanian sites, it seems probable that they were the cities founded respectively by Shapur I. and Shapur II. After our inspection we travelled to modern Nishapur, 24 miles to the north-west, and examined the various ruins, of which a plan was made.

The second section of the journey ran south-south-east across a very salty district to Katkan, an important village which we were the first Europeans to visit. It contains a shrine in honour of a certain *Nizam-ul-Mulk*, the date of which was A.H. 938 (1532). The Kuh-i-Surkh range to the north of Turshiz was next explored, and, crossing it, we reached Raus, its chief village. Another stage brought us to the modern capital of Turshiz, which is situated close to older Sultania, which is not termed Sultanabad as on the map.

We halted a day, and then marched due west across the fertile plain, and after a long march we reached Kishmar. This historical village is famous in Persian legend as being the spot where Zoroaster, the Prophet of Iran, met Gushtaps, the king whom he converted to the new faith. In memory of the event a cypress was planted, which grew to a supernatural size until, hundreds of years later, it was felled by orders of the Caliph Mutawakkil in A.H. 247 (861). In Kishmar we found a magnificent building which bore a strong resemblance to the *Gumbad-i-Kabus*, and is possibly of the same date. The interior was decorated with rich plaster work, but no date was discoverable, and the villagers connected it with Zoroaster, as was only natural.

A short march to the south-west brought us to the ruins of ancient Turshiz, which do not appear to have been examined by any previous traveller. It was the capital of the district which was then known as Busht-al-Arab. It was besieged by Tamerlane, who tapped the water in the ditch, and then drove a mine under the walls which collapsed. The fort was not a very large one; outside was a column, which rises to a height of some 70 feet, with a Kufic inscription. A good deal

of pottery was brought for sale, which I subsequently presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum. Of greater interest was a Chinese snuff-bottle and a piece of old Persian glass. This old site was the farthest point of the tour, and returning to Meshed some old sites were visited to the south of the district, after which I returned to my headquarters. This concluded my sixth journey.

CAPTAIN F. M. BAILEY'S LATEST EXPLORATION.¹

By Lt.-Colonel A. C. YATE.

CAPTAIN F. M. BAILEY, of the Indian Army, is, as is well known to readers of this *Magazine*, the elder son of the late Colonel Frederick Bailey, who succeeded Mr. Silva White as Secretary of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, a post which he held till within a few years of his death, which took place at the end of 1912. Thus the son was brought up in society and surroundings calculated to nurture and develop any natural bent for exploration. The last letter which I received from Colonel Frederick Bailey is dated June 12, 1912, and was written shortly after the Gill Memorial had been awarded by the Royal Geographical Society to his son, who, to quote the terms of the Royal Geographical Society award, "in 1904 was personally attached to Captain Rawlings, the leader of the expedition from Lhasa through Tibet, and has quite recently" (April to August, 1911) "carried out an important journey from China to Assam by way of Batang and Rima on the Upper Lohit, making a careful traverse of the route." Colonel Bailey's letter naturally reflects the pride which he felt in the success of his son's enterprise, and concludes with an expression of regret that the obligatory exclusion of all political matter detracted from the interest of the paper, descriptive of his son's last journey, which appeared in the April numbers of the Royal and Royal Scottish Geographical publications for 1912.

It is a difficult matter for one who has never approached nearer to the borderland of Assam and Western China than the Kunlon Ferry over the Salween, and who has consequently been unable to follow the records of exploration along the marches of South-West Sechuan and South-East Tibet with that closeness which personal knowledge facilitates, to weigh with accuracy and impartiality the parts played by a succession of explorers in achieving the solution which has now been effected. Very recently Mr. F. Kingdon Ward has brought out the account of his travels along this frontier from April to December, 1911, in a volume entitled *The Land of the Blue Poppy*. Had Captain Bailey been in search of a picturesque title for his monograph on this country, I conceive that he would have blossomed into "The Land of the *Yellow Poppy*"; for I cull the following from the early part of his article: "Below the pass I saw some magnificent yellow

¹ This paper appears also in the *Journal* of the Central Asian Society, part I., 1914.

SKETCH-MAP OF PERSIA, AFGHANISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN
 Showing the Journeys of Lt.-Col. P. M. Sykes, C.M.G., C.I.E., etc.



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