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'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad'

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About this record

The volume is *Report on Sistan and the Country Between it and Mashad* [Mashhad], by Lieutenant H D Napier, Staff Lieutenant, Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India. It was printed at the Government Central Printing Office, Simla, 1894. It consists of two parts, political and military.

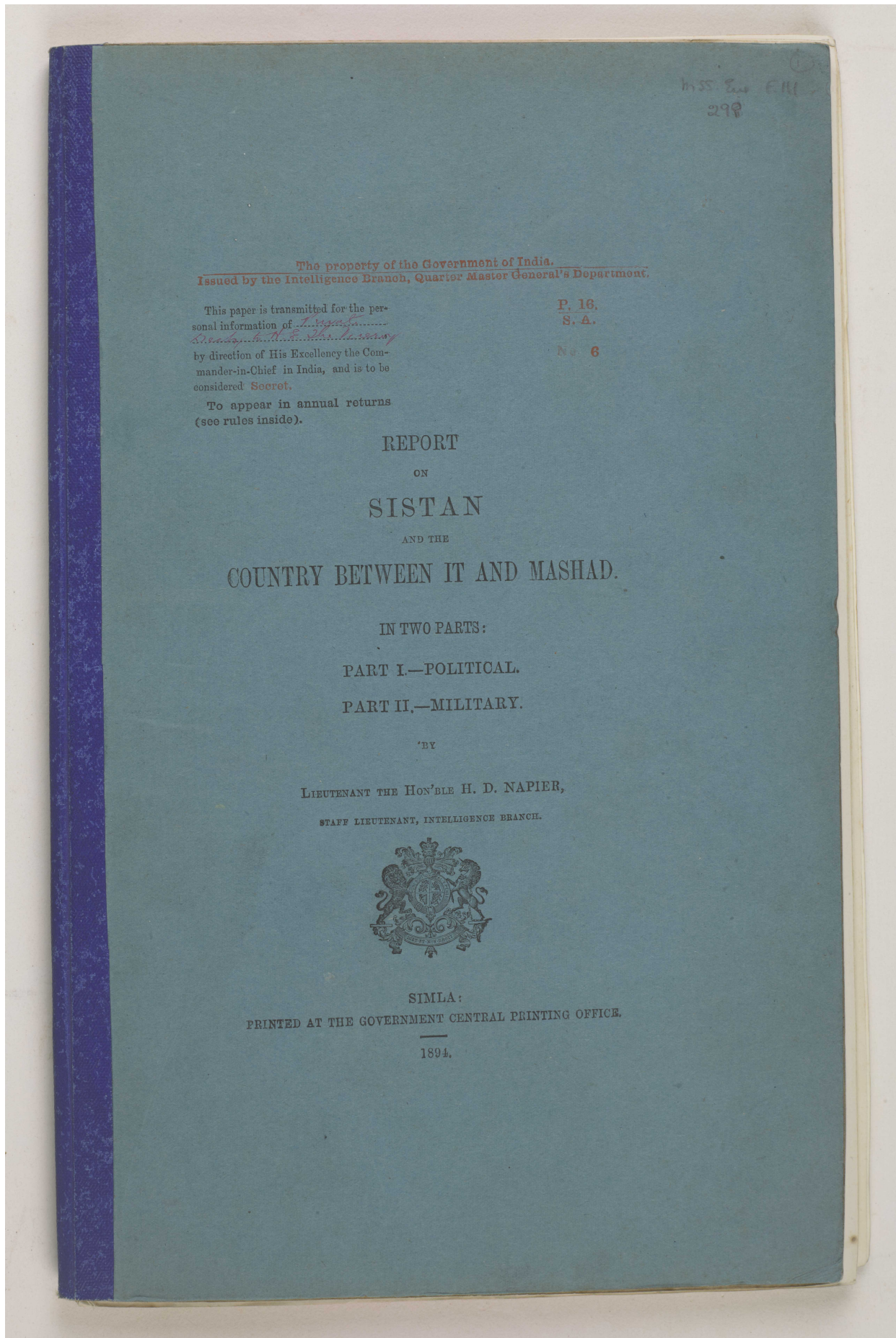
The report is largely based on a journey from Mashad to Sistan and back undertaken between 1 November 1892 and 18 March 1893 by the author; his munshi and a native of Mashad, Haji Jawad [Haji Javād]; a sub-surveyor of the Queen's Own Corps of Guides, Sher Ali Khan [Shīr 'Alī Khan]; a 'gholam' [young servant] from the Governor of Khorasan (unnamed); and a Turkoman [Turkmen] 'postal sowar' [mounted orderly or guard] (unnamed). It provides information and statistics (often tabulated) on the history, geography, economy, population, resources, roads, and meteorology of the region. The information in the military section reflects concerns with supplies, transport, and development possibilities.

Throughout the volume there are numerous photographs, plans, and sketches. These are of fortifications, landscape features, sites of historical or cultural interest, and notable people. In a pocket at the rear of the volume is a map that illustrates the report.

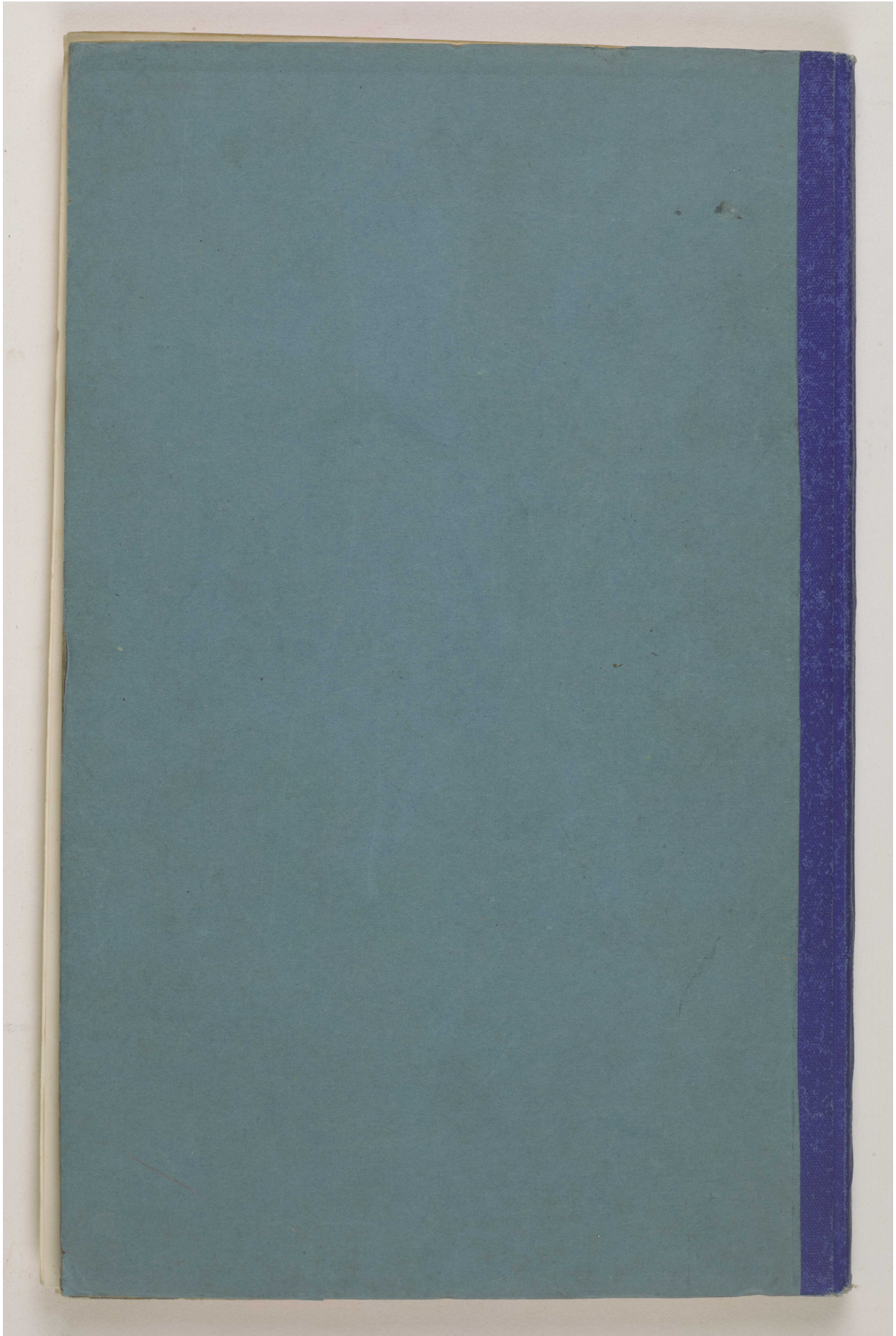
Near the beginning of the report there is a preface (folio 4) written by Lieutenant-Colonel George Hand More-Molyneux, Assistant Quarter Master General, Intelligence Branch, on 7 May 1894, and guidance for the 'Custody and Disposal of Secret Books, Reports, &c., Issued by the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's

Department in India' (folio 3).

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [front] (1/118)



'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [back] (2/118)





'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [edge] (4/118)



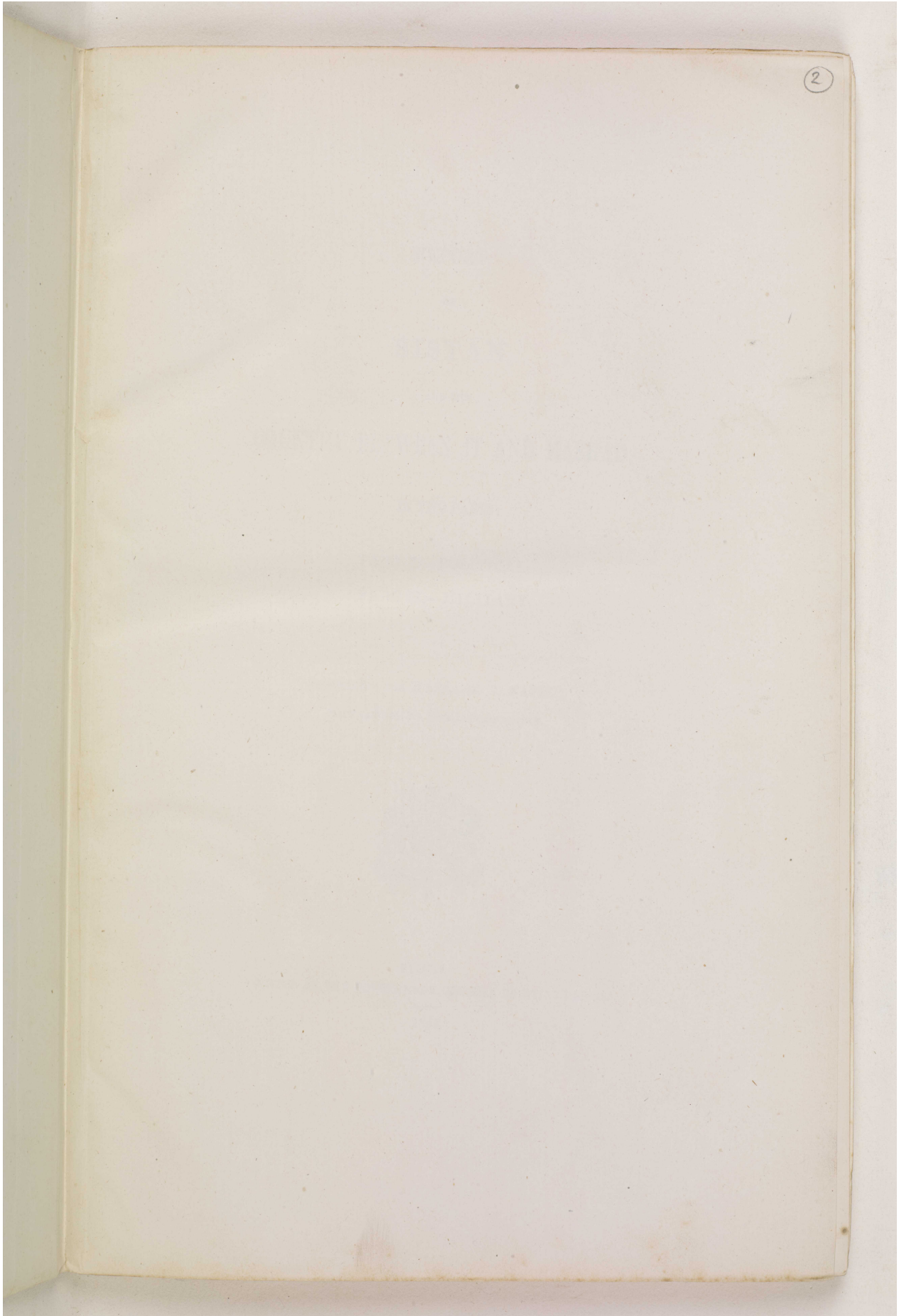
'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [head] (5/118)

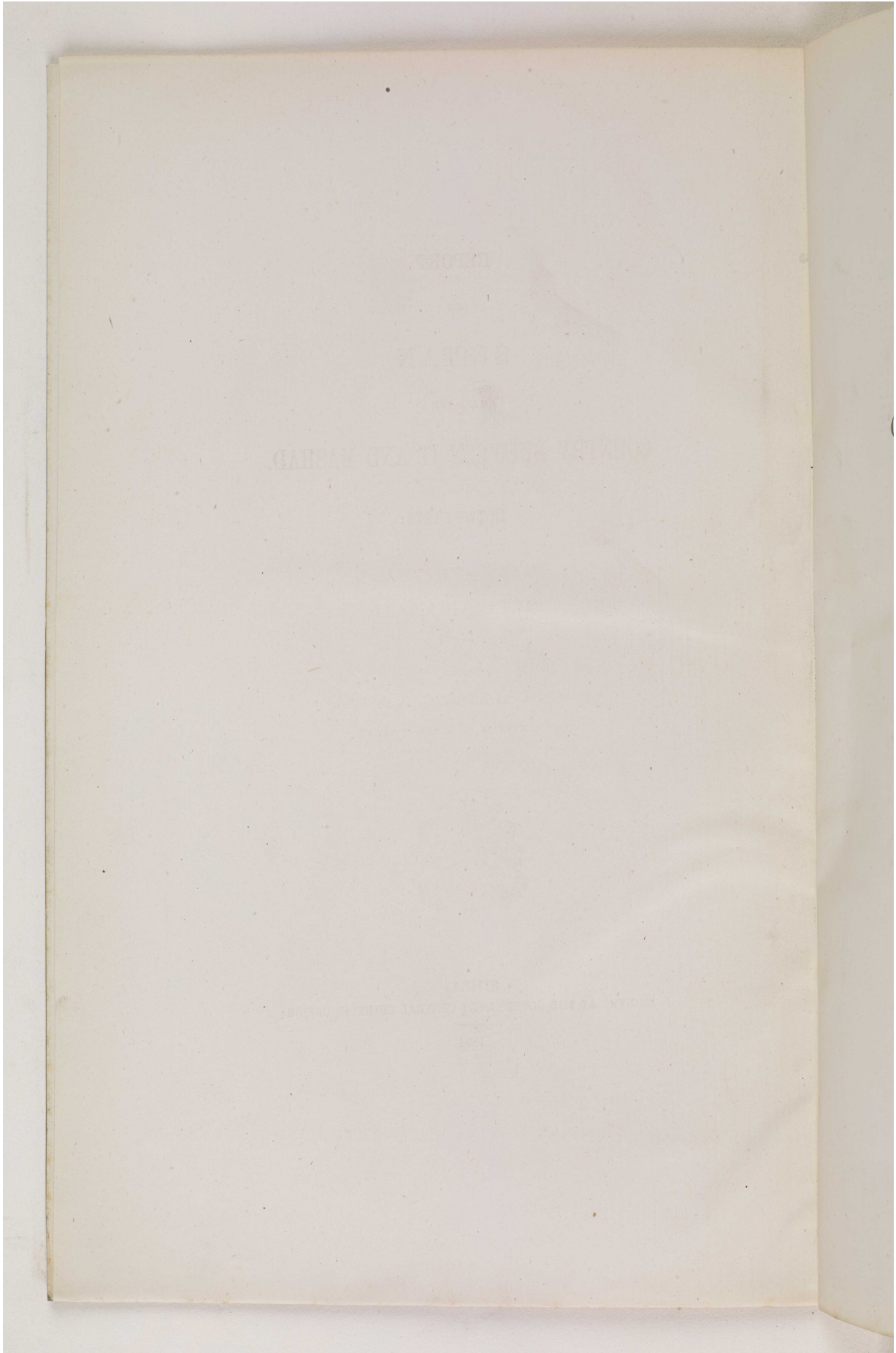




'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [front-i] (7/118)







'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [3r] (10/118)

REPORT
ON
SISTAN
AND THE
COUNTRY BETWEEN IT AND MASHAD.

IN TWO PARTS:

PART I.—POLITICAL.

PART II.—MILITARY.

BY

LIEUTENANT THE HON'BLE H. D. NAPIER,
STAFF LIEUTENANT, INTELLIGENCE BRANCH.



SIMLA:
PRINTED AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRINTING OFFICE.

1894.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [3v] (11/118)

CUSTODY AND DISPOSAL OF SECRET BOOKS, REPORTS, &c., ISSUED BY THE INTELLIGENCE
BRANCH, QUARTER MASTER GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT IN INDIA.

The attention of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief having been called to the want of system in the custody, use, and disposal of secret works, &c., His Excellency desires that in future the following regulations may be strictly adhered to:—

- (a) Officials to whom works of a secret nature are issued will be held personally responsible for their safe custody, and they must be very careful to keep them under lock and key, and under no circumstances to leave them where they are likely to be observed by people who should have no access to them. They will submit annually (on the 1st January) to the Intelligence Branch a return showing that such matter is still in their possession.
- (b) When an official to whom a secret work has been issued vacates his appointment or is transferred or proceeds on duty or leave (out of India for any period, or in India for any period exceeding three months), all secret works in his possession, if held in his official capacity, must be personally made over to his successor (be he temporary or permanent), and a report submitted to the Intelligence Branch by the officer handing over the issues showing that this has been done. The following is the form of report to be made:—

Certified that I have this day delivered over to.....the following secret works issued to me by the Intelligence Branch:—

No.	Full title of work.	No. of vols.	No of copies.	REMARKS : Explaining reason of handing over.

Place and date.

Signature

Signature of receiving officer

In the case of officers of the District Staff, these reports must be sent through the G. O. C.

- (c) In the case of an official leaving his station under circumstances other than above stated, it is optional for him to hand over the secret works in his charge to another officer with the above prescribed formalities; but, if he does not do so, he is as responsible for them during his absence as he is during his presence at his station.
- (d) Personal or complimentary issues of secret works will be held by the recipient until his departure from India, when the secret matter will be returned to the Intelligence Branch for safe custody, or special permission obtained for its retention.

ARMY HEAD QUARTERS ;
Simla, 1st October 1891. }

JAMES BROWNE, Major-General,
Quarter Master General in India.

Intelligence Branch Diary No. $\frac{18 \text{ of } 1894.}{\text{Persia.}}$

PREFACE.

LEUTENANT Napier visited Sistan in the winter of 1892-93, being employed under the Foreign Department. He received instructions from the Intelligence Branch to furnish a report on Sistan and the country between it and Mashad.

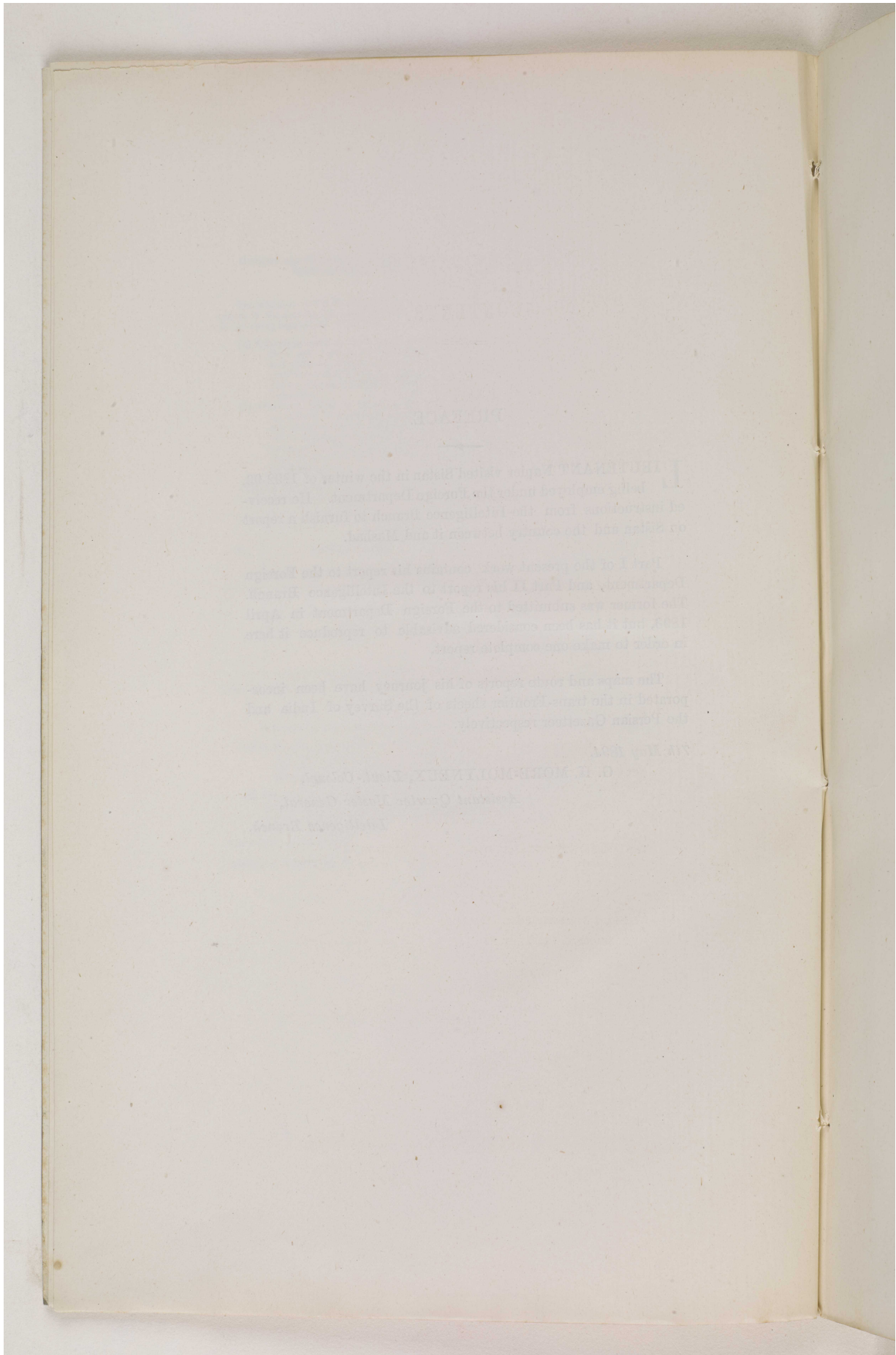
Part I of the present work contains his report to the Foreign Department, and Part II his report to the Intelligence Branch. The former was submitted to the Foreign Department in April 1893, but it has been considered advisable to reproduce it here in order to make one complete report.

The maps and route reports of his journey have been incorporated in the trans-Frontier sheets of the Survey of India and the Persian Gazetteer respectively.

7th May 1894.

G. H. MORE-MOLYNEUX, *Lieut.-Colonel,*
Assistant Quarter Master General,
Intelligence Branch.

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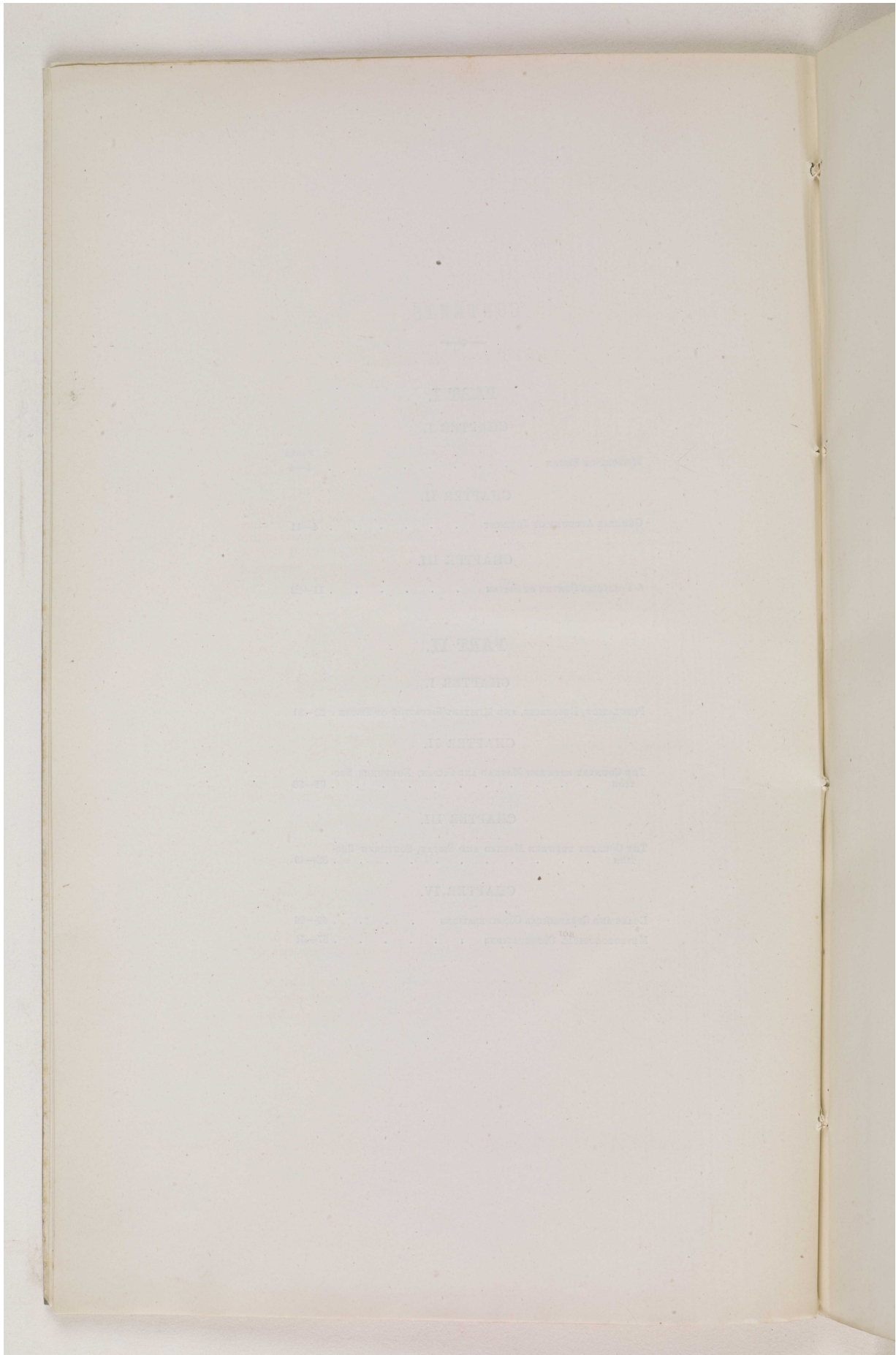
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PART I.—POLITICAL.

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CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF SISTAN.

An account of the ancient and modern history of Sistan has been already given in some detail by Dr. Bellew, but it will be as well, perhaps, before commencing an account of my journey to Sistan, to make a short précis of this and of Captain Napier's report of 1872 while bringing the history up to date.

Sistan was once an important portion of the dominions of Cyrus and Darius.

In 1333 A.D. Taimur invaded the country.

In 1502 it was an independent principality, under a local chief, like the other provinces of Persia.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, and for some time afterwards, it remained under Cayani chiefs as a portion of the Persian empire.

Early in the eighteenth century the ruling Cayani chief made a struggle for the Persian throne, but was bought off by the Afghan chief of the Ghilzai tribe, then dominant in Persia.

About 1730 Malik Husein, a Cayani chief, successfully withstood a seven years' siege on the Kuh-i-Khwaja against Nadir Kuli, a general of the Persian Shah Tamasp; but was subsequently conquered by Nadir, who destroyed all the fortresses in the country.

In 1747 the kingdom of Afghanistan was founded under Shah Ahmed, and the Cayani chief of Sistan tendered him his submission and allied himself by marriage to the Afghan ruler.

Then Shah Ahmed conquered Khorasan, and extended the limits of Afghanistan to include Turbat-i-Haidari, Tun, Tabas, Kain, and Neh.

From that time Sistan under its Cayani chiefs came under the Governor of Herat.

In 1773 the Cayanis were deposed, and Mir Beg, a Shahreki chief, was made Governor. He, however, quarrelled with the Sarbandi clan, and was killed at Rudbar.

The Cayanis were then restored under Malik Bahram, who called in the Nahroe Baluch to assist him against the growing power of the Shahreki and Sarbandis.

About 1793 anarchy prevailed in Afghanistan, and the various tribes of Sistan allied themselves, some with the Kandahar and others with the Herat ruler, so that the country was devastated by inter-tribal feuds.

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In 1800 Mahmud invaded Afghanistan from Persia, and, with the assistance of the Arab chief of Kain and the Cayani, Shahreki, and Sarbandi chiefs of Sistan, seized Kandahar and Kabul.

In 1833 the Sistanis took part in the defence of Herat against the Persians. From that time up to 1845 Sistan remained subject to Kohndil Khan, the chief of Kandahar, and the Sarbandi under Muhammad Ruza were the dominant clan.

In 1848 Muhammad Ruza died and was succeeded by his son, who changed his allegiance to Herat.

Kohndil sent an army into the country, captured Herat assisted by the Nahroe Baluch, and made Ali Khan, a brother of Muhammad Ruza, Governor of Sistan.

Soon after Kohndil Khan and Ali Khan began to intrigue with Persia, each on his own account.

In 1855 Kohndil died, and Ali Khan hoisted the Persian flag.

About this time the Persians, who were again besieging Herat, took the opportunity to occupy the Lash Juwain country by the help of Ali Khan and of Mir Alum Khan of Kain, and even tried to capture Farah.

At the conclusion of the war they continued to hold the Lash Juwain country, but subsequently abandoned it in consequence of the demands of the Amir of Kabul, backed by the British Government, and retired west of the Helmund.

Then the Sistanis, finding themselves brought under Persian rule contrary to their wishes, rebelled against Ali Khan, and set up his nephew, Taj Muhammad Khan, who attacked Sihkuha, the capital, and slew his uncle.

Taj Muhammad ruled independently till 1862, when he tendered his submission to Persia. In 1866, in consequence of his intrigues with Afghanistan, he was attacked by a Persian army and by Mir Alum Khan of Kain, and was taken prisoner to Tehran.

Sharif Khan, Nahroe, was made Governor, and the Persians built the fort of Nasirabad to secure their position in the country.

From this time the Persians made steady encroachments eastwards, intriguing with the chiefs of Chakansur and Lash.

Mir Alam Khan soon succeeded Sharif Khan as Governor, and his efforts to further Persia's designs east of the Helmund led to such a threatening attitude on the part of the Amir of Afghanistan that the Shah appealed to the British Government. The British Government at first refused to interfere, but eventually an Arbitration Commission was agreed upon, and Colonel Goldsmid was appointed to delimitate the boundaries in 1872.

His award was as follows:—

“The main bed of the Helmund below Kohuk should be the eastern boundary of Persian Sistan, and the line of frontier from Kohuk to the hills south of the Sistan desert should be so drawn as to include within the Afghan limits all cultivation on both banks of the river from the bund upwards.

“The Malik Siah Kuh appears a fitting point north of Sistan. The southern limit of the Naizar should be the frontier towards Lash Juwain. Persia should not cross the hamun in that direction. A line drawn from the Naizar to the Kuh Siah hill near Bandun would clearly define her possession.

"It is, moreover, to be well understood that no works are to be carried out on either side calculated to interfere with the requisite supply of water for irrigation on both banks of the Helmund."

The same year, a few months after the departure of the Commission, the Sistanis broke out in rebellion against the domineering chief of Kain, and shut him up in Nasirabad on the 21st December.

His chief enemies were Ibrahim Khan of Chakansur, Ahmed Khan of Lash Juwain, Sharif Khan of Nahroe, Kamal Khan of Bandar, and Malik Abbas Khan, Cayani.

The tribes against him were the Sanjurani, Cayani, Shahreki, Nahroe, and Sarbandi.

In February 1873 he was relieved by a force from Mashad. He was, however, recalled from Sistan, and a Persian entitled the Samsam-ul-Mulk was made Governor.

During his brief reign, a Persian official was sent to demarcate the frontier as laid down by Colonel Goldsmid in concert with an Afghan deputy; but, acting perhaps on secret instructions from Tehran, the Samsam-ul-Mulk obstructed the proceedings, and finally dismissed the officers on the following objections:—

1st.—The Afghans are able to cut off the water.

2nd.—People will emigrate to the Afghan side.

3rd.—The loss of the Tarakun grazing lands.

4th.—The loss of the greater part of the Naizar.

As Captain Napier remarks: "The Persians, therefore, refused to accept the arbitration; the boundary line, although known, was not declared to the people and not respected. However, the Persians abandoned the Tarakun lands and Bandar Kamal Khan, but managed to secure revenue from a number of villages on the Afghan side, some of which belonged to Sharif Khan and Ibrahim Khan, both enemies of the Governor of Sistan."

The Samsam-ul-Mulk soon quarrelled with Sharif Khan. A complaint was made to Tehran that he wished to keep the rebellion open for purposes of plunder, and he was recalled, but not before he had succeeded in beating Sharif Khan and his ally Ibrahim Khan, who fled to Chakansur, leaving his villages on the Persian side to be confiscated.

In December 1873 one Muhammad Jafar Khan was appointed Governor, but was recalled in July 1874, and in December Mir Alum Khan was reinstated.

In March 1875 a deputation of Sistanis went to Tehran to protest, but without avail, and Mir Alum Khan continued in power until his death.

During his rule the objections of the Persians to the award were made known to the British Government, and various attempts were made from time to time by Persia to reopen the question.

In 1882 the Persians falsely complained that the Afghans had drawn off the water at Bandar, and that in consequence their land was lying waste and the population was dwindling; and in 1884 the Amir of Afghanistan complained that the Persians refused to evacuate land north of the Naizar, which led to a request from the Shah that this clause might be reconsidered; but the Viceroy of India has always strongly deprecated any change, and indeed

stated that the Government of India will not be answerable for the conduct of the Amir of Afghanistan if the award be not maintained in its strict geographical accuracy.

On the death of Mir Alum Khan in 1891, his second son, Ismail Khan, was appointed Governor of Birjand, the hereditary seat of the chiefs of Kain; and his eldest son, Ali Akbar Khan, was made Governor of Sistan.

The cause of this preference for the younger son is said by some to be a quarrel which Ali Akbar Khan had had with his father; others affirm that Ali Akbar was given the more difficult task of ruling Sistan because he is more a man of the sword than his brother; while others again hint that Ismail Khan was more politic in disbursing the large sums of money so essential to obtaining high office in Persia.

Their difference in age is, however, very trifling.

The only other son of Mir Alum Khan now alive is a boy of ten years of age called Muhammad Ibrahim Khan.

Ali Akbar Khan has one son of about the same age called Mir Mahsum Khan. Ismail Khan has no sons.

Such was the condition of affairs at the time of my visit, which I will now describe.

CHAPTER II.

GENERAL ACCOUNT OF JOURNEY.

I left Mashad on the 1st November 1892 charged with letters of congratulation and presents from the Agent to the Governor-General for Khorasan to the Governors of Birjand and Sistan on their succession to their respective posts.

I was accompanied by a munshi named Haji Jawad, a native of Mashad, by Dafadar Sher Ali Khan, Queen's Own Corps of Guides, sub-surveyor, by a gholam from the Governor of Khorasan, and a Turkoman postal sowar from the Agency.

I reached Birjand on the 19th November, and was received by a servant of the Amir, as the Governor is called, who offered me accommodation in the village, which, however, I had no need of.

The next morning the head "Mustofi" came to enquire my business, and I arranged a time to call on the Amir.

Soon after the usual presents of tea and sugar were brought, as well as some sheep and a quantity of ghee.

In the afternoon I rode out to the Governor's residence, which is situated a little way outside the town on the south side. A small detachment of infantry received me at the gate, and, after crossing the courtyard of a not too pretentious abode, I was ushered into the presence of a fat and very stolid-looking man of about forty years of age. This was a surprise, as I had been led to believe Ismail Khan was quite a young man. Moreover, his servant had informed me he was a great sportsman and could at full gallop send a

bullet through a lemon thrown up in the air, whereas his appearance led me to doubt whether he could even mount a horse.

However, after the customary greetings, I presented this Nimrod with a rifle and revolver and also a watch, and handed him the letter of congratulation.

He appeared pleased, and we conversed on various topics, during which I told him of my intended visit to Sistan, and mentioned that a letter would reach him about me from the Amin-es-Sultan. He appeared incredulous.

I then asked him about Captain Strelbitzsky's visit to Sistan, and whether he had made the acquaintance of that Russian officer.

He replied, "Certainly he had done so. Strelbitzsky had stayed in Birjand twice."

I noticed that his manner was constrained, and he appeared anxious to get the interview over as quickly as possible. He informed me that he was going out into camp very soon to visit his eastern frontier, where I knew the Afghans of the Farah district had recently made a raid. This was just about the time of the Shiah persecutions in Herat, and Persians were more than usually bitter against Afghans. I had also heard that he had locked up some unoffending traders of Sabzawar in retaliation for this attack, so, without referring directly to this, I expatiated on the measures that the Indian Government had successfully taken to protect the Shiahs.

Though he applauded this, his tone throughout was not sufficiently reassuring to induce me to refer to political questions more intimately concerning himself. So after mentioning that England was desirous of cultivating friendly relations with him, I took my leave.

The next day I was informed that Sartip Haji Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, a brother of Ismail Khan, was coming to see me, and he shortly appeared, causing me another surprise, for the sartip or colonel turned out to be a nice and intelligent-looking little boy about ten years old, who shyly apologised for his brother not returning my visit in person as he was just moving into camp. This was an evasion I had expected. However, I entertained the boy as well as I could, and gave him a watch on his departure. I then returned a visit I had received from the Colonel Commanding the Artillery of Birjand, which consisted of six or seven 12-pounders and 36 gunners, all told. He was a pleasant, cheery fellow, who had visited Paris in the suite of the Shah, and was consequently delighted to meet some one who could corroborate the stories of "Farangistan" with which he astonished the natives.

In the evening the letter of recommendation from the Amin-es-Sultan reached me by the Persian post from Mashad. It was very satisfactory, stating that I was going to Sistan on business connected with British subjects, and commanding the Amir to show me every civility during my stay in his country. This I sent him immediately, for he was leaving next day.

I mentioned at the same time that I would not require the gholam he had kindly offered me, as I had one already from the Governor of Khorasan; for I had heard that the man he was sending was really to be a spy on my actions, and he looked a very sharp and intelligent rascal. His name was Ghias Beg, and he seemed to be a sort of confidential factotum. He figured successively as peshkhidmat, tufangdar, and gholam, and was also the kadhuda of a village. He had been to Askabad; for Strelbitzsky, when he

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was here last year, not only gave the Amir a rifle, but showed him a ready means of making money by trading direct with Russia.

In the same letter I also told him that his Afghan prisoners had petitioned me (two of them had bribed their guards and come up to my tent), but that, as they were not British subjects, it was not for me to interfere. At the same time I remarked that if he appealed through our Consulate, the British Government might restrain the Afghans, but could not do so if he indulged in reprisals.

Ismail Khan acknowledged my letter, and, with reference to the gholam, replied that the Governor of Khorasan had expressly ordered him to send a man with me. The Sahib Diwan (Governor of Khorasan) had, previous to my departure from Mashad, shown himself distinctly averse to my mission. Regarding the Afghans, he said he was going to the frontier to enquire into the matter, and would release the prisoners if his own men had not been ill-treated.

During the day it had been carefully made known to me that the Amir had already disposed of my presents, giving the rifle to his "mustofi" and the watch to this very gholam, so that now there was no doubt of his real sentiments. I was surprised, however, that the Amin-es-Sultan's letter had had no effect.

Next morning I left Birjand. The tops of the Bagheran mountains were just tipped with snow. The high road to Sistan bends to the east, but I chose the unfrequented track round the western slope of the range. At Mukhtarun, a large village three marches beyond Birjand, the headman wanted to stop me, as I had no gholam from the Amir. Ghias Beg, instead of accompanying me, had first gone off to settle his own affairs in his village, and had no doubt sent on a man to detain me till he could overtake us, for the villagers of themselves are never obstructive.

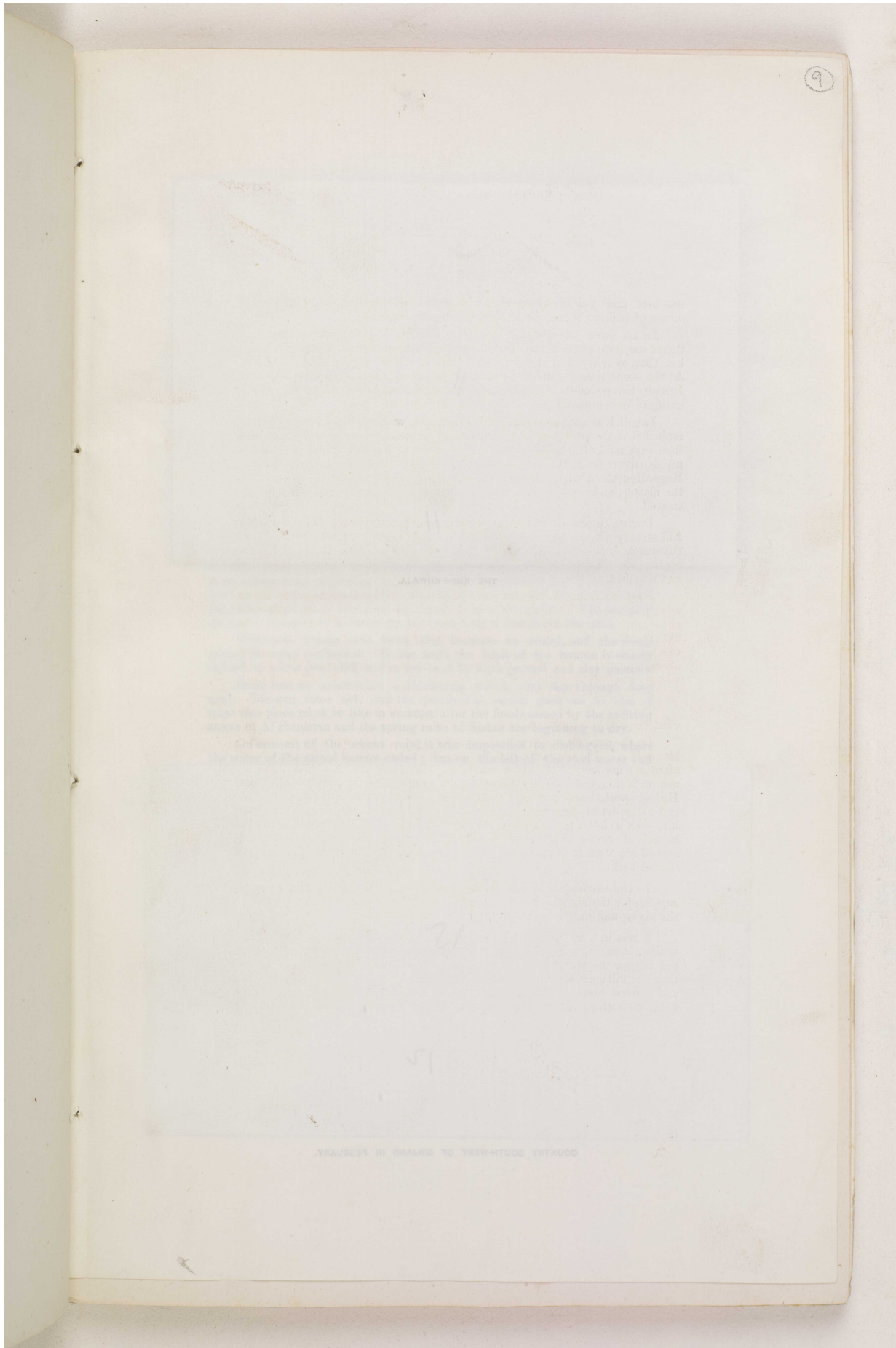
However, I took no notice of the somewhat menacing attitude of the villagers, and moved off without a disturbance.

On the seventh day Ghias Beg caught me up, but made no excuses for his absence. The next day also he remained behind, following me some hours after on a donkey, as his horse was lame. My camp at this place was not near any village, so I thought this a good opportunity of getting rid of him. He had openly boasted to my servants that he was sent to take charge of me, and not to let me go where I liked. Accordingly, next morning I dismissed him with a letter to the Amir, saying how he had stayed behind, and that he was of no use to me. He at first refused to go, declaring he had business of his own in Sistan, but, on my insisting, pretended to give in and started back.

In the evening I arrived at the next stage, Zainulabad, and procured supplies for the night. Next morning I heard the gholam had arrived during the night, and the villagers would give no more supplies.

I was in a fix, for I had 60 miles of uninhabited country in front of me, without counting a small village a few miles on which had been also warned not to give me provisions. However, I ordered the muleteers to load up, and then the villagers collected round to bar the road. I then sent for the gholam and ordered him to disperse them, but he said I had dismissed him, and he could do nothing unless I re-engaged him. This was Sistan territory. I

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'The Kuh-i-Khwaja' [9v] (1/1)



THE KUH-I-KHWAJA.



COUNTRY SOUTH-WEST OF BIRJAND IN FEBRUARY.

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had the Amin-es-Sultan's letter read out and warned him he was taking a risk.

The villagers said they would obey the orders of the Amir, and would not let me pass.

I then ordered the ghulam to accompany me to Sistan, and he at once dispersed the villagers and had the necessary supplies sent on to Bandun, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles further, at the mouth of a defile, where I was obliged to halt owing to the rain and mud.

At Birjand I had heard that Ali Akbar Khan was at Tabas. He is married to a daughter of the hereditary chief of Tabas, the Amad-ul-Mulk, who is said to be a wealthy and influential prince, and he no doubt finds it a pleasanter place to live in than Sistan.

This incident rather tended to corroborate the impression I had received at Birjand that, in the absence of his brother, the Amir of Kaim would be found all-powerful in Sistan.

Next morning we left Bandun in a thick Scotch mist. It had been raining for two days, but as the country is a slightly undulating gravel plain, the road was not in bad order up to within a few hundred yards of Barang, the next halting-place. This name implies the edge of the hamun. There is no village here, only some clumps of tamarisk raised a few feet above the level of the surrounding country. On the left is the mud basin of the lake, the water of which at this time appeared to be a mile away. The camping ground is bounded by a curved gravel beach only 4 feet above the mud.

When the hamun is in flood, this becomes an island, and the floods extend far away southward. To the north the limit of the hamun is clearly defined by a low grey cliff, and to the west by high ground and clay mounds.

From here we commenced a distressing march next day through deep mud. The sun came out, and the pestilential stench gave one an idea of what this place must be like in summer after the floods caused by the melting snows of Afghanistan and the spring rains of Sistan are beginning to dry.

On account of the recent rain, it was impossible to distinguish where the water of the actual hamun ended; but on the left of the road water and reeds alternated. To the south is a low flat-topped hill, the celebrated Kuhl-i-Khwaja, about 400 feet high, planted on the edge of the reed-bed and completely commanding the entrance to Sistan. The reeds, over 10 feet high, form an almost impassable barrier to anything but an elephant.

The road is merely a clearing through the reeds, deeply furrowed with ruts.

Twenty miles of road from Barang to near Afzalabad lie through reeds and bare mud liable to be flooded.

Such floods do not occur every year; once in three years seems to be about the average.

From Afzalabad we wandered over a dreary-looking waste of lumpy ground covered with a low tamarisk scrub, and soon came in sight of Nasirabad. It presents quite an imposing appearance amongst the few miserably-built villages round about, with its tidy-looking wall and regular bastions.

On arrival I was received outside the fort by an "istikbal" of 10-file of ragged infantry and a few gunners, who conducted me in great state to a walled garden 500 yards north of the fort, where I pitched my camp.

Next morning the acting Governor, Naib Abdurrahman Khan, called on me.

He is a rather tall and thin man, of perhaps 50 years of age, agreeable-looking, and apparently very anxious to please, but a man of little authority.

Both at Birjand and here I noticed that the chief is everybody and the rest nowhere. He brought the pillars of the state with him. They consisted of a yawar (captain) called Mir Ali Beg and a munshi.

I showed him the Amin-es-Sultan's letter, which evidently impressed him, and told him I had come to see Ali Akbar Khan, and was also going to enquire about the possibility of opening up a post route between Meshed and Quetta, which might also prove of assistance to caravans plying between Sistan and India.

I did not say anything about the gholam until next day, when I returned his call and secured a private interview. He then told me the gholam had accused me of having taken some important letters which were intended for himself,—that is, Abdurrahman Khan,—and had invented some other lies about me.

I told him the facts of the case and gave him a slip of paper which I had taken from the gholam before dismissing him. It contained the usual order to kadhudas of villages to give me supplies, mentioning my name.

I then demanded the gholam's dismissal and asked for another, which he granted me.

I could see he was anxious to do what he could, but he was afraid of offending the Amir of Birjand, as he is himself a Birjandi and keeps his family there.

He told me that Ali Akbar Khan was secretly at enmity with his brother, and I explained to him that all this hostility had emanated either from the Sahib Diwan, Governor of Mashad, or from Ismail Khan, and that Russian intrigue was at the bottom of it, for they were jealous of our developing trade-routes and thus curtailing their own profits.

I gave him a silver watch before leaving, and he was delighted.

This did some good, and I got rid of the gholam, but he remained in Nasirabad all the time I was in Sistan, and, acting no doubt under the instructions of the Birjand chief, was instrumental in procuring an order to all the kadhudas of villages not to give me any information.

The result was that I was regarded everywhere with great suspicion, though always treated politely.

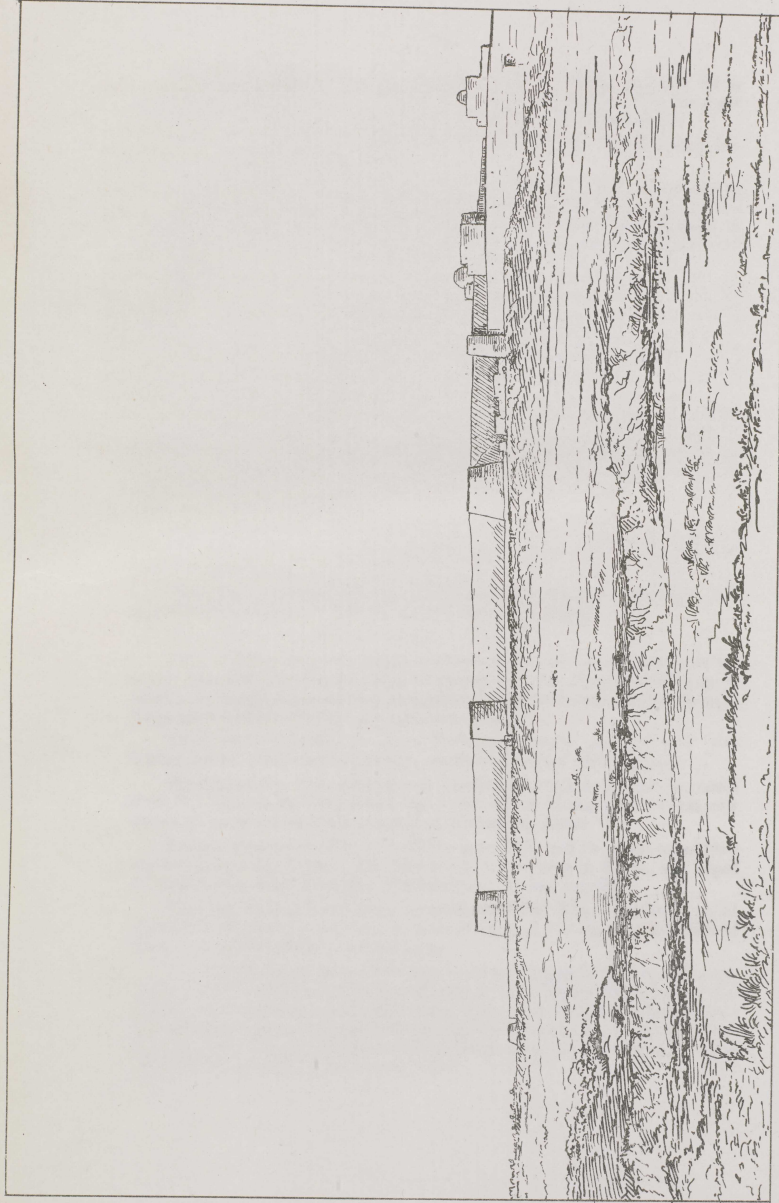
I remained in Sistan proper a little over three weeks, working from north round by east and south to west, and then, returning to Sihkuha, travelled round the God-i-Zirreh to investigate the projected post route, about which I have already sent in a report.

On my return I had intended to explore the Palang Kuh range and the country west of it in accordance with the general instructions given by Mr. Elias, and then to visit Ali Akbar Khan at Tabas on my return journey to Mashad. But on returning to Sihkuha I ascertained that Ali Akbar Khan had been ordered back to Sistan, and that he was leaving very shortly and would stay some time in Birjand on his way.

'Fort of Nasirabad Sistan, The "Ark." [11r] (1/1)

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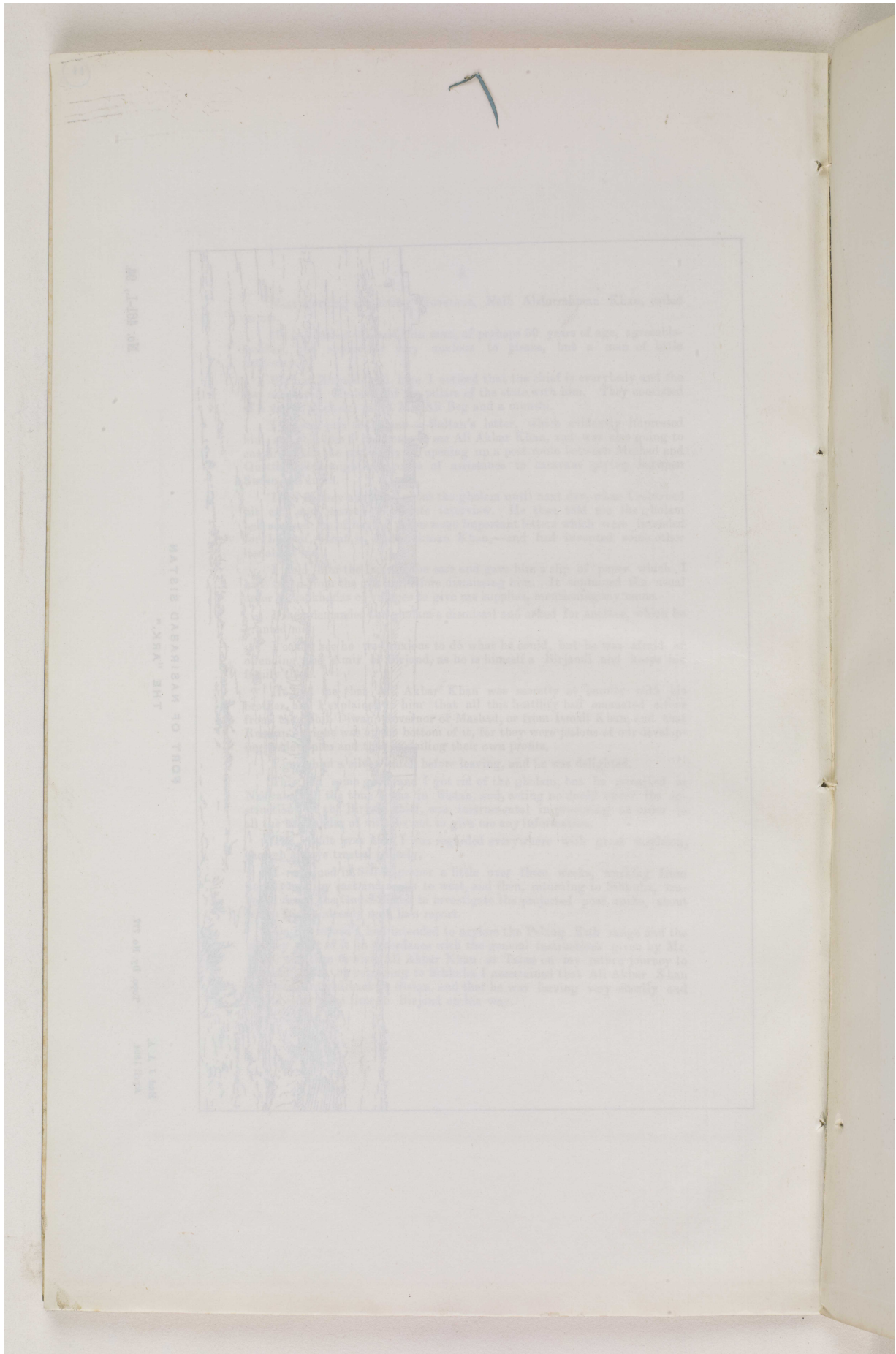


FORT OF NASIRABAD SISTAN
THE "ARK."

No. 461-I, 94.

Expd. J. A. A.
April 1894.
Topo. Dy. No. 777.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [11v] (27/118)



'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [12r] (28/118)

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I also knew that one or two Russian doctors would probably be in Birjand about that time ; and taking into consideration the way the Amir had behaved, it was not desirable that I should meet Ali Akbar there.

The Governor of Sistan might thus be "got at" by the Russians before I had been able to say a word.

I accordingly posted a man off to Tabas with all speed to ask him to defer his departure a few days, as I would be passing Khur, and would like to meet him there. Khur lies on the road between Tabas and Birjand, at the junction of another road running north and south, by which I proposed to travel.

I then marched to the base of the Palang Kuh, and, following it up, arrived at Neh in about a week. There I met two Russian doctors who had come from Mashad *via* Birjand in a cart drawn by four horses.

Russians are about the poorest horsemen in the world, but they have a wonderful seat on a cart, and will find their way across country on wheels where no one else would dream of driving.

They came and called on me, and I discovered they were the second instalment of doctors for Mashad. Before leaving I had met one at the Russian Consulate, who, I afterwards heard, had started in my tracks, but returned in consequence presumably of Mr. Elias' representations to Tehran that the ostensible reason of his journey, the outbreak of plague and cholera in Sistan, was invented for the occasion.

Meanwhile cholera actually did break out in Birjand after I had passed through, and gave the Russians another opportunity, which they at once availed themselves of.

These doctors were civilians. They were of Armenian extraction, and appeared pleasant, cheery fellows, though somewhat rough.

One of them was suspected of being an engineer.

They told me they were fully convinced of the futility of their journey, as everyone said there was no plague in Sistan, but the Russian Government would not be satisfied until they had pursued their investigations on the spot. They had travelled very fast and carried no tents.

Their party consisted of three Turkoman sowars mounted and two drivers and an interpreter in the cart, which also carried their luggage.

Simultaneously with their arrival I received instructions regarding them from Mr. Elias on the supposition that I was still in Sistan, which I was now unable to carry out as I was committed to meet the Amir.

I asked them when they intended to leave Neh, and they said something about resting a day or two ; that they would not be long in Sistan, and hoped to catch me up, when we might travel back to Mashad together.

They had no idea I was going to meet Ali Akbar Khan and knew about my visit to Birjand, so they were as little desirous of my company as I was of theirs, and left for Sistan next morning.

I heard afterwards that they visited several villages in Sistan, and especially warned the people to have nothing to do with Indian goods and to discourage any opening up of Indian trade routes, as it was by this means that the cholera had found its way into the country last summer. I do not think they can have done much harm. The Sistanis were already warned of their approach and what their real objects were.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [12v] (29/118)

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On the 9th of February Ali Akbar Khan arrived at Khur. I was there two or three days before him, as he had put off his departure ten days on my account, and was delayed on the road by some heavy snowstorms. He was travelling with a large suite and all his harem.

Next morning he pitched a reception tent, and we had a long interview. He received me with the greatest courtesy, regretted having been away from Sistan, and hoped everything had been done to entertain me in his absence.

The first glance showed me he was a very different stamp of man to his brother, and I understood the constant allusions of the peasants to him as "shamshirtar" when compared with Ismail. Really a trifle older, he is much younger in appearance than his brother, and a fine, strong, soldierlike man for a Persian. He is a little stout, about the middle height, and has a strong, resolute-looking face that precludes the idea of his being dominated by his brother. His manner is singularly straightforward, and he struck me as being a man of considerable ability.

If he allows his brother to meddle with Sistan, it must be owing to indifference and disgust at finding himself in the inferior position and not to incapacity or weakness.

During this interview I presented him with Mr. Elias's letter and presents, which again consisted of a rifle and a revolver. He was much pleased with them and handled the rifle like a sportsman.

In the course of conversation I explained as well as I was able the English policy as regards Afghanistan and Russia.

He took great interest in the matter, especially concerning Afghanistan, and appeared to be well informed on the subject. His idea was that we would continue to find the Amir refractory until we had given him a good beating, and he was anxious to know whether we were likely to do so, quite appreciating the delicacy of the situation. As regards English interests in Sistan, he expressed the greatest sympathy, and said I might rest assured that he would do whatever lay in his power to further them; that, of course, he was the servant of the Shah, and his sanction would be necessary in case of any projects we might have in view—this with reference to the establishment of a post route,—but that he was well aware of the great friendship existing between our Government and Persia.

Our interview ended here, but in the afternoon I rode out some distance with him, as he had to move on to the next village for supplies for his enormous caravan.

This gave me the opportunity of a more private conversation, and I pointed out to him that we were nearer neighbours to him than the Russians were by reason of our command of the Persian Gulf, and that there was a possibility of our becoming nearer neighbours still by the voluntary adhesion of Baluchistan to the British Crown.

He agreed that it would be greatly to his advantage to be on friendly terms with us, and, moreover, assured me that he had a great respect for British power.

At parting I gave him a very nice telescope in recognition of the handsome way he had entertained me during the short time we were together.

Though it must have been at considerable inconvenience to himself, he insisted on sending me all my meals ready cooked and served up in about twenty different china dishes on a most lavish scale.

'Ali Akbar Khan, Governor of Sistan.' [13r] (1/1)

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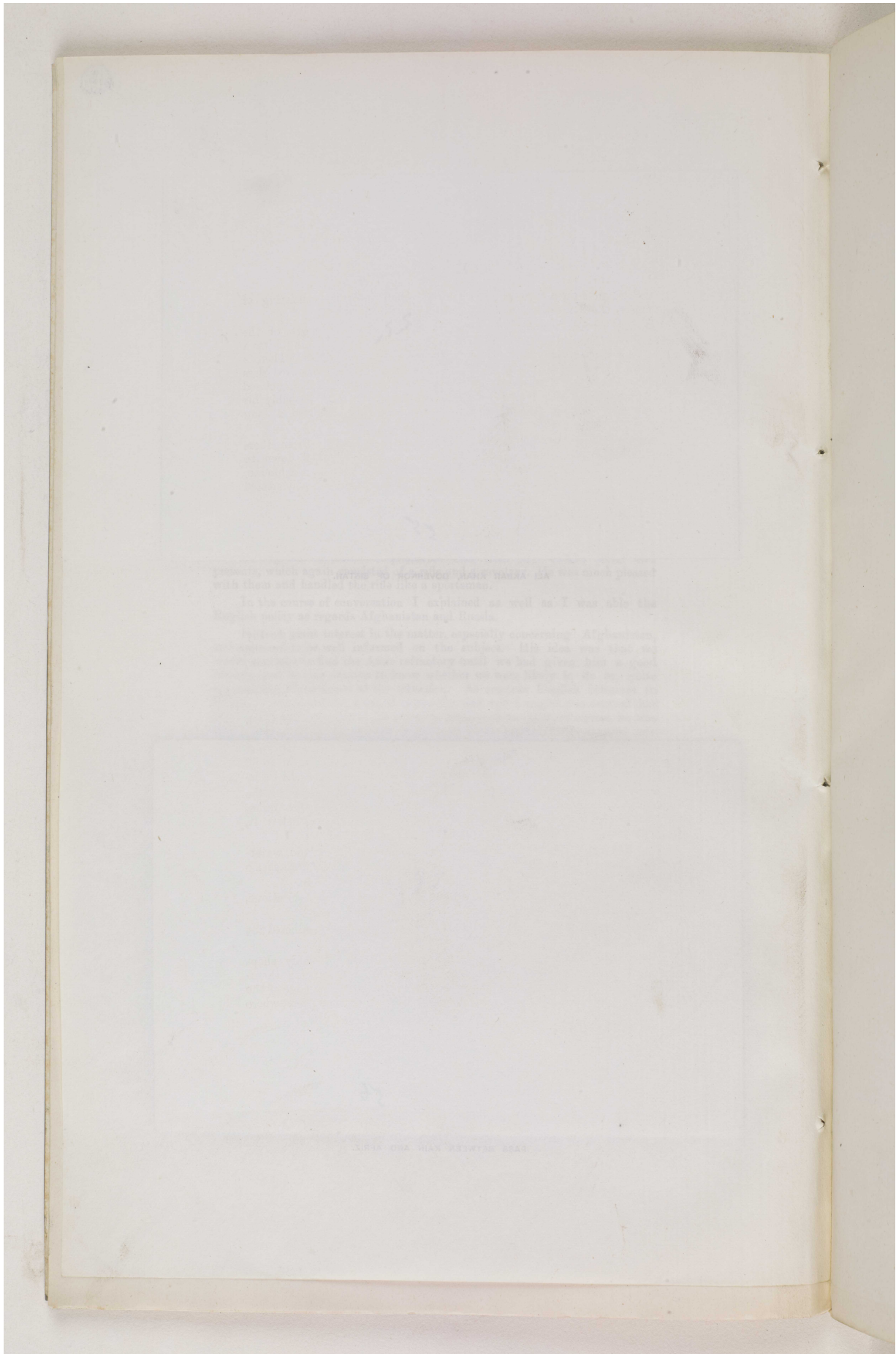


ALI AKBAR KHAN, GOVERNOR OF SISTAN.



PASS BETWEEN KAIN AND AFRIZ.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [13v] (31/118)



He also gave me a curious assortment of small presents, consisting of sweetmeats, sherbet, saffron, pieces of cloth, and a Kain carpet.

During my ride back to camp I had to pass the whole length of the caravan. At the head rode Ali Akbar Khan, and immediately behind him a small party of mounted sowars. Then came some of his led horses. Then a lady of the harem followed in a green palanquin with discreetly-coloured glass windows. After her came several women in mule panniers, and then a closed carriage drawn by a pair of cream-coloured horses. This was probably his principal wife, the daughter of the Amad-ul-Mulk. Then followed a long string of baggage animals.

Next morning I left Khur, travelling north-east to Kain. From there I went along the east of the Ahingeran range to Sharaks, then down to Tabas in Sunikhana, and gradually back to Mashad by way of Hashtadan, where I noticed they had already begun to demolish the pillars recently erected by General McLean.

I arrived at Mashad on the 18th of March.

CHAPTER III.

A POLITICAL SURVEY.

Sistan is bounded on the north and north-east by a dense and marshy thicket of reeds gradually merging into the hamun, except along the road to Lash Juwain, and the strip on either side of it, which is generally dry.

The eastern boundary is formed by the main and most easterly arm of the Helmund, which at the Sistan bund flows in a single bed, but spreads out a little lower down into a network of smaller channels meandering through a low swamp covered with thick tamarisk jungle, 10 or 12 feet high, and as impenetrable as the Naizar. What is called the main stream is only 45 feet wide, but is a trifle deeper than the other branches, which vary from 30 to 60 yards in breadth, and are from three to four feet deep in winter at the fords.

To the south the line drawn from the Sistan bund in the river to the Malik Siah Kuh cuts off from Sistan a tract of about 2,000 square miles, partly desert plateau, and partly a rich alluvial plain some 400 feet below it, which was formerly watered by the Tarakun canal.

To the west Sistan is bounded by the Palang Kuh, a rugged and waterless range of about 6,000 feet in altitude, at the base of which stretches a gently sloping gravel plain for about 16 miles down to the flat clay.

To the north-west the limit is undefined where there are no habitations, but along the main road Zainulabad is the frontier village.

The award of the Arbitration Committee is now practically adhered to; Persia owns no villages to the east of the Helmund.

Tarakun is deserted by both Afghans and Persians. Possibly shepherds taxed by Persia wander there, but the Afghans do not concern themselves about this district. The north-eastern portion, the southern edge of the Naizar in the direction of Lash Juwain, appears to be the only place where

any chance of friction still remains, the Persians naturally infringing border line that consists of valuable grazing.

Within these limits lies the fertile basin of Sistan. The overflow of the hamun, however, renders a great portion of this useless. There are no permanent habitations west of the Kuh-i-Khwaja, which in time of flood becomes an island separated from the mainland by a narrow channel. Beyond it is a vast swamp stretching west and south-west for many miles. Further still to the south, below the latitude of Sihkuba, is a flat clay plain, sometimes inundated, but at other times covered with a species of grass called "bunnu," which affords excellent pasture for large flocks of sheep and camels. This flat gradually narrows southwards into the channel known as the river Shela, which conducts the overflow of the hamun into the God-i-Zirreh. During this winter there was no stream in the Shela, though a large volume of water from the Helmund was pouring into the hamun with a current of nearly two miles an hour.

The country north and east of Nasirabad is covered with a low scrub, a species of tamarisk. The ground is lumpy and requires some labour to irrigate; consequently this portion is very thinly populated and boasts of hardly any cultivation.

South-west of Nasirabad the large village of Chiling forms the centre of the best cultivated and most densely populated portion of Sistan. This is watered by the main branch of the Sistan canal, which, starting from the bund in a deep and rapid stream, flows first along the edge of the desert plateau north-west to Shahrستان. From there it branches off, one arm bending to the north and the other westwards. The northern arm waters the country east of Nasirabad; the western arm a few miles further again bifurcates, sending a channel towards Nasirabad; while the main stream continues westwards to water the districts of Chiling and Sihkuba. These main canals vary from 120 to 20 feet in breadth, and are usually fordable at many places, the depth varying from 2 to 4 feet. Where there is no ford, the water is about 6 feet deep. They are not bridged, but from them emanate innumerable watercuts from 15 feet to 3 feet wide, bridged here and there by a rickety construction of tamarisk boughs, and only one foot wide.

They are enclosed by steep banks containing 3 to 4 feet of water, and form very serious obstacles to baggage animals.

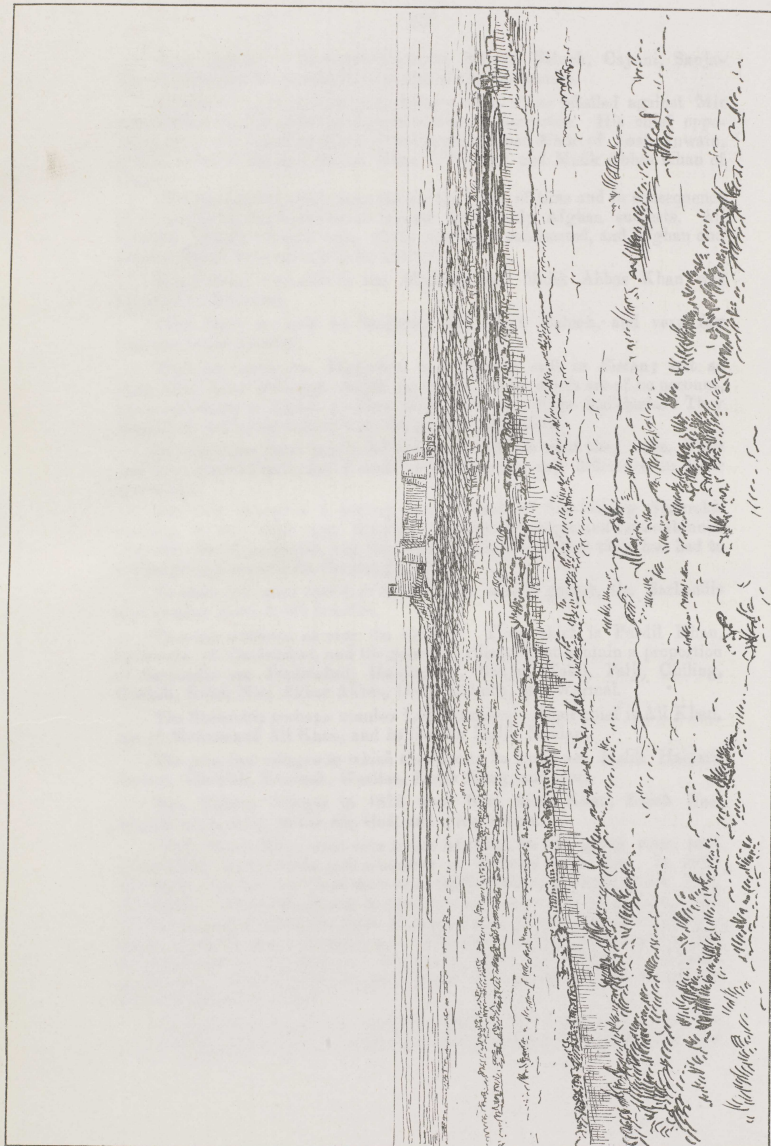
The head of the main canal is defended by a small mud fort called the Burj-i-Sar-i-Band, which is garrisoned by a force of six or eight men. These men do not, however, live in the fort, but in some huts nearer the edge of the canal. One of them told me with evident pride that though they did not live in the fort themselves, they kept their muskets there.

Roads there are none, nor is there sufficient traffic from village to village to make anything like a decided track, except between Nasirabad and the principal villages, such as Chiling, Sihkuba, Dashtak, Burj Alum Khan, and Kimak; and along these a stranger would lose his way without a guide. Even with guides, one's baggage animals were half the time stumbling across country, coming upon pathways here and there, and then losing them again.

Dr. Bellew has given an account of the various tribes in Sistan at the time of the Arbitration Commission.

Inhabitants.

15



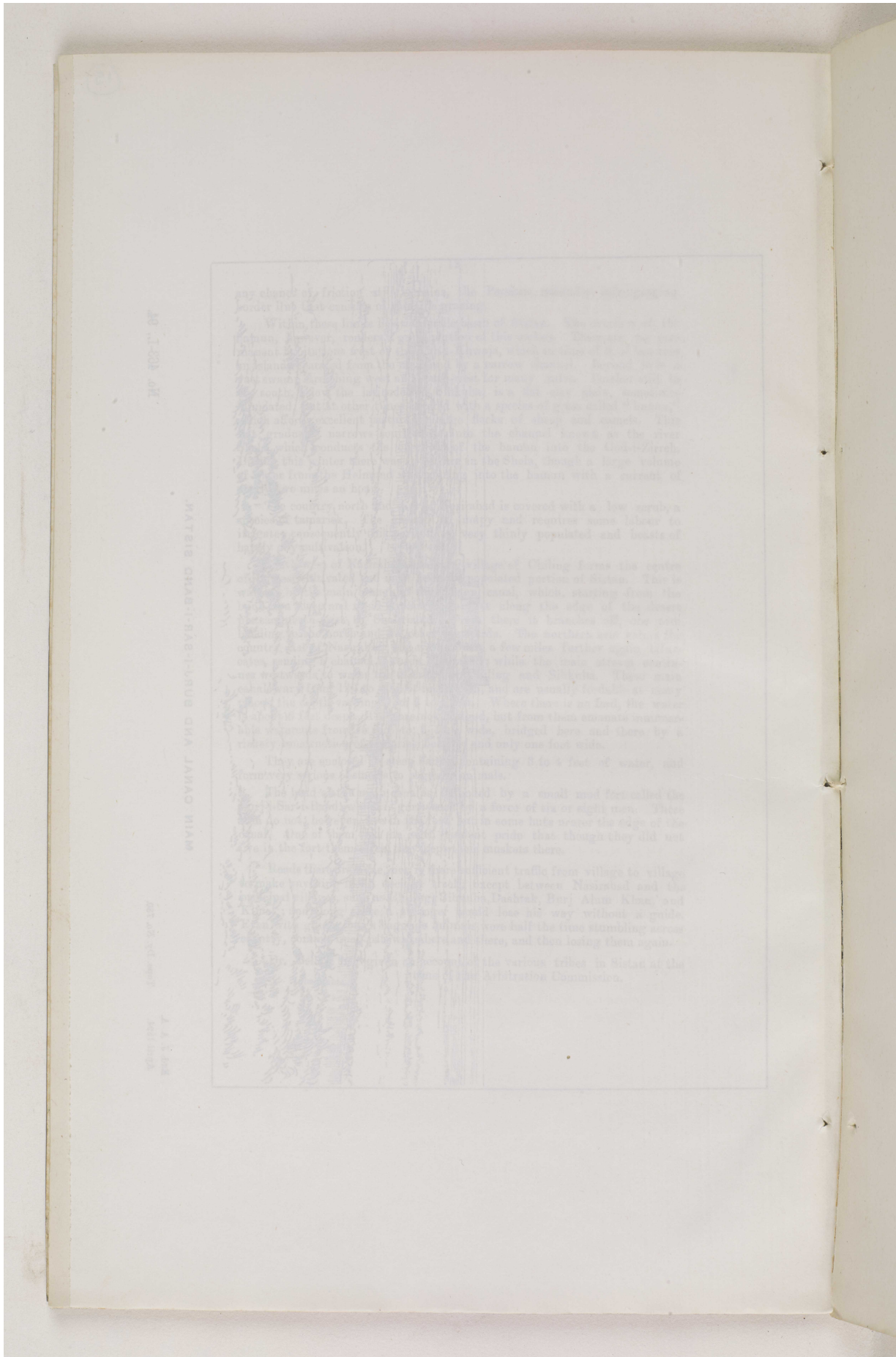
MAIN CANAL AND BURJ-I-SAR-I-BAND SISTAN.

Exd. J. A. A.
April 1894.

Topo. Dy. No. 780.

No. 463-I, 94.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [15v] (35/118)



They consisted of Sarbandi, Shahreki, Nahroe Baluch, Cayani, Sanjurani Baluch, and Tawk Baluch (servants of the Sanjurani).

As mentioned in the foregoing history, these tribes rebelled against Mir Alum Khan shortly after the departure of the Commission. His chief opponents then were Ibrahim Khan of Sanjurani, Ahmad Khan of Lash Juwain, Kamal Khan of Bandar, Sharif Khan of Nahroe, and Malik Abbas Khan of Cayani.

Of these the first three have during the lapse of time and in consequence of the award of the Commission become indubitably Afghan subjects. All Ibrahim Khan's villages west of the river were confiscated, and Afghan and Persian Sistan have become quite distinct.

Sharif Khan went over to the Afghans, and Malik Abbas Khan was banished to Khorasan.

Thus there are now no Sanjurani and Tawk Baluch, and very few Nahroes in the country.

There are Sarbandis, Shahrekis, and Cayanis still in Sistan; but as clans they have well-nigh ceased to exist. Their chiefs are of no account, and none occupy a higher position than that of village kadhuda. They themselves are being merged into the general population.

In some cases these people did not dare to tell me what they were. They said they were Sistanis, and I could not recognise any difference in their appearance.

The only exception I noticed was a band of fine-looking Shahrekis working in the fields near Dashtak, of better physique and fairer-skinned than the rest of the people, and they bitterly complained that they had had to exchange their swords for the plough-share.

To enter into more detail, as far as I was able to gather, the Sarbandis now number about 2,000 families.

They are scattered all over the country. Their chief is Purdil Khan, kadhuda of Daolatabad, and the principal villages that contain a proportion of Sarbandis are Daolatabad, Huseinabad, Banjar, Tokil, Palji, Chiling, Gosheh, Kaleh Nao, Akbar Abbas, Dodi, Sibkuba, and Warmal.

The Shahrekis perhaps number 1,000 families. Their chief is Ali Khan, son of Muhammad Ali Khan, and he lives in Malik Haidari.

The principal villages in which they are to be found are Malik Haidari, Jazinak, Dashtak, Khamak, Wasilan, Kaleh Kang, and Gori.

The Nahroe villages in 1872 were Burj Alum Khan, Kaleh Nao Sharifabad, Kimak, Abbas Ali, God, and a few others.

When Sharif Khan went over to the Afghans, he was given some land about Kaleh Fath, and he took a number of Nahroes with him. In 1885 Mr. Merk reported that there were some 2,000 Nahroes between Kaleh Fath and Nadali. Sharif Khan was related by marriage to Mir Alum Khan, and on that account probably the Amir of Afghanistan afterwards removed him to Kabul, where he died four years ago. His sons returned to Sistan and sought the protection of Alum Khan, who gave them the village of Khwaja Muhammad. That and the village of Malik are the only Nahroe villages in Sistan at the present time.

They number about 100 families. Malik Abbas Khan, Cayani, was given a village near Sarakhs, where he settled, together with other poor and

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discontented Sistanis. He died last year, leaving his son to inherit the village in Khorasan. His brother Gulzar Khan is now kadhuda of Bahramabad.

The remnants of this once powerful clan are to be found in the villages of Bahramabad, Jalalabad, Kechwan, and Tilfak, and are said to number about 200-families.

Regarding the dihean or serfs of these clans mentioned by Dr. Bellew, I was unable to find any trace of such a relationship between them and the remainder of the inhabitants.

The nomad Baluch are distinct from the dwellers in villages. Their principal tribes are the Gurgich, Sarai, Saruni, Jamalzai, Shauzi, and Brahui.

The total population of Sistan I estimate at about 50,000, including 6,000 nomads. Although this is a higher figure than Colonel Goldsmid's in 1872,—namely, 35,000 *plus* 10,000 nomads,—Sistan does not give me the idea of a country that is improving.

Many villages are in a tumble-down condition, with half the houses deserted, and nowhere does one see new villages being built. Ruins meet the eye on all sides, caused by an excess or scarcity of water, either flooded out or abandoned.

Generally speaking, the inhabitants of Sistan are a miserable race, very dark-skinned, of wretched physique, small in stature, and inferior both physically and mentally to the Persian.

The Kain people regard them with great contempt. They look more like natives of lower India than Persia, and live in the greatest squalor. Their food consists of bread and turnips, and fruit when in season.

They are wretchedly clad, and in many places do not get enough to eat.

Though I saw no starving beggars round my camp, Dafadar Sher Ali more than once reported to me that men who had done some trifling service asked for payment in bread instead of money.

This was specially the case east of the Kuh-i-Khwaja, where the ground is rather high and the canal water had not risen high enough to irrigate their fields properly for two seasons.

The Baluchis are of all sorts and conditions. Those I noticed in the northern part of the basin, living among the reeds or in clearings in the tamarisk jungle, are, if anything, of inferior physique to the Sistanis; while others south-west of Sibkuha are fine able-bodied men of the stamp that used to raid the greater part of Kain, and are intensely proud of their Baluch origin. In this direction the Gurgich and Brahuis are the most numerous.

The nature of their feelings towards the Sistan ruler was well expressed by one whom I sounded on the subject.

His answer given in an injured tone was "Fifteen sheep, one kran"—about a quarter of the tax which obtains in other parts of Persia, but quite sufficient to rankle in the mind of a Baluch, whose wants in the shape of a settled government are represented by a minus quantity.

The country contains some sort of divisions such as Pusht-i-Ab (behind the water), Shib-i-Ab (below the water),
System of government. Mal-i-Shahreki, etc. But they are not now administrative units in any way, and are somewhat vague geographically.

Every village has a kakhuda who is directly responsible to the Governor. Occasionally one man is kakhuda of two or three villages or hamlets.

They usually pay for the post on first appointment according to the time-honoured custom of Persia, but they are not permitted to tender a fixed sum annually, and then make what they can out of the village. Every year servants of the Amir are sent round to collect what is nominally one-third of whatever the total land produce may amount to. In reality the peasants only get about half the produce. None of the people own land on a fixed rental. They cultivate the Crown lands as they are ordered by the kakhuda, who in many cases owns the bullocks and supplies the seed, so that the villagers are practically his slaves.

Consequently neither the kakhuda nor the villagers have any interest in improving the land. The kakhuda himself is in abject terror of the Governor, who hears of everything that takes place. If a man has a complaint that the kakhuda cannot or will not settle, he can always have access to the Governor. Against the Governor there can be but the smallest chance of redress. Surrounded as Sistan is on all sides by desert which cuts it off from the rest of Persia, practically the only exit lies through Birjand territory, the Governor's native country.

The difference between the system of government of Birjand and that of Sistan is very marked. In the one case the people are under their hereditary ruler, villages are assessed at a regular *maliyat*, peasants are land owners, pay a fixed rent and reap the benefit of the improvements they make, while in the other case they are the conquered subjects of a foreign ruler and are treated accordingly.

None of the chiefs of the old clans dared to come and see me, which Feeling of the people. showed that the Birjand officials were suspicious that I might endeavour to stir up these people against the existing *régime*.

I therefore made no effort to break through their reserve, for it was more important to conciliate the powers that be. However, when I was leaving Sirkuha for Baluchistan, I sent for the kakhuda, the head of the Gurgich Baluch, called Pasand Khan, gave him a shawl, and persuaded him to take care of my superfluous baggage, etc., until my return. This he did, locking it up inside the fort. The day after my departure he happened to be going down to the Shela district on some business of his own, and when he returned he was sent for to Nasirabad, and was accused of having accompanied me and of being a friend of the English. As head of the Gurgich tribe and an influential man, he receives 300 tomans a year from the Government to keep the Baluch quiet, so this was rather significant.

The idea was probably suggested by the Amir of Birjand's gholam, who was still in Nasirabad. However, he managed to satisfy their misgivings, and when I returned, there being no Sistan gholam with me, he became very friendly, and said he was anxious to do anything he could for the English. He told me there was a general idea that the English had bought Sistan from the Shah.

Perhaps my letters from Tehran and the opposition of the Amir of Birjand gave some colour to this rumour in their eyes. My denial only helped to confirm the idea, and nothing would satisfy him until I had given him a few lines on paper to say he had helped me, which he treasured up as a second string to his bow, and was careful not to show anybody.

As regards the remainder of the inhabitants, they would gladly welcome any change from the oppressive rule they now groan under; and though I was careful never to suggest any such contingency, the idea of an English annexation has certainly occurred to them, and I have no doubt they secretly long for the fulfilment of it.

Among the better educated the name of Russia is well known, but I do not think she occupies a higher place than we do. Afghanistan is always referred to as "Mal-i-Ingliis," and they still consider the arbitration award as a deliberate annexation on the part of the English of half of Sistan.

I believe this erroneous idea serves the purpose of tending to preserve our prestige in a country where it is constantly in their recollection, and where might is more respected than right.

The Sistani is not a bigot. Since the Persian occupation of the country, nearly everybody has found it more convenient to become a Shiah. I only met one or two

Religion.

Sunnis in Sistan.

The Baluch appear to be sublimely indifferent to the petty differences of either sect.

Early in the spring I passed crowds of Sistanis on their pilgrimage to Mashad. I do not think this was so much a proof of their devotion as an evidence of the poverty and misrule of their own country that forced them to seek for labour elsewhere.

The dwellers in villages are chiefly agriculturists, the remainder being weavers, potters, shoemakers, etc., who do not do more than supply the wants of the population.

Industries and trade.

The nomads are the principal owners of live-stock; large herds of cattle browse in the Naizar; sheep spread over Sistan, and, especially in the south-west, find good grazing. Camels are scarce, except in the Shela district, where they abound.

There is very little trade in the country. The exports consist of grain, ghee, cow and camel hides, wool, goats' hair, and camels' hair.

The imports are cast-iron, English and Russian piece-goods in very small quantities,—for the Sistani mostly wears his own cloth,—Indian tea, indigo, spices, and English or French sugar from Yazd. Both tea and white sugar are rare commodities, and not used by the bulk of the people.

Two caravans travel to India every year, laden chiefly with ghee and wool; but they have to pay heavy toll to the Afghans or run considerable risk from want of water on the journey.

Wheat and barley are the staple products of the country. Cotton is grown in small quantities, as also opium and tobacco, the two latter being of very inferior quality. Good turnips and a little pulse and millet are also produced. Round the villages, melons, grapes, and occasionally fruit trees are cultivated; but, with the exception of melons, the Sistan fruit is not equal to that of other parts of Persia. Pomegranates, oranges, apricots, and peaches come under this category.

It is very difficult to obtain reliable information about the grain crop.

The only sure ways of assessing the amount of grain produced are to

... to the number of wells of water in each village, or, if the water supply is limited, to ascertain the amount of water. I tried the first method, but was frustrated, as was not practicable in a country like Sistan. Such questions of water supply are even those asked usually by one's servants; the English did not what was to be asked and were false intelligence, generally and especially the real amount. The second method was not applicable to Sistan. I was therefore obliged to fall back on what general information could be obtained.

The conclusion I have arrived at is that Sistan does not yield more than two millions of bushels (51,750 tons) in the proportion of 1 wheat and 2 rice. It requires about 40,000 head of oxen needed to support the population and a surplus of 25,000 head (10,150 tons) over and above the needs of the population.

The Sistan as defined by the old Ghilzai courses of 910 square miles. Nearly all of this is sterile land. On the basis of the assumption that each 1 acre produces one kharwar of wheat and 2 rice — an assumption which is an exaggeration from the present — the total area of 50,550 acres, or nearly 1/4 of this area, is actually under cultivation.

Water is carried on in a very simple way; the ground is not always properly cleared before the corn is sown, and cattle are allowed to graze on the fields, which is said to improve the crop.

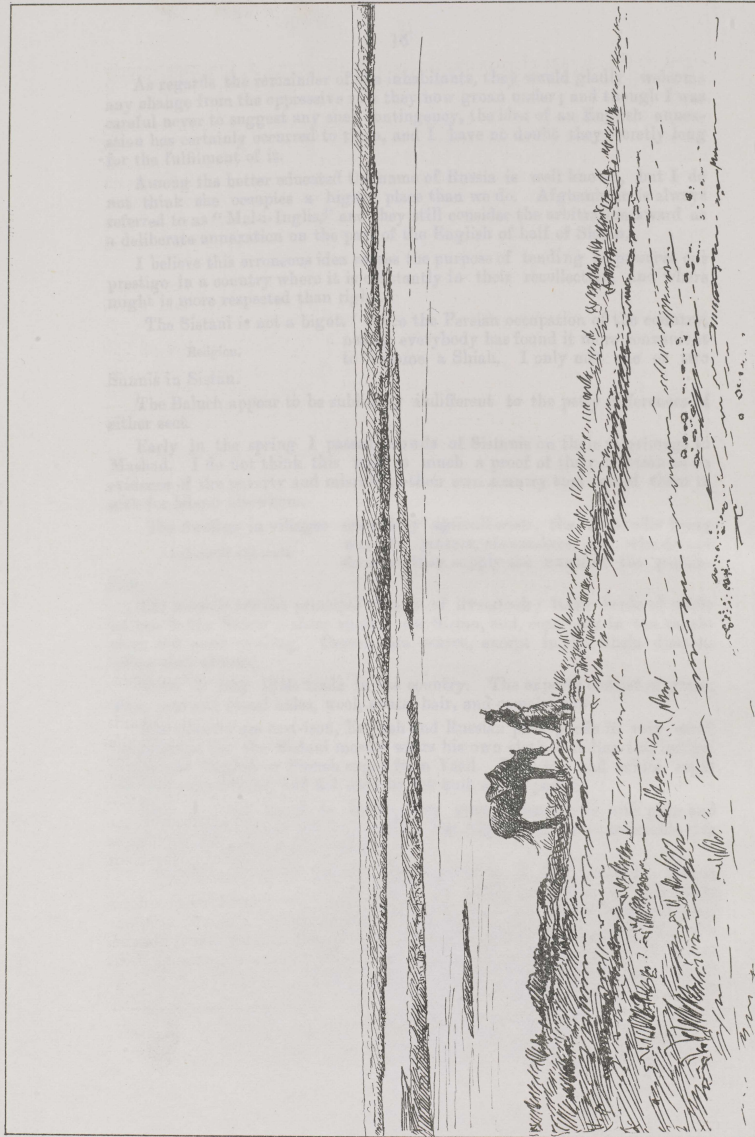
Out of the difficulties the people seem to contend against is shifting sand-drifts. More than once I noticed the soil buried in the sand; that, however, is not very serious and there. More important is the want of water over the water supply. When the Ghilzai rise, the country is flooded by water and becomes a bog. The people sometimes have to raise low banks to prevent the water from reaching the wells. The water is raised from the periodical overflow of the Indus, and has most probably reached Sistan, again, if the land is under a certain point, a large part of the country cannot get enough water for the crops.

The land is very fertile, and is very rich in soil. It is about 40 yards wide and the land is being constantly washed away towards the middle of the river, which is a source of water now flowing over it at the time of the flood. When the water is high, the land is very rich and the workmen are impressed from the flood, and the water is very rich, and has been attributed to the richness of the soil. This is very much due to the richness of the soil, and the richness of the soil, and the system of government.

The richness of the soil would at least produce a large surplus of wheat and rice in such a country. I only saw one well in the Sistan, and in the country they abound. The richness of the soil is very rich, and the richness of the soil is very rich, and the richness of the soil is very rich.

مكتبة قطر الوطنية
Qatar National Library

'Sistan Band, River Helmand.' [18v] (1/1)



Exd J. A. A.
April 1894.

Topo. Dy. No. 781.

SISTAN BAND, RIVER HELMAND.

No. 474-I., 94.

* Head of main canal.

No. 474-I, 94.
 SISTAN BAND, RIVER HELMUND.
 Topo. Dy. No. 781
 Ecol. J. A. A.
 April 1894.
 * Head of main canal.

count up the number of yoke of oxen in each village, or, if the water-supply is limited, to ascertain the amount of water. I tried the first method, but soon found it was not practicable in a confined area like Sistan. Such questions at once arouse suspicion even though asked casually by one's servants; the people find out what one is about and give false intelligence, generally underestimating the real amount. The second method was not applicable to Sistan. I was therefore obliged to fall back on what general information I could pick up.

The conclusion I have arrived at is that Sistan does not yield more than 75,000 kharwars of grain (21,763 tons), in the proportion of $\frac{2}{3}$ wheat and $\frac{1}{3}$ barley.

Of this amount about 40,000 kharwars are needed to support the population, leaving a surplus of 35,000 kharwars (10,156 tons) over and above the needs of the population.*

The area of Sistan as defined by Colonel Goldsmid consists of 950 square miles. Nearly all of this is arable land. On the assumption that about $\frac{1}{4}$ acre produces one kharwar—an assumption based on enquiries from the peasants—56,250 acres, or roughly $\frac{1}{11}$ of this area, is actually under cultivation.

Farming is carried on in a very slovenly way; the ground is not always properly cleared before the corn is sown. Cattle are allowed to graze on the young shoots, which is said to improve the crop.

One of the difficulties the people have to contend against is shifting sand-drifts. More than once I noticed crops buried in the sand; that, however, only occurs here and there. What is far more important is the want of command over the water-supply. When the Helmund rises, the country is flooded for miles and becomes a bog. They sometimes have to raise low banks in front of Nasirabad itself to prevent the water from reaching the walls. This is quite distinct from the periodical overflow of the hamun, and has most disastrous results. Then, again, if the bund subsides beyond a certain point, a large portion of the country cannot get enough water for the crops.

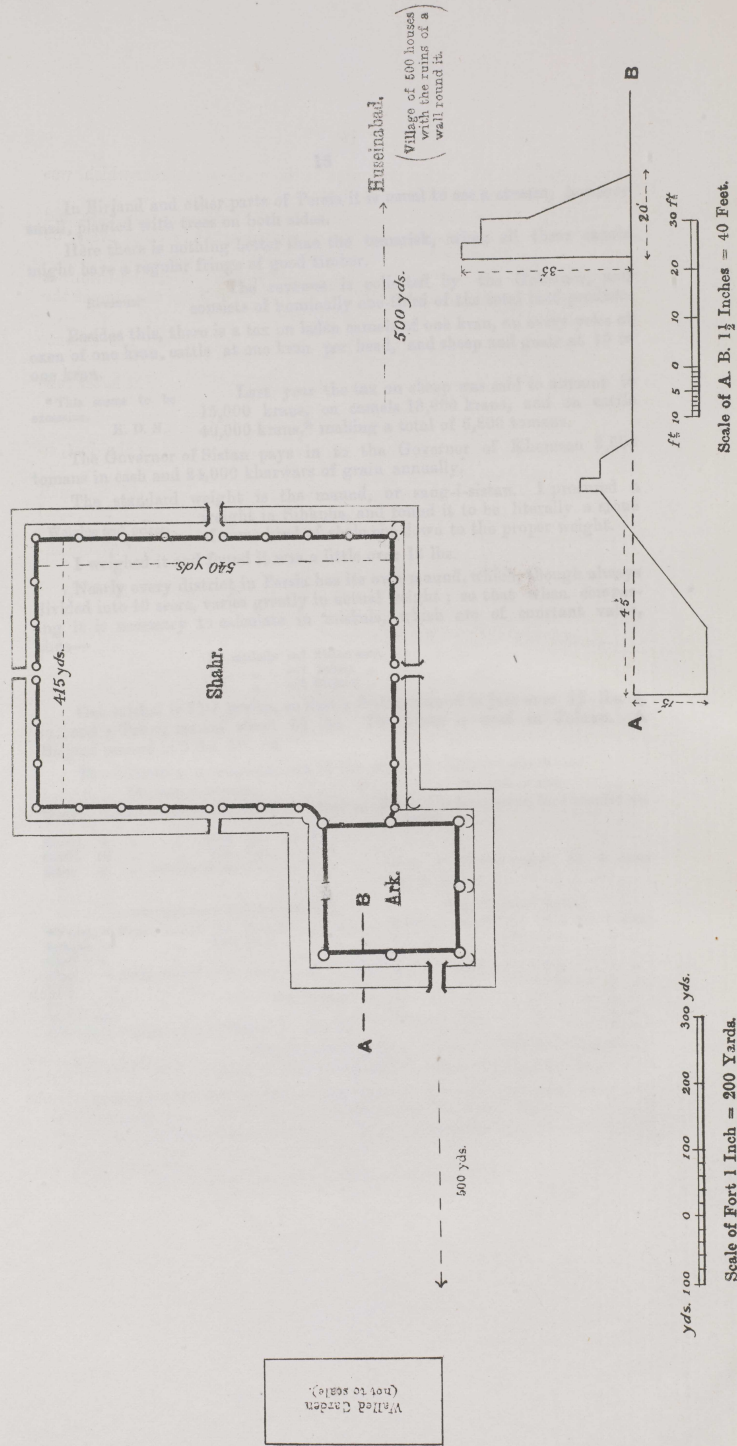
The bund is made of fascines of tamarisk and earth. It is about 40 yards thick near the bank, but is being constantly washed away towards the middle of the river, where a large volume of water was flowing over it at the time of my visit. When it becomes too bad, some thousand workmen are impressed from all the villages round to repair it. This occurs two or three times a year.

The absence of all trees is very remarkable, and has been ascribed to the notorious "wind of 120 days." It is probably merely due to the supineness and want of energy of the rulers of the country and the system of government that stifles all private enterprise.

Were it otherwise, the "bad-i-sad-o-bist roz" would at least produce a plentiful crop of windmills in such a corn-growing country. I only saw one or two in the whole of Sistan, whereas in the Birjand country they abound. At Neh alone there are over 30, and at Tabas in Sunikhana there are at least forty windmills.

* See page 29.

NÁSIRABAD.



No. 493-L, 94.

Topog. Dr. No. 731.

Expd. J. A. A.
March 1884.

by 400 yards in length, with a projection at the north-west corner which was added eight years ago, and forms the "ark."

The walls of the fort are 25 feet high, about 8 feet thick at the base, and less than 2 feet thick at the top, and are furnished with bastions every 60 yards.

The walls of the ark are 35 feet high and 20 feet thick at the base. A ditch encircles the walls, 15 feet deep and 45 feet broad, from the edge of the counterscarp to the parapet of the covered way.

There are embrasures for guns in the bastions, but they are not mounted. The parapet is loopholed for musketry.

The fort is built of mud and the ark of sun-dried bricks. The latter contains the residence of the Governor.

Inside are barracks for 800 men, and there are 4 guns.

There was some hesitation in giving me permission to enter the fort, so I did not press to see it.

Huseinabad, 500 yards to the south-east of the fort, is an old Sarbandi capital. It is now in a very dilapidated condition, and consist of 500 mud houses surrounded by the remains of a city wall. It contains no shops. An important mullah lives here called Agha Haji Ismail, and owns a considerable amount of property.

The only other mullah of any importance in the country is Said Ali in Burj Alum Khan.

Besides Nasirabad, Sihkuha is the only other place of any strength in Sistan, and that is built in a naturally strong position on three clay mounds, and consists of a fairly strong irregular-shaped wall with bastions at the corners. At the foot of it lies the town itself, half in ruins, and surrounded by a ruined wall.

There is also a small mud fort in the centre of the village of Dashtak.

None of the villages of Sistan are enclosed by walls; all the others I saw were absolutely defenceless even against a Baluch or Afghan raid.

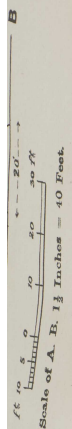
The following is a list of all the villages containing 500 houses and over:

	Houses.
Huseinabad	500
Banjar	700
Khamak	800
Jazinak	700
Dashtak	600
Kimak	700
Kaleh Nao	800
Burj Alum Khan (three villages in one)	1,000
Sihkuha	500
Chiling	500

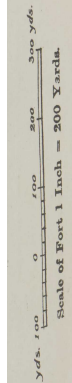
Besides these there are over 100 smaller villages and hamlets, 22 of which contain not more than 20 houses each.

The houses are built of mud and are small dome-roofed structures.

One room is generally occupied by the donkey, which only the very poorest dispense with. The streets are the receptacles for rubbish of all sorts; carcasses and bones of animals lie about in great profusion and in various stages of decomposition.



Fort of Nasirabad.



Sistan is garrisoned by one of the two Birjand regiments. In the ranks are very few, if any, Sistanis. Each regiment consists of nominally 800 men.

Army.

The Amir of Kain is the brigadier of the two regiments with the title of Amir-i-Panj. Each regiment has one sartip or colonel, one sarhang (major*), two yawars (captains†), eight sultans, 16 naibs, and 40 vakils.

*Lieutenant-Colonel.
†Majors.

E. R. T.

These regiments are changed between Birjand and Nasirabad periodically.

At the time of my visit the regiment in Sistan was commanded by Sartip Mir Mahsum Khan, the only son of Ali Akbar Khan. The Sarhang, Haji Parwez Khan, was at Tabas. One yawar was present, called Mir Ali Beg.

The troops, numbering about 500, were nearly all in Nasirabad. There were said to be about 30 gunners.

The men had no uniform and looked very ragged. The infantry are armed with muzzle-loaders. Very fair weapons are manufactured in Birjand as well as gunpowder.

Alum Khan is said to have collected a large number of muskets and stored them in Birjand to arm the peasantry should occasion arise.

A private soldier's pay is 7 tomans in cash and 2 kharwars of grain per annum.

A gunner receives nominally 16 tomans and three kharwars per annum.

North and east of Nasirabad the soil is light and sandy. In the more cultivated districts it appears to be a sandy clay, often covered with a thin saline efflorescence. At Sihkuha the soil is dry and spongy, and so thickly encrusted with salt as to give the appearance of fresh-fallen snow.

Further south-west, where liable to inundation, it is a firm impermeable clay that retains the water and facilitates floods. The desert plateaux seem to be formed of a substratum of clay topped with gravel.

It is this clayey soil that renders it possible for caravans to cross the desert in winter south of the Helmund with the tolerable certainty of finding pools of rain-water.

During the time of my stay in Sistan the climate was very agreeable; only when it rained very heavily the atmosphere in districts near the Naizar became very damp and impregnated with a disagreeable smell. At Nasirabad some of my men got rheumatism, and everything inside the tents had a damp, clammy feeling. This after rain. I did not notice it elsewhere.

Climate.

During December the average temperature at 7 A.M. was 37° Fahr.; at 2 P.M. 62° in the shade, and at 9 P.M. 42°. The lowest temperature I recorded was 27°.†

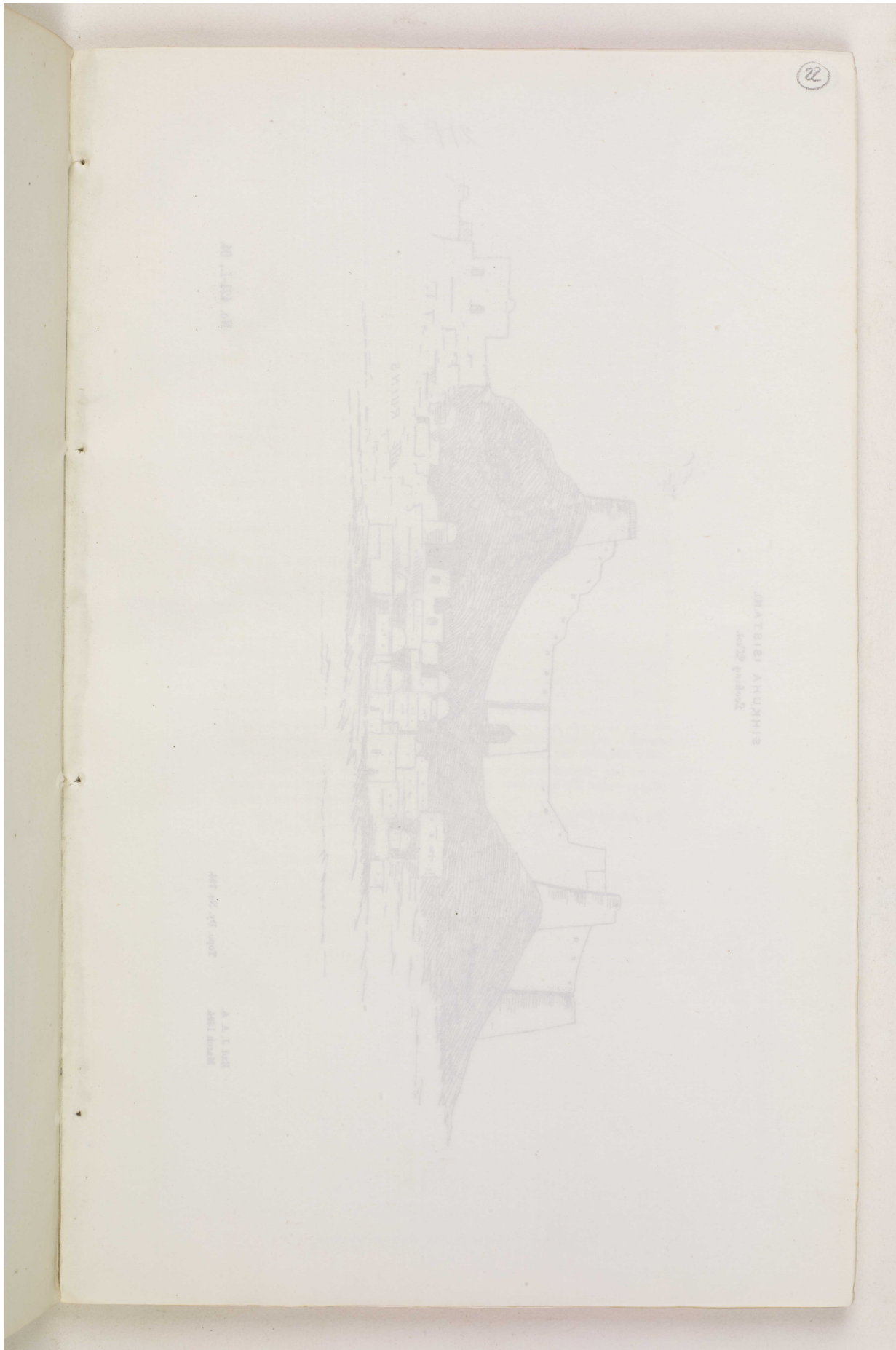
† During the time Mr. Napier was in Sistan the weather at Mashad was exceedingly mild. Enan-Smith recorded 37° of frost in Sistan.

E. R. T.

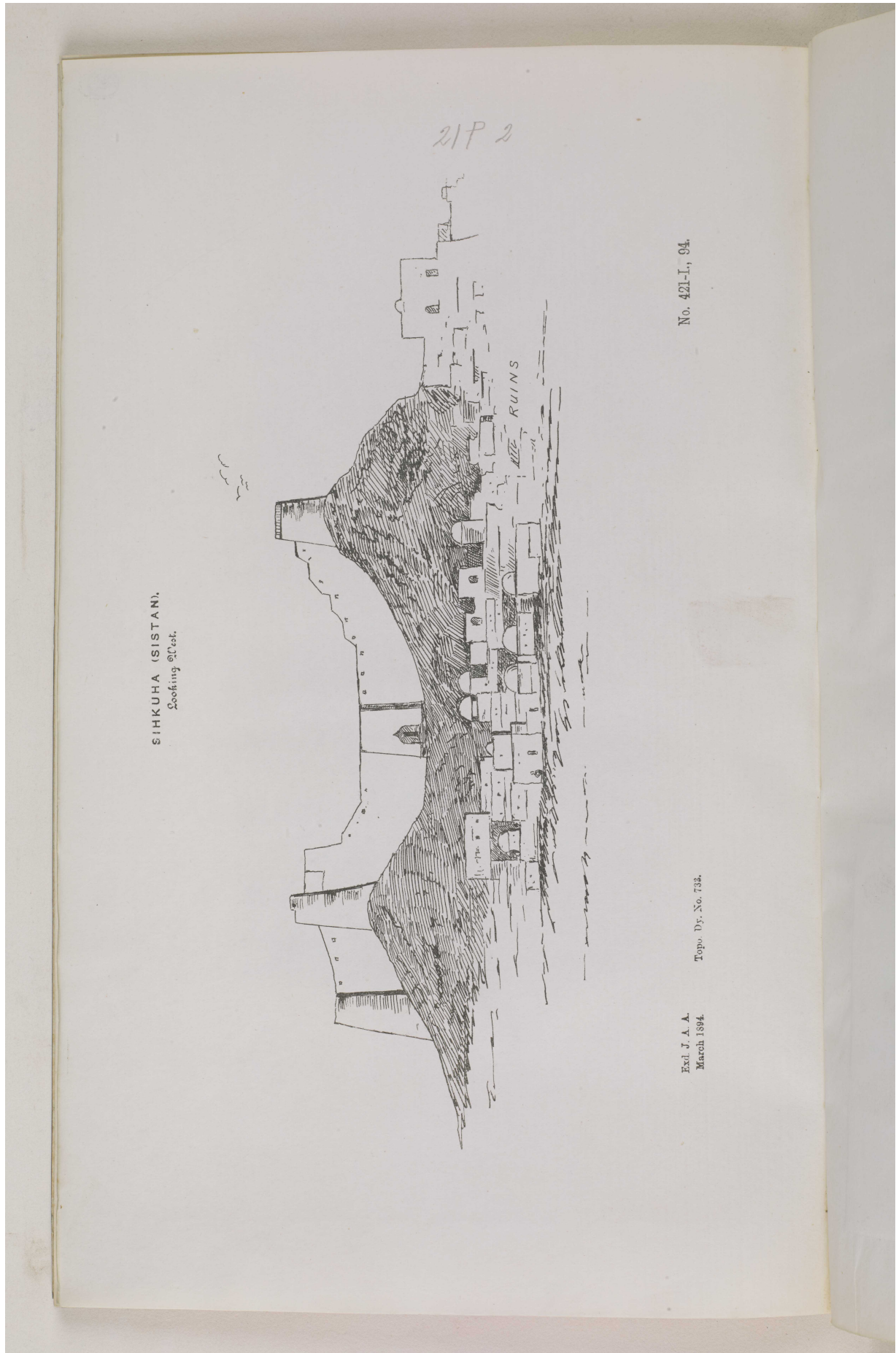
There was no snow while I was in the country; it does fall occasionally, but never lies for any length of time.

At 10 A.M. a strong cold wind generally arose and blew for a great part of the day. At night there was a heavy dew.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [22r] (48/118)



'Sihkuha (Sistan), Looking West' [22v] (1/1)

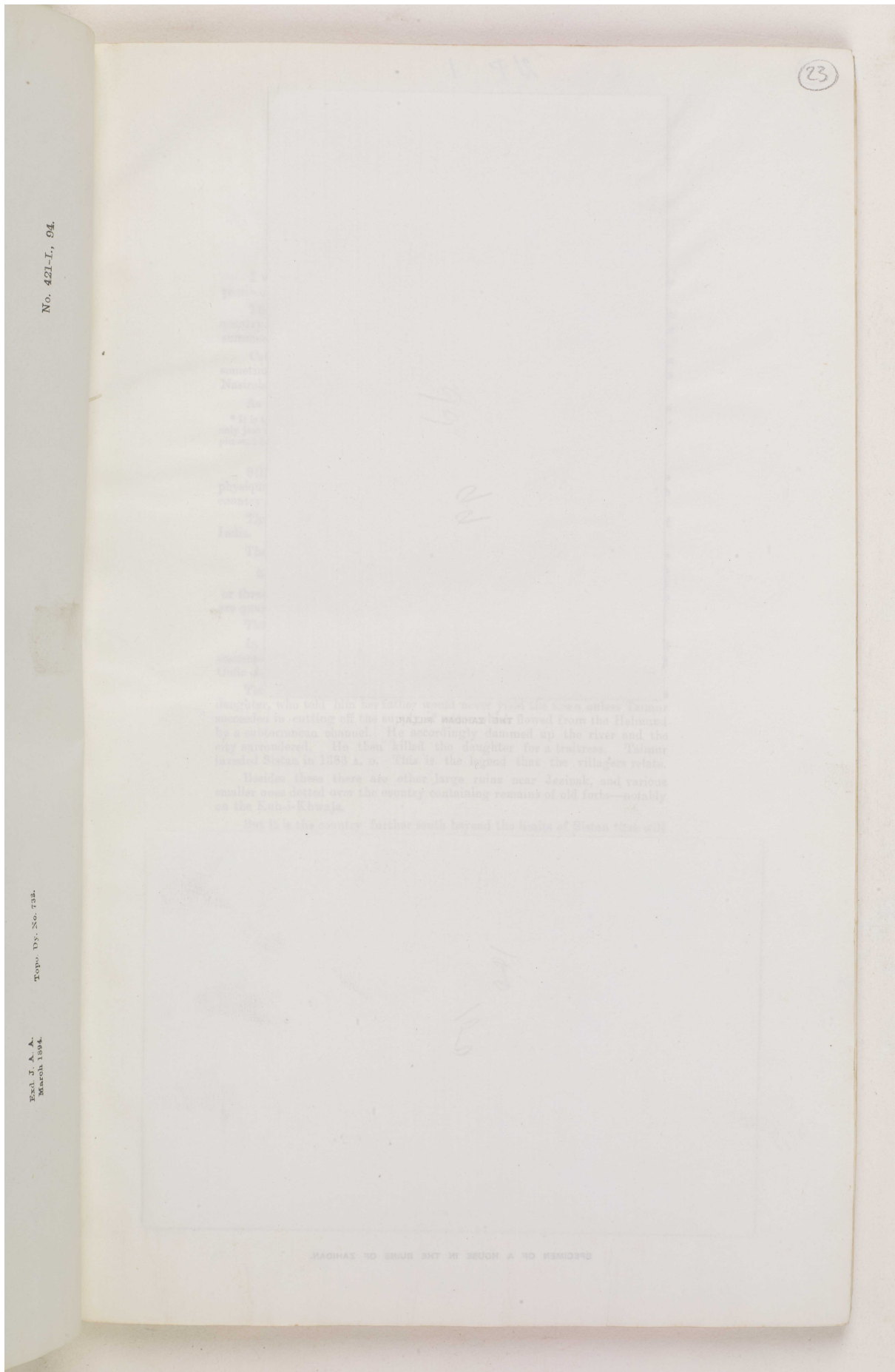


SIHKUHA (SISTAN),
Looking West.

No. 421-L, 94.

Exd. J. A. A.
March 1894.
Topo. Dy. No. 732.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [23r] (50/118)



'The Zahidan Pillar.' [23v] (1/1)



THE ZAHIDAN PILLAR.



SPECIMEN OF A HOUSE IN THE RUINS OF ZAHIDAN.

I was told the same stories that other travellers have recorded about the pestilential fly and the 120 days' wind.

The fly is very destructive to horses, of which there are very few in the country. They have to be swathed in cloths from head to foot during the summer.

Cattle and donkeys fare very well, but camels from strange countries sometimes fall ill from the bite of these flies. Sihkuha is not so bad as Nasirabad in this respect.

As regards the wind, I imagine it must be as strong in many places in

* It is the same at Herat and Hashtadan. We are Birjand, judging from the wind- only just out of it at Mashad, and in fact get a mills all over that country.* pleasant breeze, which is perhaps the edge of it.

E. R. T.

Still, taking the climate all the year round, one has only to look at the physique and general appearance of the Sistanis to be convinced that the country is by comparison with the rest of Persia very unhealthy.

That is very different, however, from a comparison with many parts of India.

The largest ruins now apparent are those of Zahidan. They lie to the east of Nasirabad and extend in a narrow strip for a length of 14 miles. The houses were evidently of two or three storeys, and must have been built largely of burnt bricks, as there are quantities lying about, as well as red tiles.

There are also bits of pottery and porcelain ware strewn around.

In the midst of the ruins stands a tower about 60 feet high, with a spiral staircase inside. Round the outside is an inscription in what appear to be old Cufic characters.†

Taimur is supposed to have captured this city by the aid of the king's daughter, who told him her father would never yield the town unless Taimur succeeded in cutting off the supply of water which flowed from the Helmund by a subterranean channel. He accordingly dammed up the river and the city surrendered. He then killed the daughter for a traitress. Taimur invaded Sistan in 1383 A. D. This is the legend that the villagers relate.

Besides these there are other large ruins near Jezionak, and various smaller ones dotted over the country containing remains of old forts—notably on the Kuh-i-Khwaja.

But it is the country further south beyond the limits of Sistan that will best repay the archaeologist.

Forts such as Haozdar and Tarakun are well known and are of comparatively recent date, but further south, between Ramrud and Godar-i-Shah to the east of the regular caravan track, I passed almost continuous evidences of what must once have been large cities, extending over a tract of country 40 miles in length. In some places a wall or two and a few mounds were the only striking marks of former habitations, but on examining the ground one could see the whole country was strewn with bits of red brick, tiles, and pottery, as at Zahidan, and also broken pieces of marble vases and handsome stones.

† NOTE.—I copied as much of this inscription as had remained intact and sent it to Dr. Rien of the British Museum, who is an authority on old oriental inscriptions. He pronounced it to be a form of Cufic of about the 5th century of the Mahomedan era. He was unable to decipher more than the words "ab Sultan ab MazaffarSalatan ab Islam," but could find no date nor proper name that could lead to the identification of the Sultan who erected the tower. The transcript was no doubt imperfect.—(H. D. N).

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [24v] (53/118)

22

In one place I came upon a little graveyard consisting of four parallel lines, about 13 yards in length, of stones and marbles of all colours and of curious shapes.

These pointed to some religion long prior to the Muhammadan era. Some of them were well carved and beautifully polished.

The place looked as if it had been undisturbed for centuries. My Baluch men had never seen it before and were much surprised.

There seems to have been a large city near this place, with the remains of a gigantic wall; but the clay plain is broken up into such curious shapes by the action of the weather that it is difficult to distinguish where ruins end and Nature begins.

All this country was watered from the Tarakun canal and its branches down as far as Godar-i-Shah, where old canal-beds are still recognisable.

Being at a greater distance from the hamuns and the Naizar, the climate should be better than in the more northern basin.

There are legends that Sistan once supported an army of six lakhs—a large enough figure to make due allowance for oriental exaggeration, and still leave a respectable margin.

Old manuscripts are said to exist at Nadali containing the ancient history of Sistan, but I did not succeed in obtaining any.

About eight years ago it is said that water found its way into the old channel of the Tarakun canal during a period of excessive flood and inundated the country for some miles, so that the work of restoring it would probably be easy.

The Afghans do not extend beyond a mile or two from the river at isolated points such as Bandar and Rudbar.

Should we find it necessary at some future period to adopt a more active policy towards Sistan, the acquisition of this projecting strip of territory from Afghanistan would give us a *pied à terre* from which without annexing any Persian territory we might be able to frustrate the ambitious designs of Russia in this direction, and at the same time secure our own position. To achieve this peaceably, it would be necessary to convince the Persians of our friendly intention towards them by first constructing suitable irrigation works in Sistan that would ensure them a constant supply of water; otherwise the reopening of the Tarakun canal would raise the whole country against us in dread of a water famine.

Of course any schemes with regard to Sistan are dependent on the construction of a railway; and seeing how absolutely essential the command of the Helmund is to any development of the country, it appears to me that the best and boldest line for the railway would be the one projected by Colonel Holdich *via* Kbaran, and passing along the north of the God-i-Zirreh.

Such a line is only exposed to attack from the Afghans on reaching the Helmund. It would there pass along the high desert plateau overlooking the river some hundred feet below, and could be easily defended.

PART II.—MILITARY.

CHAPTER I.

POPULATION, RESOURCES, AND MILITARY SITUATION OF SISTAN.

According to instructions received from the Assistant Quarter Master General, Intelligence Branch, I have to report on "the present condition of Sistan as regards supplies, transport, etc., its capabilities of development, etc., and also on the inhabitants of Sistan and the country generally between Mashad and Sistan." I was also subsequently directed to pay special attention to the question of supplies.

In my political report I have already given a general description of Sistan, its inhabitants, etc., so that, to avoid repetition, the present report should be considered as supplementary to the former, but dealing more particularly with the military side of the question.

As regards population, supplies, and transport, the following is a list of all the villages in Sistan with their supplies:—

List of villages in Sistan.

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Horses.	Sheep and goats.	Camels.	Donkeys.
Nasirabad	200	130	...	...	200	200
Huseinabad	500	50	...	...	30	50
Bala Khana	50	17	...	...	...	50
Kechwan	50	25	...	...	...	50
Rai	50	34	...	...	...	30
Kaleh Nao	10	8	...	...	...	8
Deh Nao	20	14	...	...	...	20
Kul ... ..	?	...	...	...	...	...
Dargi ... ..	?	...	...	...	...	...
Shaitan	40	50	...	50	...	...
Banjar	700	560	...	3,000	30	500
Iskil	120	110	...	1,000	30	100
Kasimabad	30	18	...	70	10	20
Burj Afghan	70	36	30
Rindan (huts)	30	8	20
Jalalabad	100	34	15	50

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List of villages in Sistan—contd.

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Horses.	Sheep and goats.	Camels.	Donkeys.
Gurgali	50	40	...	...	...	30
Muhammad Khan	20	10	...	...	...	10
Burj-i-Karko	20	10	...	...	...	10
Khanabad ... ..	?	...	...	...	...	...
Ibrahimabad	80	50	...	...	...	30
Tilfak	70	40	...	...	...	40
Bushir ... ..	?	...	...	...	...	...
Jalsi	150	130	20	...	50	...
Jangikhu	50	8	...	...	...	100
Aliabad	50	32	...	...	...	30
Khadang	50	15	...	5,000	...	15
Ibrahimabad... ..	80	50	...	...	...	30
Mirza Khan ... ..	?	...	...	...	...	...
Zahidan	60	26	...	...	...	10
Yar Muhammad	170	124	...	200	...	120
Deh Nao	100	72	...	200	10	50
Asikazi	70	74	...	150	...	50
Gori	40	14	...	...	...	...
Jahrabad	30	14	...	50	...	20
Haji Muhammad	20	10	...	...	...	...
Khamak	800	140	...	2,000	...	200
Sihkila	20	11	...	200	...	10
Mastikhar	20	15	...	50	...	10
Kalb Muhammad	20	10	10
Milak	150	30	100
Kaod	130	80	100
Jehangir Khan	50	36	40

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List of villages in Sistan—contd.

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Horses.	Sheep and goats.	Camels.	Donkeys.
Sharifabad ...	70	64	...	...	...	50
Ushturak (huts) ...	20	8	...	...	...	10
Malik Haidari ...	150	26	...	300	...	20
Burj-i-Sarband ...	40	14	...	70	...	25
Wasilan ...	400	60	20	...	...	200
Jazinak ...	700	600	...	4,000	100	500
Kaleh Kang ...	200	70	...	200	...	100
Dashtak ...	600	460	...	...	50	400
Shahrak ...	60	20	...	...	...	50
Shahristan ...	60	20	...	...	...	100
Kimak ...	700	65	...	1,500	...	200
Kalata Abbas ...	20	8	...	50	...	10
Haji Muhammad ...	20	8	...	20	...	15
Khwaja Muhammad ...	30	12	4	...	2	20
Kaleh Nao ...	800	540	10	2,000	...	500
Barj Alam Khan (including two other villages).	1,000	780	30	3,000	...	800
Palgi Kohna ...	200	230	...	500	...	150
Palgi Nao ...						
Dehsukhta ...	80	72	20	...	...	50
Luf ...	200	130	...	500	100	100
Banramabad ...	100	114	4	...	...	100
Muhammadabad ...	150	124	20	2,000	...	100
Chang-i-Murghau ...	15	8	10
Ibrahimabad ...	50	16	2	150	...	40
Baghak ...	60	130	...	200	...	50
Kul-i-Khurd ...	15	8	8

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List of villages in Sistan—contd.

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Horses.	Sheep and goats.	Camels.	Donkeys.
Kul	100	14	4	300	...	50
Afzalabad	50	16	...	...	...	30
Siahsar-i-Khurd	4	4	...	...	...	...
Siahsar	40	6	...	60	...	30
Tamarabad	20	10	...	...	...	15
Muhammad Amir	80	20	...	...	...	50
Sangchuli	100	20	...	400	...	70
Dodi	400	40	4	400	...	250
Pudina	8	6	...	...	...	6
Abbas	20	8	...	50	...	10
Ismail	30	6	...	...	...	20
Abbas Khan	40	14	...	...	...	30
Mulali	8	6	...	...	...	6
Sihkuha	500	350	20	1,000	100	400
Naigard	100	114	4	...	...	100
Gosheh Bala	} 500	224	10	...	30	400
Gosheh Pain						
Sadaki	150	154	...	500	...	140
Alahi	30	16	...	50	...	20
Shahriani	10	4	...	...	...	8
Chiling	500	216	30	1,500	10	400
Jamalabad	100	36	...	300	...	50
Husein Mashadi	30	9	...	...	...	10
Lutfulla	70	36	...	500	...	50
Muhammad Azim	} 100	46	...	100	10	50
Huseina						
Muhammad Safar						
Muhammad Safar	100	48	...	200	...	50

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [27r] (58/118)

(27)

List of villages in Sistan—contd.

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Horses.	Sheep and goats.	Camels.	Donkeys.
Eustam	30	24	...	...	...	20
Jehun Baksh... ..	15	...	3	...	...	10
Muhammad Beza	15	18	...	...	...	6
Husein Rais	50	26	...	200	...	40
Jubar	20	14	...	...	...	8
Gurg	70	28	...	100	...	50
Tuti	80	40	...	200	...	50
Misbeg Khudadad	60	28	...	...	...	30
Tileh	30	11	...	...	...	20
Akbarabad	100	38	...	1,000	...	10
Khidri	20	7	...	...	...	...
Deh Shahbaz	30	14	...	50	...	20
Daolatabad	400	224	...	3,000	30	300
Deh Khudadad	200	96	...	...	...	100
Taghi ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Huseinabad	150	140	...	500	...	140
Bustam Mahmud	40	18	...	...	...	30
Devna ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Zor ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Abbas Muhammad ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Zainul Kasim... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kalb Ibrahim
Isah
Ismail-i-Musa
Amir-i-Muhammad
Ibrahim Muhammad
Khiani	25	12	15

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List of villages in Sistan—concl.

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Horses.	Sheep and goats.	Camels.	Donkeys.
Akhum Ghulam
Bakir
Ibrahim
Pusht-i-Dashfak
Lutak ...	40	15	...	...	...	25
Warmal ...	50	20	...	...	...	30
Muhammad Abdulla
Nasirabad	12	6	...	...	7
Nasirabad
Illahabad
Komali
Tagazi
Haji
Isah
Mansuri
Damoi
Ghulam Ali
Said Muhammad	20	...	...	...	...
Mukhtar	20	...	...	...	...
Total ...	14,577	7,924	205	36,870	807	8,907

In the above list there are 27 villages about which I have no detailed information.

Most of these are situated in the neighbourhood of Chiling, where there are a great number of very small hamlets. The remainder lie to the north-west of Nasirabad. If an average of 20 houses be taken, it will probably be near the mark, and each village may be reckoned to own about 12 cattle and 15 donkeys. To these may be added 3,000 sheep and 100 camels.

The total will then stand at 15,117 houses, 8,248 cattle, 205 horses, 39,870 sheep, 907 camels, and 9,312 donkeys. Reckoning each house at 3 people, a low average, to make allowance for the numerous empty houses sometimes included in a village estimate, gives a total of 45,351 inhabitants. To these may be added 6,000 nomads.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [28r] (60/118)

28

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It will be noticed that the country contains no mules and very few horses. Camels are also scarce, and those that do exist are seldom to be found among the villages of Sistan.

Transport.

They are either employed in carrying goods from Bandar Abbas and other places, or are grazing in the outlying districts.

Besides these, the nomads own a considerable number of cattle, sheep, and camels, and contribute largely to the Amir's revenue thereby. Large flocks are usually to be found under the Palang Kuh, where they obtain very good pasture from the "bunnu," a peculiar species of grass that flourishes on the flat part of the basin where liable to inundation. The Naizar feeds large herds of cattle, and there are a considerable number of camels owned by Baluchis in the Shela district, where the tamarisk, etc., abounds.

If one is to believe the amount said to be collected in taxes by the Amir, there should be altogether 225,000 sheep, 13,000 camels, and over 40,000 cattle; but I must confess I am sceptical about these high figures.

As regards the grain supply, I estimated in my former report that the country yielded about 75,000 kharwars as far as I was able to judge. I then deducted 40,000 kharwars for the needs of the population, leaving a surplus of 35,000 kharwars (10,156 tons). A subsequent reference to the Report of the (1880) Indian Famine Commission, however, showed that including seed, cattle food, and wastage, the average ordinary consumption throughout India is 580 lbs. per head. Taking that therefore as a basis, and including nomads, there would be a surplus of 29,180 kharwars or 8,467 tons.

This would suffice to maintain a division of all arms permanently in the country.

The capabilities of development are great. The land is extraordinarily fertile, and only 1-11th of the total arable land is cultivated. There is more than enough water in the Helmund, and with a good system of canals there should never be a bad harvest. Besides this, the old Tarakun canal could be reopened, thereby not only fertilising part of the desert to the south of Sistan as far as the God-i-zirrah, but also tending to convert the Naizar and the clay flat between it and the Shela into arable land by diminishing the amount of waste water. Ruins in the part now subject to inundations to the west of Sibkuha appear to show that the ancients must have had a better command over the Helmund waters than the people of to-day.

The inhabitants in spite of their heroic ancestor, Rustam, are not now a warlike race. The Shahrekis, Sarbandis, Cayanis, etc., whatever they may have been, do not now represent a military force. Very few of the inhabitants carry arms. They are completely overawed by the Kain people, and would be worthless as soldiers.

Any highly irrigated country is difficult for troops to operate in. Sistan is particularly so. There is not a road or anything approaching a road anywhere. The whole country is intersected with canals and watercuts, at best bridged here and there by a few boughs of tamarisk, barely broad enough or stable enough for one loaded mule to cross at a time.

Between Sibkuha and Nasirabad, a distance of 20 miles, one has to cross more than 20 canals and watercuts, of which two canals are 30 feet wide and 2 feet deep in their normal condition, and the remainder are watercuts with

the following average dimensions—banks 6 feet above ground level, water 3 feet deep, 5 feet broad, and sometimes as much as 4 feet below ground level. Distance from the top of one bank to the top of the other 15 feet.

Add to this the fact that the watercuts often overflow, converting the soil for some distance into a heavy bog, and it will be seen how difficult it is for even a caravan to get from one village to another. The villages, as I have before remarked, are all undefended, with the exception of Nasirabad. In the centre of a few villages are the remains of forts of which the most noticeable is Sihkuha.

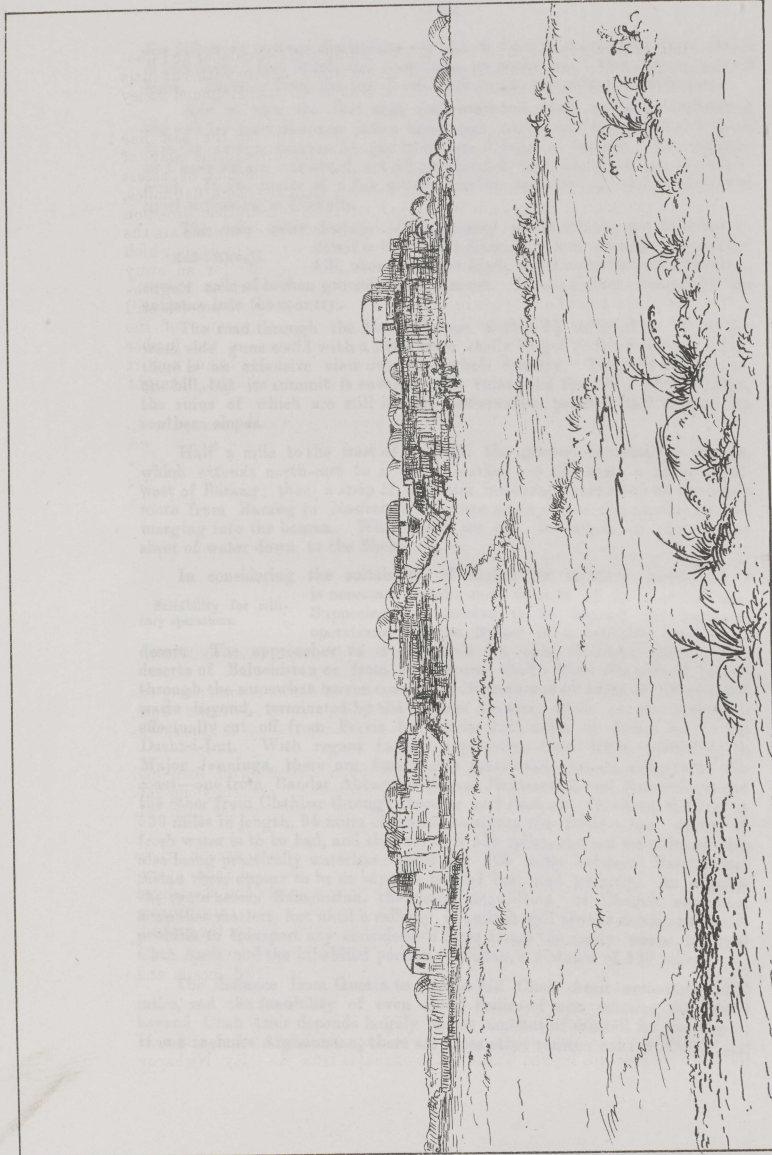
The only other feature of the country which I have not described in detail is the Kuh-i-Khwaja, a low, circular, flat-topped hill, about 400 feet high, and having an area of about a square mile of broken ground on its summit. It completely commands the entrance into the country.

The road through the Naizar passes within $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of it. From the west side guns could with a little work easily be got to the top, from which there is an extensive view over the whole country. There is no water on the hill, but its summit is covered with ruins, and there is a whole village, the ruins of which are still in fair preservation, perched half way up its southern slopes.

Half a mile to the west of the hill the ground is usually a swamp, which extends north-east to a pillar marked on the map, a little south-west of Barang; then a strip of dry land intervenes, traversed by the main route from Barang to Nasirabad, and then again comes flat marshy ground merging into the hamun. When floods are out, the whole of this is one sheet of water down to the Shela.

In considering the suitability of Sistan for military operations, it is necessary to take some account of its surroundings. Supposing Afghanistan to be beyond the limit of operations, Persian Sistan is a veritable oasis in a desert. The approaches to it are from the side of India through the deserts of Baluchistan or from the Persian Gulf; from the side of Russia through the somewhat barren country of Birjand, and 60 miles of uninhabited waste beyond, terminated by the Naizar swamp; while on the west it is effectually cut off from Persia by nearly 200 miles of desert called the Dasht-i-Lut. With regard to the approaches from India, according to Major Jennings, there are two routes practicable for an army from the coast—one from Bandar Abbas *via* Regan, Nahimabad, and Nasratabad, and the other from Chahbar through Bampur and Sarhad. Of these, the first is 536 miles in length, 94 miles of which are across the Dasht-i-Lut, where no fresh water is to be had, and the second is 515 miles, the last 94 miles of this also being practically waterless; while for 325 miles between Bampur and Sistan there appear to be no supplies beyond fuel and grazing. As regards the route across Baluchistan, the recent acquisition of Chagh somewhat simplifies matters, but until a railway is built it will always remain a difficult problem to transport any considerable force across the sandy waste between Chah Amir and the inhabited portion of Sistan, a distance of 160 miles.

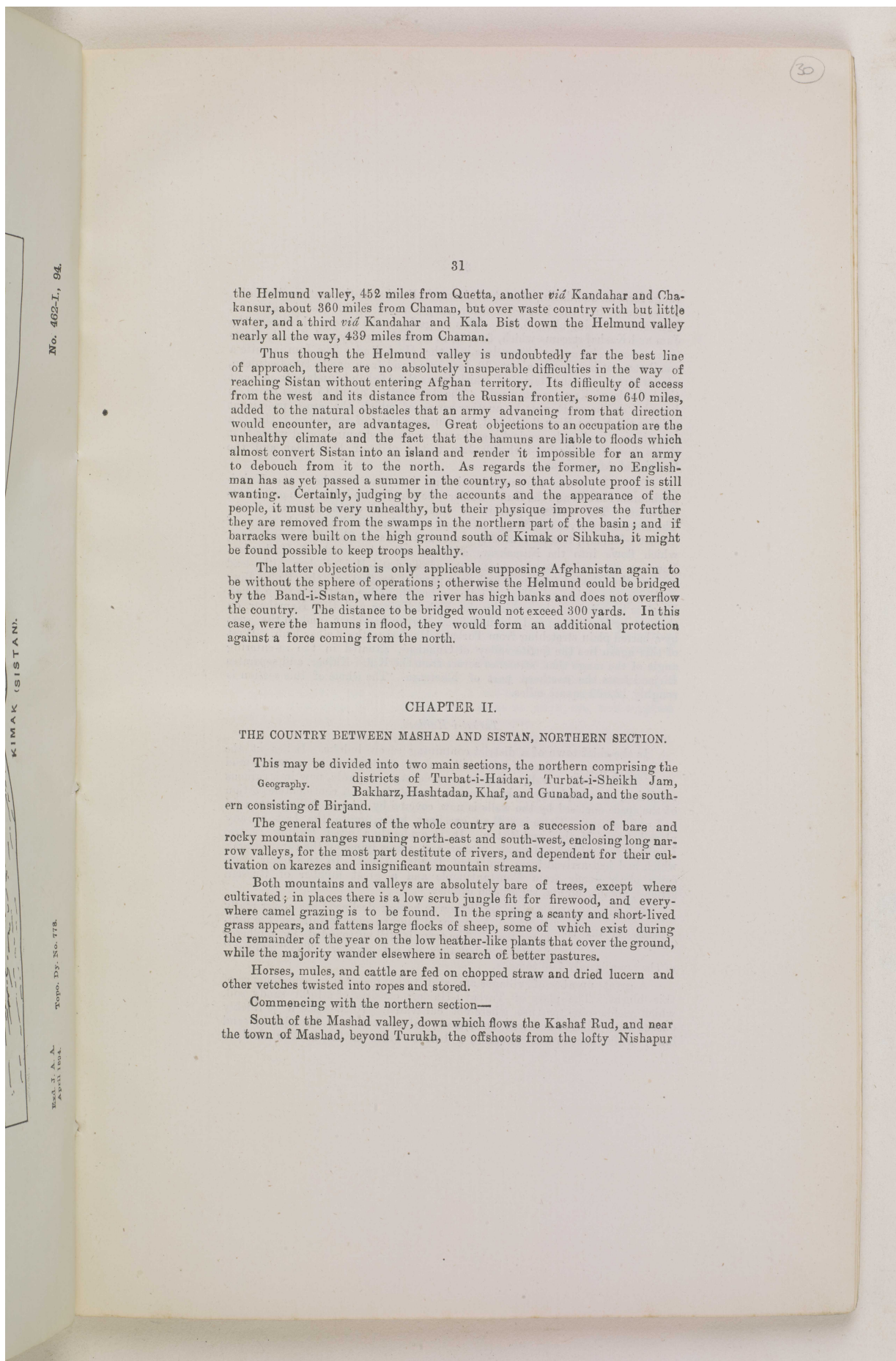
The distance from Quetta to Sistan *via* Chah Amir amounts to 527 miles, and the feasibility of even small bodies of men crossing the desert beyond Chah Amir depends largely on the amount of rainfall for the season. If one includes Afghanistan, there are three other routes: one *via* Nushki and



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KIMAK (SISTAN).

Exd. J. A. A.
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KIMAK (SISTAN).

Exp. J. A. A.
Asst. Insp.

Topog. Dy. No. 778.

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the Helmund valley, 452 miles from Quetta, another *via* Kandahar and Chakansur, about 360 miles from Chaman, but over waste country with but little water, and a third *via* Kandahar and Kala Bist down the Helmund valley nearly all the way, 439 miles from Chaman.

Thus though the Helmund valley is undoubtedly far the best line of approach, there are no absolutely insuperable difficulties in the way of reaching Sistan without entering Afghan territory. Its difficulty of access from the west and its distance from the Russian frontier, some 640 miles, added to the natural obstacles that an army advancing from that direction would encounter, are advantages. Great objections to an occupation are the unhealthy climate and the fact that the hamuns are liable to floods which almost convert Sistan into an island and render it impossible for an army to debouch from it to the north. As regards the former, no Englishman has as yet passed a summer in the country, so that absolute proof is still wanting. Certainly, judging by the accounts and the appearance of the people, it must be very unhealthy, but their physique improves the further they are removed from the swamps in the northern part of the basin; and if barracks were built on the high ground south of Kimak or Sihkuha, it might be found possible to keep troops healthy.

The latter objection is only applicable supposing Afghanistan again to be without the sphere of operations; otherwise the Helmund could be bridged by the Band-i-Sistan, where the river has high banks and does not overflow the country. The distance to be bridged would not exceed 300 yards. In this case, were the hamuns in flood, they would form an additional protection against a force coming from the north.

CHAPTER II.

THE COUNTRY BETWEEN MASHAD AND SISTAN, NORTHERN SECTION.

This may be divided into two main sections, the northern comprising the districts of Turbat-i-Haidari, Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam, Bakharz, Hashtadan, Khaf, and Gunabad, and the southern consisting of Birjand.

The general features of the whole country are a succession of bare and rocky mountain ranges running north-east and south-west, enclosing long narrow valleys, for the most part destitute of rivers, and dependent for their cultivation on karezes and insignificant mountain streams.

Both mountains and valleys are absolutely bare of trees, except where cultivated; in places there is a low scrub jungle fit for firewood, and everywhere camel grazing is to be found. In the spring a scanty and short-lived grass appears, and fattens large flocks of sheep, some of which exist during the remainder of the year on the low heather-like plants that cover the ground, while the majority wander elsewhere in search of better pastures.

Horses, mules, and cattle are fed on chopped straw and dried lucern and other vetches twisted into ropes and stored.

Commencing with the northern section—

South of the Mashad valley, down which flows the Kashaf Rud, and near the town of Mashad, beyond Turukh, the offshoots from the lofty Nishapur

range form an undulating stretch of downs. Further to the east are low hills. These merge into the Kat-i-Shamshir range, some 7,000 feet in altitude, Meshed itself being about 3,100. This range forms the watershed between the Jam and Kashaf streams which, flowing in a south-easterly and easterly direction respectively, empty themselves into the Hari Rud. The Jam is quite a small stream, being only about 20 feet broad and from one to two feet deep, near where it joins the Hari Rud, which forms the Afghan boundary from about the latitude of Karez northwards. The Jam valley, about 15 miles broad, is bounded on the south-west by another range, of which the most prominent point is the Kuh-i-Bizg, 9,330 feet, the southern limit of the range. This is a conspicuous landmark, overlooking a barren and almost uninhabited waste that slopes down from Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam to the plain of Hashtadan and the frontier of Afghanistan.

To the north-west the range breaks up into two branches: the Kuh-i-Muhammad Mirza and the Kuh-i-Baidar. South of these is the plain of Turbat-i-Haidari. The western portion of this tableland drains into the Kavir. The almost dry riverbed, on the left bank of which is situated the town of Turbat-i-Haidari, takes a southerly course and joins the Shur Rud or salt river, which flows into the Namaksar, a large salt lake south of Hashtadan. Four or five miles to the south-east of Turbat-i-Haidari low hills lead up to the Bakharz range, which runs parallel to that of the Kuh-i-Bizg enclosing the Bakharz valley, 12 miles in breadth, and separating it from Khaf. Khaf is bounded on the south by the Kuh-i-Kaibar and the Namaksar, on the east by Hashtadan and the undefined Afghan boundary, and on the west by a barren plain stretching from Turbat-i-Haidari to the Kaibar Kuh. West of this again lies the fertile valley of Gunabad, situated in the re-entering angle of the range that stretches across from the Kuh-i-Kaibar, and separates Birjand from the northern part of Khorasan. The whole of this section is roughly 12,000 square miles.

Turbat-i-Haidari.

Is the chief town of a district containing seven buluks. It lies at the foot of a low hill, and is surrounded by a weak mud wall, with bastions every 70 yards, now in a ruinous condition, and completely broken down in several places. A considerable portion of the space enclosed by the walls is now covered by houses falling into ruin and uninhabited. There is still an excellent bazar, quite the best of any place between Mashad and Sistan. It is evidently a great trading centre. I noticed several bales of goods, pepper, and spices lying by the caravansarai, which had just arrived from India *via* Bandar Abbas. In the bazar were some cloth goods from Constantinople and a great number of Russian articles, notably chintz, sugar, and candles.

The silk industry noticed by Bellew as having declined has never really revived. A species of blight seems to fall on the mulberry trees. The town is still surrounded by mulberry plantations, but they do not prosper. The "maliyat" of the town is only 700 tomans.

A great number of villages are said to be deserted in consequence of this blight. The plain of Turbat-i-Haidari consists of a light sandy soil, which yields some pasture where not cultivated. To the east it is thickly dotted with villages and well cultivated; to the west it is bounded by sand hills; while southwards stretches a barren waste as far as Buznabad, so

sparsely populated that mule caravans will not cross it, but prefer the round-about route to Kain *vid* Gunabad.

The district is administered by a Persian official under the Governor of Khorasan, and has no hereditary ruler; consequently the Governor of Turbat-i-Haidari changes with every new Governor of Khorasan, or whenever any one else is found to offer more money for the post.

There are about 100 inhabited villages in the district, and its grain assessment is now 2,000 kharwars.

Bakharz.

I did not visit the Bakharz valley, and have no information about it.

Bakharz. Bell remarks that the valley is fertile about Shahr-i-nao, and that near Chakmak there is splendid grazing, and crops are cultivated in the sandy soil without irrigation. MacGregor also notices the excellent grazing in the valley in the spring and early summer.

Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam.

The village of Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam is situated in the centre of a gently sloping plain about 2 miles above the brook known as the Jam river, and between it and the Kuh-i-Bizg.

It presents but a sorry appearance with its tumble down fort, squalid houses, and dirty narrow streets. The only thing that distinguishes it from an ordinary village is the ruin of the mosque of Sheikh Jam, which can be seen for many miles.

It has been a fine piece of architecture, and the exquisite colouring of the mosaic work in the main archway is still in fair preservation. In the village are some shops which, though they make no show, are well supplied with Russian goods. Tea is the only Indian produce.

The valley contains some good grazing in the spring, and the district, which is under the Nasrat-ul-Mulk, hereditary chief of the Taimuris, contains 52 villages. In the last few years, thanks to the energy of the Nasrat-ul-Mulk, this district has considerably improved. Several new hamlets have sprung up and some are now being built between Turbat and Mashad, all enclosed by four low, but strongly built, mud walls, with the houses built along the inside of the walls, and an empty square in the centre. There seems to be plenty of water; in the winter the centre of the valley near the village of Langar forms a marsh, about 2 miles long, and in the summer, at a time when the Hari Rud at Kaman-i-Bihisht was dry, I noticed a good flow of water in the Jam river. The lower part of the valley east of Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam is also now being opened up, and will soon become fairly populous. The number of abandoned forts in this part, especially north of the river, is very remarkable. The Turkomans are probably responsible for this desolation.

The principal villages in the district are—

Name of village.	Number of houses.	Number of cattle.	Number of sheep.	Remarks.
Turbat ...	500	80	5,000	There are also about 200 horses
Langar ...	500	80	2,000	
Abdulabad ...	400	80	3,000	and 2,500 donkeys in the district.
Khairabad ...	200	80	...	
Duzanak ...	200	40	1,000	
Bizg ...	150	40	2,000	
Hassanabad ...	100	60	1,000	
Yagutin ...	100	40	1,000	
Mahmudabad ...	100	80	2,000	
Kaleh Shir ...	100	40	500	
Ravinj ...	60	20	2,000	
Amghan ...	60	24	500	
Kadirabad ...	60	10	...	
Bardu ...	40	40	...	
Karezu ...	40	10	...	
Mirza Jafir ...	20	8	200	
Alghan ...	30	10	700	
Naodeh ...	30	10	1,000	
Shakhtu ...	10	4	...	
Samarkawe ...	20	10	1,000	
Hajiabad ...	30	16	1,000	
Taghiabad ...	25	16	50	
Khuramabad } Asadabad }	15	8	...	
Nasirabad ...	25	18	...	
Bassanik ...	30	20	500	
Aman Muhammad ...	20	10	...	
Aghul-i-Kamar ...	15	12	...	
Mohminabad ...	20	12	...	
Shurab ...	10	10	...	
	2,000	688	24,450	

Marked on the map—N. W.
Trans-Frontier series.

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This makes a total of 11,600 inhabitants. Taking the remaining 22 villages at an average of 30 houses each, and including the village of Ferai-man, 500 houses, which also belongs to the Nasrat-ul-Mulk, will give for the whole valley a total of 16,240 inhabitants, and, say, 1,700 cattle and 34,000 sheep.

I estimate the yearly produce of wheat and barley at 16,450 kharwars.

Grain crop. Allowing 580 lbs. per head per annum, there remains a surplus of 1,959 kharwars (566 tons.)

In March 1893 prices at Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam were—

11 maunds (71½ lbs.) chaff for one kran.
3 „ (19½ lbs.) barley for one kran.
2 „ (13 lbs.) bread for one kran.

On April 30th there were 200 kharwars of grain stored here.

Inhabitants. The inhabitants are mostly Persians, those of Ferai-man being of particularly good physique.

This little district belongs to the Nasrat-ul-Mulk, who is building new villages here also. The inhabitants are partly Hazaras and partly Persians.

Hashtadan.

Hashtadan.

The Hazaras predominate. Their chief is Sartip Ismail Khan, who is said to have some thousands of "khasadars" under his orders. The actual garrison in Taiabad consists of 200 soldiers, 15 gunners, and 50 Hazara sowers. There are also two guns. A considerable number of nomads, Afghans, Baluchis, Hazaras, and Taimuris, encamp on the plain near the Afghan border, where there is most excellent grass, real English turf among the low hills, during spring, and probably

Pasture.

lasting well on into the summer. The soil is light and sandy, and early in March the whole plain was literally alive with tortoises, so much so that one's horse could not canter along without crushing them. Unfortunately there is a scarcity of water.

The following is a list of the villages in Hashtadan :—

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Remarks.
Taiabad (Taibat)*	400	80	5,000	* These villages are marked on the map—N. W. Trans-Frontier Series, 3 kanats. There are also 25 horses, 100 camels, and 550 donkeys in the district.
Mohsinabad*	200	80	6,000	
Karez*	200	40	3,000	
Karat*	20	20	200	
Farizneh*	30	30	1,000	
Kuhabad*	25	20	1,000	
Abganeh*	30	30	1,000	
Nadiri*	5	8	...	
Farmanabad*	50	20	1,000	
Kashkak	50	20	1,000	
Azizbai	10	4	...	
Sarband	20	6	1,000	
Ruknabad	10	14	...	
Rahneh	15	10	1,000	
	1,065	382	21,200	

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The population may therefore be reckoned at 4,260 villagers and, say, 1,000 nomads. I estimate the grain crop at 4,775 kharwars, leaving a surplus of 81 kharwars (23½ tons).

Prices at Karat on March 10th were—

8 maunds (52 lbs.) chaff for one kran.
3 " (19½ lbs.) barley for one kran.
2 " (13 lbs.) bread for one kran.

Khaf.

This district was also under the Nasrat-ul-Mulk, but when the new Governor-General arrived in Meshed in the spring of 1893, he deprived him of it. It has, however, since been restored to the Nasrat-ul-Mulk.

The inhabitants are chiefly Taimuris; the remainder are Persians.

Rui.

Rui, the capital, lies under a low grey rocky hill with jagged peaks. It is enclosed by a mud wall, now much decayed, enclosing a space of about 200 yards by 300; but to the north and south the houses extend beyond the walls. Inside is the "ark," walled off from the rest of the town, and forming the residence of the acting Governor, a fine frank sartip of the Taimuri tribe. There is one good street of brick built shops and houses, now in ruins. Modern buildings are mere mud huts. There are 30 shops; a small colony of Hindus sell grains, etc. Outside the town are 30 windmills, 3 watermills, and 500 jaribs (375 acres) of garden and orchards.

On the opposite side of the valley, and about 12 miles off, can be seen the rocky Bakharz range, rising about 4,000 feet above the plain. The soil in the district seems to be very fertile. It is of a peculiar reddish colour. There is rather a scarcity of water.

The district contains the following villages:—

Village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Camels.	Donkeys.	Remarks.
Rui (Khaf)	1,000	200	5,000	50	500	
Sangun	400	120	4,000	200	300	
Nishtafan	300	100	4,000	200	200	
Salami	300	50	200	50	200	
Chamanabad	250	40	1,500	50	150	
Nasirabad	200	60	1,500	50	100	
Khagird	50	10	500	...	30	
Dasht	50	20	500	...	30	
Waliabad	50	12	500	...	40	
Barabad	150	40	2,000	...	10	
Mihrabad	20	10	10	

Marked on the map—N. W. Trans Frontier series.

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Village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Camels.	Donkeys.	Remarks.
Marked on the map— N. W. Trans-Frontier series— <i>contd.</i>	Tizab ...	100	30	1,000	10	70
	Bagehi ...	4	2	...	...	2
	Pauidar ...	100	40	1,000	20	100
	Laj ...	100	20	1,500	...	70
	Farahabad ...	20	10	500	...	10
	Salmun ...	20	10	500	...	10
	Ibrahimi ...	60	6	1,000	30	20
	Sultanabad ...	10	...	500	...	5
	Gujneh ...	6	4	100	...	3
	Makhalun ...	10	6	200	...	5
	Sihdih* ...	150	40	1,200	20	100
	Sihjameh ...	150	40	1,500	...	100
	Hukum ...	10	4	100	...	5
	Mangab* ...	10	4	...	...	5
TOTAL ...	3,510	908	28,800	680	2,075	

Besides these, there are about a dozen other small villages, which, taken at an average of 30 houses each, make a total of 3,870 houses or 15,480 inhabitants, with, say, 1,086 cattle, 30,000 sheep, and 2,300 donkeys. I estimate the grain crop at 13,575 kharwars, which gives a deficit of 238 kharwars (69 tons), without counting the wants of the nomads who are reckoned at 1,000 tents, chiefly Taimuris.

Gunabad.

In the valley near Gunabad are the following villages; they do not, however, comprise the whole district:—
Gunabad.

Village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Maliyat.	Remarks.
				Tomans.	
*Kuj ...	200	54	1,500	200	An average of 2 donkeys to every 3 houses may be taken.
*Min ...	50	18	50	200	
*Dulubi ...	150	60	250	250	
Khaiberi ...	150	50	1,000	180	
*Jumain ...	1,500	160	1,000	1,000	
*Gunabad ...	?	100	500	?	
*Rahan ...	120	70	500	?	
*Riab ...	100	50	500	?	
Naodih ...	40	16	500	100	
Samoi ...	150	60	...	150	
Tughab ...	150	60	...	150	

* Marked on the map.

Gunabad is a large open village. The buluk is an extremely populous little tract, receiving plenty of water from the mountain streams. The cultivation appears to be very good, though not widely extended; for it is bounded by stony mountain slopes to the south-east and west, and by a barren waste to the north. According to the information I received, the grain crop of these

villages should be not more than 4,680 kharwars, while the population would require more than 8,780 kharwars, leaving a deficit of at least 4,100 kharwars (1,180 tons); but this is probably incorrect.

Sixteen miles south of Gunabad and up a barren stony slope is situated the town of Kakh, close under the mountains at the mouth of a ravine. In the town is an old fort which is now almost in ruins. There are 1,500 houses, 100 cattle, and 2,000 sheep. The town boasts of a school, two caravansarais, a mosque, and 30 shops. Along the line of hills are 16 hamlets belonging to Kakh, which yield annually 1,800 kharwars, including Kakh.

CHAPTER III.

THE COUNTRY BETWEEN MASHAD AND SISTAN, SOUTHERN SECTION.

The southern section comprising Birjand is traversed from north to south by two main ranges: one, commencing from Kakh, passes down the centre of the country separating Nimbuluk, Kain, and Sunikhana from Alkor and Narjun, and forming the watershed between the low ground of the Dasht-i-Lut on the west and the Namaksar and Dasht-i-Na-umid on the east. This range is from 6,000 to 8,000 feet above sea level. The other range, commencing from the Kuh-i-Kaibar, is called the Ahingeran; its highest peaks are 9,500 feet. Rising steep and rugged from the plain of Isfidin on its western side, it slopes more gradually towards Afghanistan, and contains a number of villages on the eastern side, which nestle close up under the brow of the mountain forming the buluk of Zirkuh. There is a good supply of water from springs in the mountains, but below the nature of the soil and the lie of the land do not admit of the construction of karezes, which would bring the water out on to the plain that forms a prolongation of the Dasht-i-Na-umid.

The Ahingeran range, therefore, practically forms the eastern limit of Birjand, though its actual limit extends over an uninhabited and nearly waterless tract to beyond Yezdun. This tract is, however, not a bare sandy desert; camels would find grazing anywhere, and within a few miles of the Ahingeran range vegetation is more abundant than on the Persian side, and the scrub is thick and high.

These two main ranges are united by a continuous chain of hills, passing from the village of Ahingeran to the north of Duruksh, and about 20 miles broad, forming the buluk of Shakhin, and separating the plain of Isfidin from that of Sunikhana.

North of Kain, which lies among low hills, and beyond Buznabad, is a barren and little inhabited tract cut off from Nimbuluk by an arm of the Kakh range. West again of Nimbuluk comes the border of Tabas, and south of that another barren tract of country bordering on the Dasht-i-Lut, and containing a salt basin some miles in length called the Kavir-i-Muhammadabad. This is the limit of Birjand to the west in this latitude, but further south it extends to Khur, and thence includes all the country on the east side of the

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Dasht-i-Lut. The valley of Birjand and Khusf, 6 to 15 miles in breadth, is separated from the bare plain below the Kavir-i-Muhammadabad by a band of 16 to 20 miles of mountainous country, conspicuous peaks of which are the Kuh-i-Ark and the Kuh-i-Shu-shu. Immediately south of Birjand is a massive and lofty range of over 8,000 feet, called the Kuh-i-Bagheran, separating the buluk of Narjun from Arabkhana, which consists of a barren region of hill ranges and narrow valleys running north-west and south-east. South of this again is the buluk of Neh-bandun, a bare stony country, interspersed with low hills, and sloping gradually down towards the clay flat of Sistan.

The only rivers in the whole of this district are the Rud-i-Shur and the Rud-i-Khusf. Both of them are more or less salt. The former rises in the hills near Kain.

Rivers. From Kain it flows in a general north-easterly direction, passing between the Kuh-i-Kaibar and the Ahingeran range, and thence to the Namaksar. Ordinarily its stream is from 10 to 15 feet broad and a few inches deep, but the river bed varies from 50 to 150 yards in breadth. The latter, rising in the hills north-west of Birjand, flows through Khusf, and on south-west till it is lost in the Dasht-i-Lut. At the time I crossed it in February, 23 miles below Khusf it was 30 feet broad by one foot deep. In this part of Persia one often passes a dozen dry riverbeds and broad watercourses in a single march, but it is very rarely that one detects any moisture in them; so one is inclined to think that there must have been a greater rainfall formerly than is now the case. The hills are so bare of trees and any vegetation that when it does rain all the water runs off at once, and the watercourses are dry again in a few hours.

According to Dr. Bellew, the district of Kain or Birjand is divided into nine buluks—Neh, Sunikhana, Zerkot, Khusf, Alghor, Narjun, Kain, Nimbuluk, and Shahwa.

With the exception of Shahwa, about which I could learn nothing, and Khusf, which certainly does not include Duruksh, they seem to be very correct. They do not, however, appear to include the little explored country to the south-west of Birjand. I had no access to any official sources, and found that the villagers themselves were extremely vague on the subject, so that I cannot exactly state what the buluks are. The following divisions will, however, include the whole district. In order to form an estimate of the population and resources of the whole district, where I have no information, I have taken Dr. Bellew's, which will be stated wherever it occurs:

Nimbuluk.

Nimbuluk. Nimbuluk contains the following villages:—

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Remarks.
*Dasht-i-Piaz	130	80	3,000	2 mills.
*Kidri	100	60	6,000	3 mills.
*Saghuri	5	

* Marked on the map.

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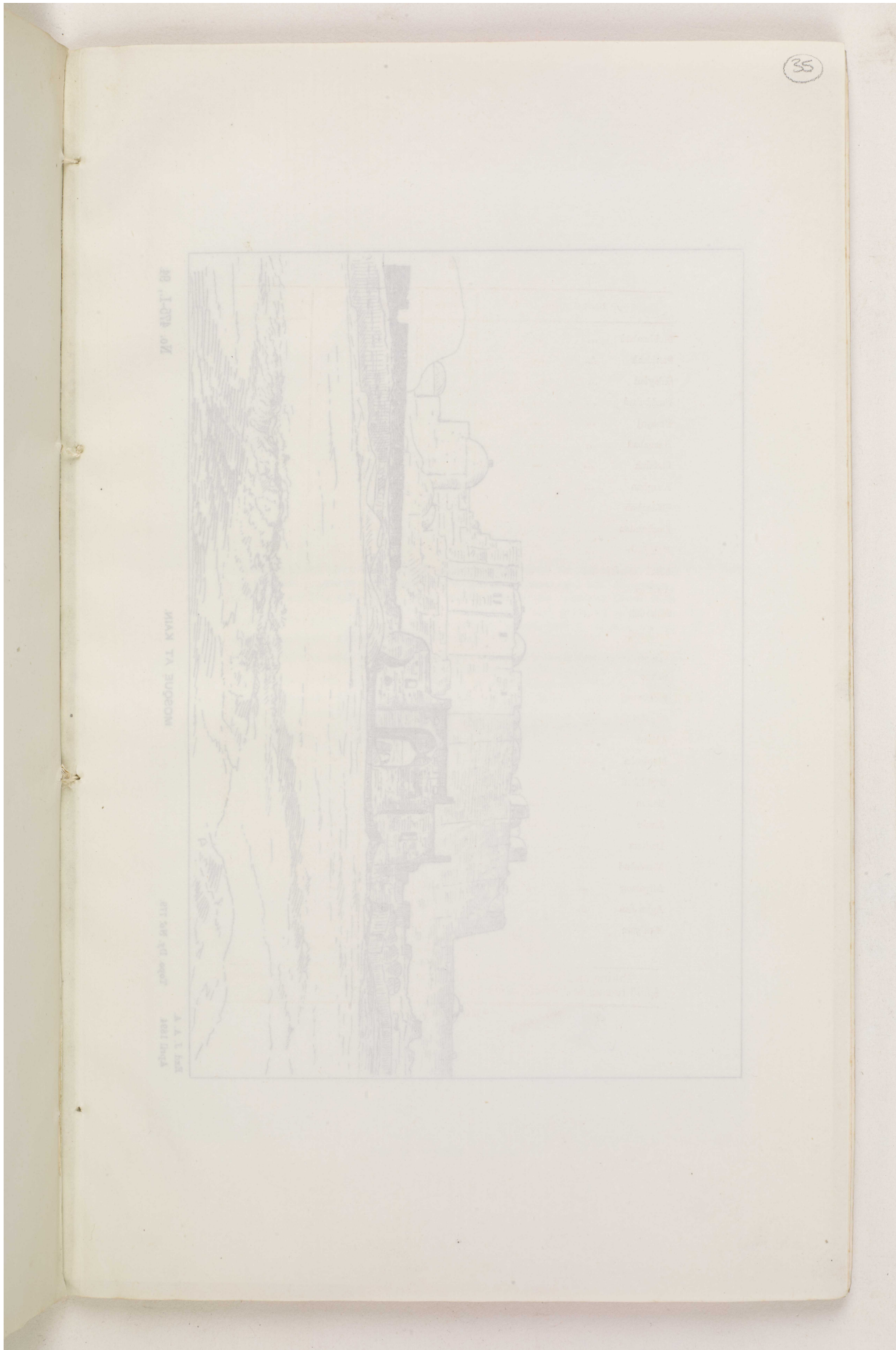
Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Remarks.
Mohimabad	76	132	700	
*Dihishk				
Salayuni				
Buskhabad				
Binayaj				
Buznabad				
Badaluk	40	30	8,000	1 mill.
Kurghan	52	100	6,000	
*Naoghab	30	24	1,000	
Dushandan	8	10	...	
*Tirghab	150	80	...	300 camels.
*Muhammadabad... ..	250	30	1,000	
Aliabad	5	6	...	
Musafah	10	12	100	
Manawaj	P	...	...
Karish	P	...	...
Behut	P	...	...
*Girimunj	P	...	...
*Asadabad	P	...	...
Akbari	P	...	...
Mardosha	P	...	...
Sayidabad	P	...	...
Badun	P	...	...
Jamin	P	...	...	Bellew.
Duduna	P	...	...
Murdabad	P	...	...
Alipalang	P	...	...
Agha Jan	P	...	...
Mehiyam	P	...	...
Total	856	664	25,800	

An average of 3 donkeys to every 3 houses may be taken.

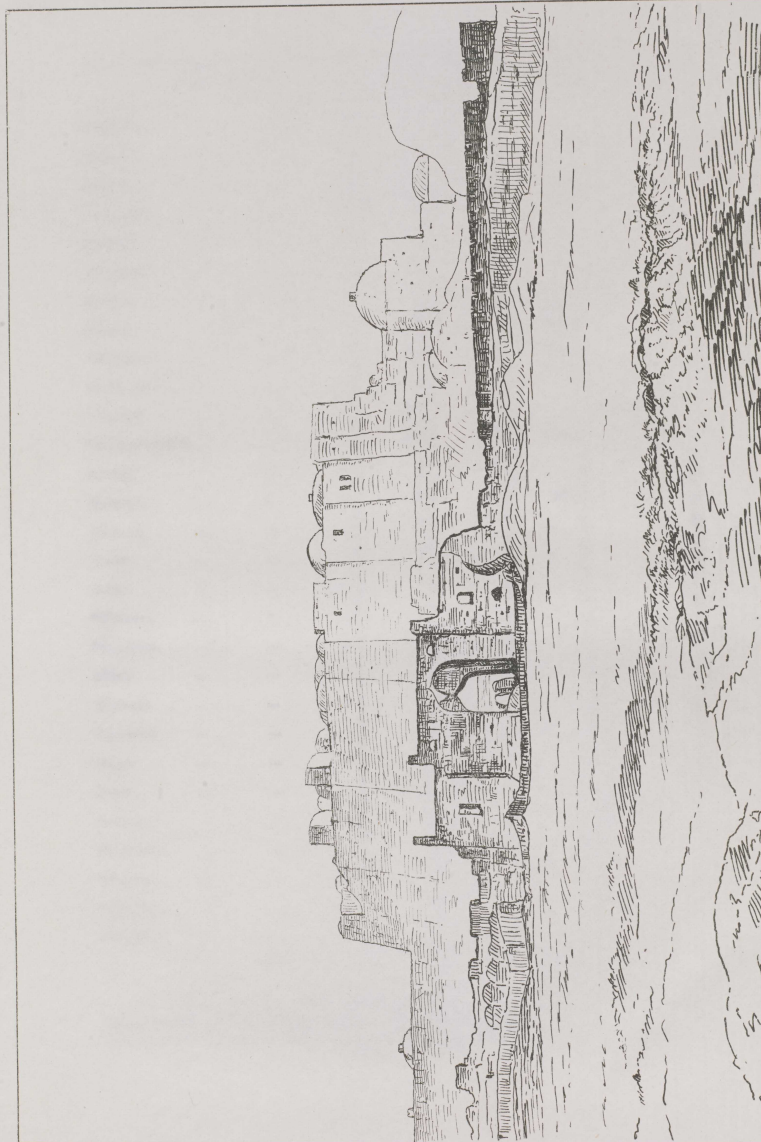
Taking an average of 50 houses for those not specified, the total becomes 4,556 houses or 6,324 inhabitants. They are Persians.

* Marked on the map.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [35r] (74/118)



'Mosque at Kain' [35v] (1/1)

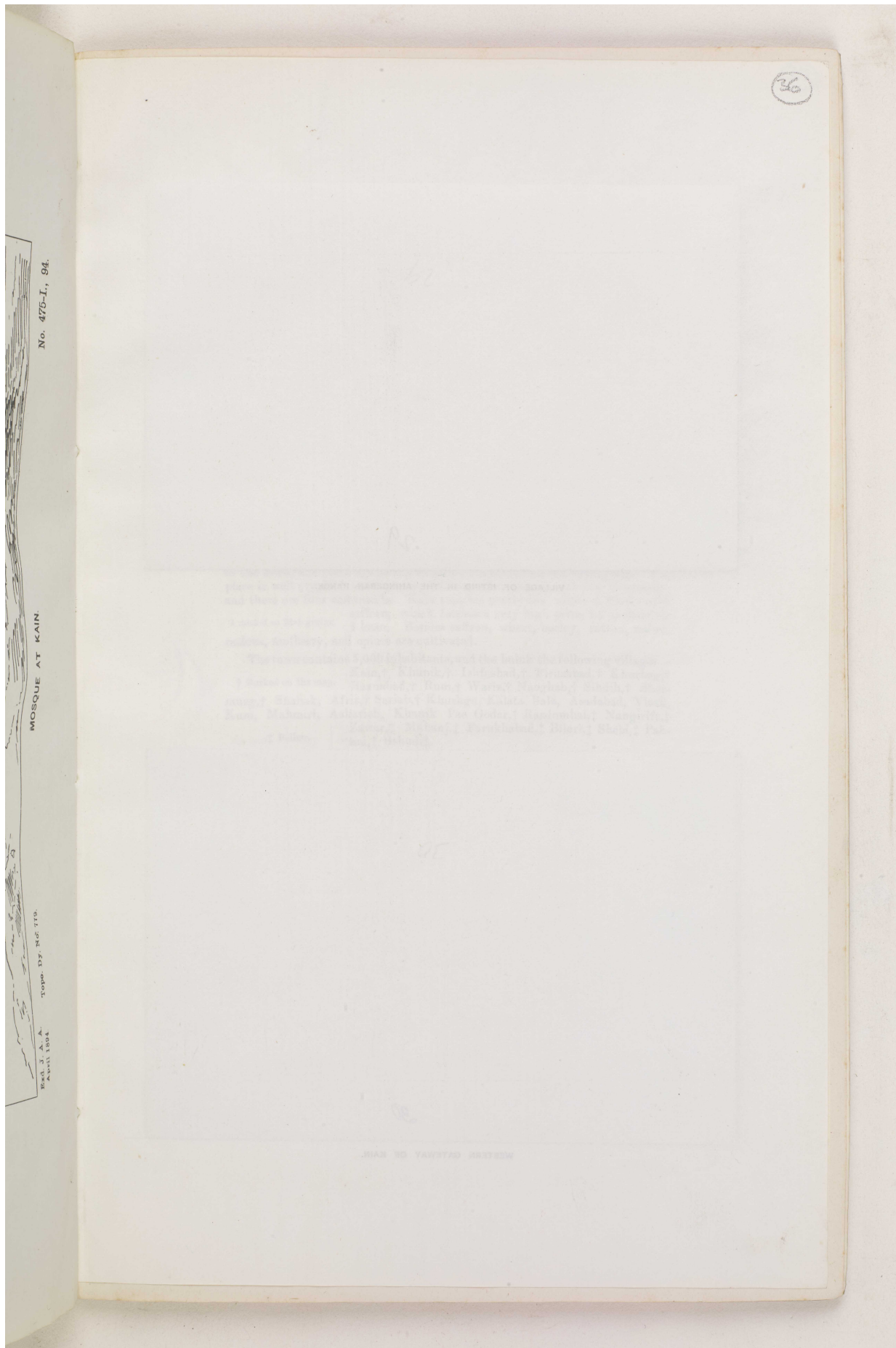


No. 475-I., 94.

MOSQUE AT KAIN.

Exd. J. A. A.
April 1894. Topo. Dy. No. 779.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [36r] (76/118)



'Village of Istind in the Ahingeran Range' [36v] (1/1)



VILLAGE OF ISTIND IN THE AHINGERAN RANGE.



WESTERN GATEWAY OF KAIN.

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Prices at Kidri in the winter were—

4½ maunds* of lucern and other vetches	1 kran.
8 " chaff	...	...	...	1 kran.
5 " barley	...	...	...	1 kran.
1 sheep	...	...	...	3 to 5 krans.
1 chicken	...	...	...	½ kran.
40 eggs	...	...	...	1 kran.
16 maunds of wood	...	...	...	1 kran.

This buluk has probably a surplus of about 2,000 kharwars of grain (580 tons).

Kain.

The town of Kain was formerly the seat of the Amir, and is situated in a much more fertile country than

Birjand.

It is surrounded by the usual mud wall, with bastions, which is now broken down in places and incapable of defence.

A mosque that looks like a huge factory is the most conspicuous object in the town, and there are about 30 shops supplied with Russian goods. The place is well supplied with water, having nine kanats and two ab-ambars, and there are four watermills. Kain supplies nearly the whole of Persia with saffron, which fetches a very high price, 2½ miskals for 1 miskal = 71·1 grains. 1 kran. Besides saffron, wheat, barley, cotton, millet, melons, mulberry, and opium are cultivated.

The town contains 5,000 inhabitants, and the buluk the following villages :-

Kain, † Khunik, † Ishfashad, † Firuzabad, † Khurbag, †
† Marked on the map. Buznabad, † Rum, † Wariz, † Naoghab, † Sindh, † Shermurg, † Shahak, Afris, † Sariab, † Khushgu, Kalata Bala, Asadabad, Vizak, Kum, Mahmiri, Askarieh, Khanik Pae Godar, † Razdumbal, † Nangirift, † Zawar, † Mahanj, † Farukhabad, † Bilori, † Shebi, † Pahnai, † Behudi.

† Bellew.

Thirty-one villages, at an average of 50 houses each, added to the population of Kain, makes a total of 11,200 inhabitants.

There are 400 camels and about 10,000 sheep belonging to the buluk, which is said to produce enough grain for its own consumption and occasionally a slight surplus, which is sent to Birjand.

The naib of Kain is Haji Abmed Beg, and an important mullah lives here called Agha Sayid Jawad. There are a great number of Sayids in the town. Kain could furnish at short notice 1,000 kharwars (290 tons) of barley, 1,000 kharwars of chaff (chopped straw), and 600 kharwars (174 tons) of wheat.

Prices on the 17th February were—

7 maunds (45·5 lbs.) chaff for	1 kran.
3 " (19·5 lbs.) barley "	1 " "
2 " (13 lbs.) bread "	1 " "

* The Tabas maund is used here, which weighs 8 lbs. 10½ oz.

Zirkuh.

This buluk is divided into two parts, Zirkuh and Pushtkuh, meaning "under" and "behind" the mountain. The Abingeran range slopes down eastwards, and falls perpendicularly to the west. The east side is called Zirkuh and the west Pushtkuh :—

Name of village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Remarks.
<i>Zirkuh.</i>				
*Istind	60	60	4,000	
*Garmab	12	8	...	
Tighab	8	8	500	
*Fandukht	40	30	...	
Mirabad	20	10	...	
*Isfad	60	60	1,000	
*Abiz (Awiz)	80	60	1,200	
*Buhnabad	50	60	3,000	
*Abingeran	6	4	...	
*Bamrud	80	28	1,500	20 horses.
*Sharakhs	100	30	500	3 camels.
*Edkul	50?	50?	...	
*Yazdan	12?	8?	...	
<i>Pushtkuh.</i>				
*Isfidin	250	120	5,000	1 watermill.
*Afh	100	100	1,000	
*Zehun	500	100	2,000	An average of 2 donkeys to every 3 houses may be taken throughout.
*Peihun	30	30	...	
Khatimi	15	10	...	
Nikh } Sarab }	100	60	500	
Pastaun	5	4	...	
Anjul	4	4	...	
Khusravi	20	40	500	
Ishkabad	4	4	...	
Warinjan	4	8	50	
Total	1,610	896	20,750	* Marked on the map.

BAMRUD (BIERJAND).
Seeking Elcott.

'Bamrud (Birjand). Looking North.' [38r] (1/1)

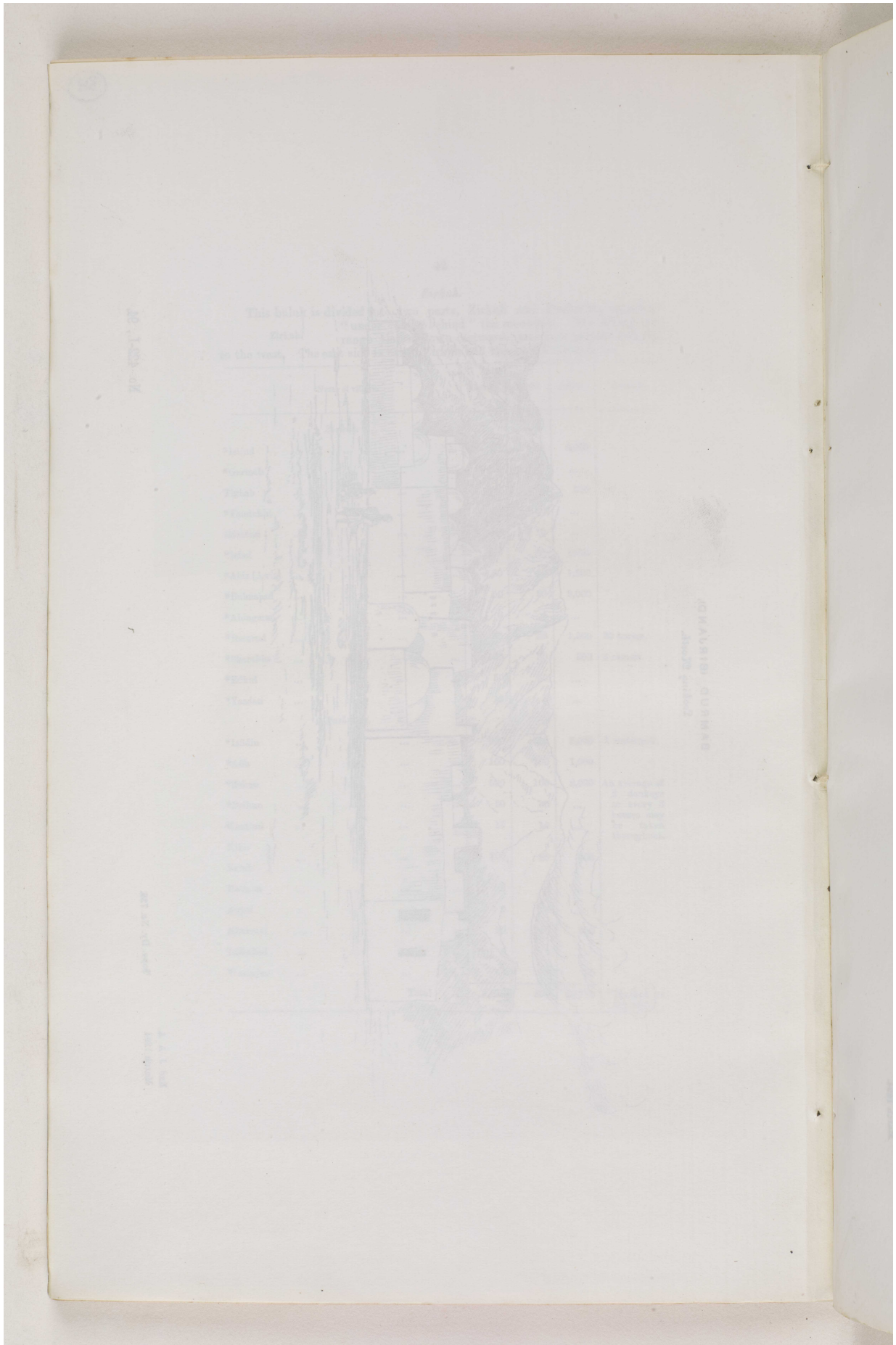


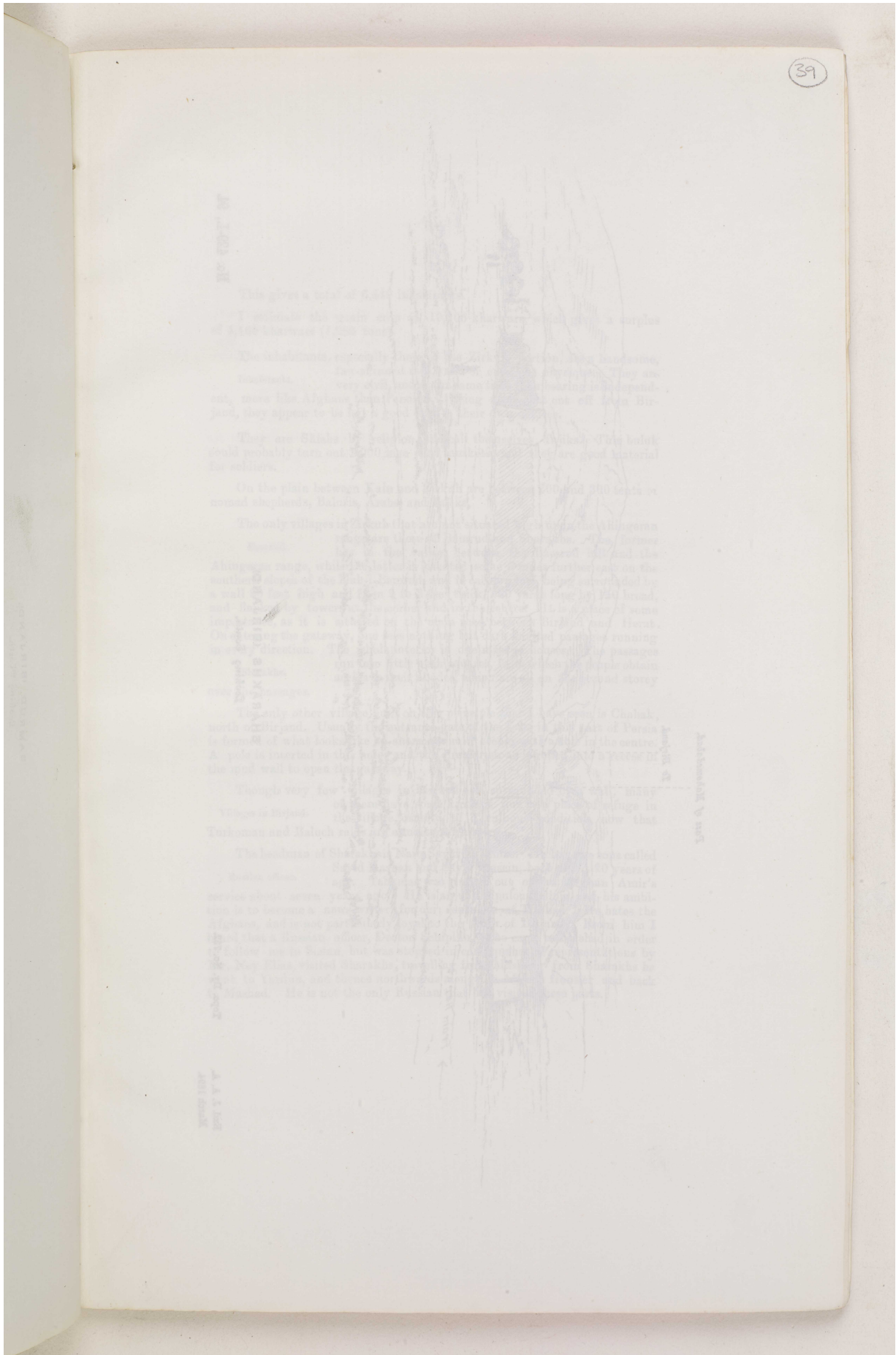
BAMRUD (BIRJAND).
Looking North.

No. 422-I, 94.

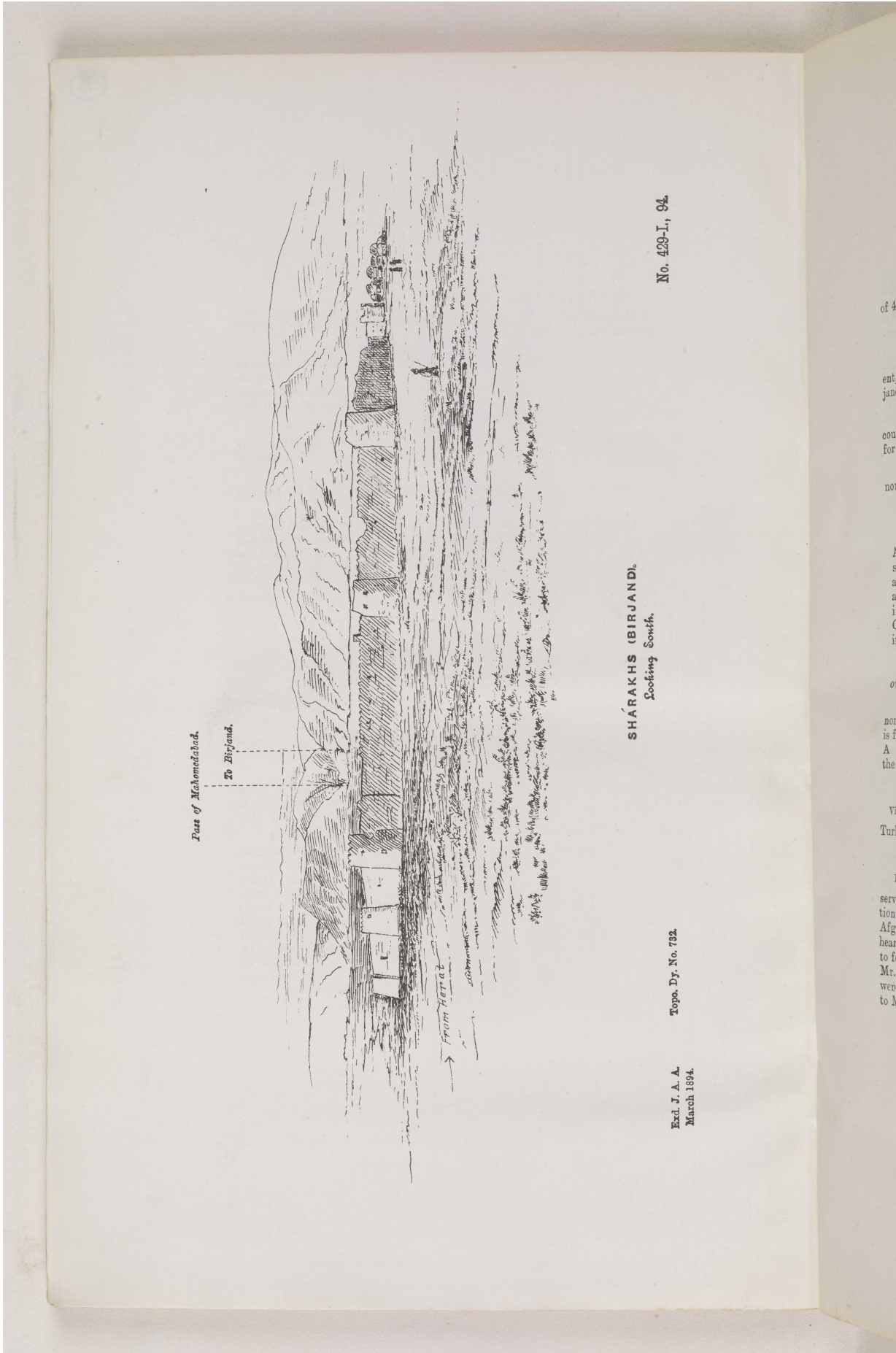
Exl. J. A. A.
March 1894.
Topo. Dj. No. 758.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [38v] (81/118)





'Sharakhs (Birjand). Looking South.' [39v] (1/1)



Pass of Mahmedabad.
To Birjand.

From Herat

SHÁRAKHS (BIRJAND).
Looking South.

No. 429-I., 94.

Topo. Dy. No. 732.

Exd. J. A. A.
March 1894.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [40r] (84/118)

40

No. 429-I, 94

43

This gives a total of 6,440 inhabitants.

I estimate the grain crop at 10,206 kharwars, which gives a surplus of 4,460 kharwars (1,285 tons).

The inhabitants, especially those of the Zirkuh portion, are a handsome, fair-skinned race, and of excellent physique. They are very civil, and at the same time their bearing is independent, more like Afghans than Persians. Being somewhat cut off from Birjand, they appear to be left a good deal to their own devices.

They are Shiah by religion, and call themselves Tajiks. This buluk could probably turn out 1,000 men with muskets, and they are good material for soldiers.

On the plain between Kain and Zirkuh are between 200 and 300 tents of nomad shepherds, Baluris, Arabs, and Tajiks.

The only villages in Zirkuh that are not situated high up in the Abingeran range are those of Bamrud and Sharakhs. The former lies in the valley between the Bamrud hill and the

Bamrud. Abingeran range, while the latter is situated some 6 miles further east on the southern slopes of the Kuh-i-Bamrud, and is called a fort, being surrounded by a wall 20 feet high and from 2 to 3 feet thick, 200 yards long by 150 broad, and flanked by towers at the corner and in the centre. It is a place of some importance, as it is situated on the main road between Birjand and Herat. On entering the gateway, one sees nothing but dark vaulted passages running in every direction. The whole interior is one mass of houses. The passages run into little open squares, from which the people obtain access to their abodes, which are all on the second storey

Sharakhs. over the passages.

The only other village built on this principle that I have seen is Chahak, north of Birjand. Usually the entrance gate of the forts in this part of Persia is formed of what looks like an enormous mill stone, with a hole in the centre. A pole is inserted in this hole, and the circular stone is rolled into a recess in the mud wall to open the gateway.

Though very few villages in Birjand are surrounded by a wall, many of them have some kind of fort as a place of refuge in the village, usually in a ruinous condition, now that Turkoman and Baluch raids are a matter of history.

The headman of Sharakhs is Naib Sayid Tahamas. He has two sons called Sayid Kashan and Sayid Husein, both about 20 years of age. Tahamas was turned out of the Afghan Amir's

Russian officer. service about seven years ago. He is an unscrupulous fellow, and his ambition is to become a news-writer for our consulate at Mashad. He hates the Afghans, and is not particularly loyal to the Amir of Birjand. From him I heard that a Russian officer, Doctor Schipilin, who came to Mashad in order to follow me to Sistan, but was stopped in consequence of representations by Mr. Ney Elias, visited Sharakhs, travelling from Mashad; from Sharakhs he went to Yazdun, and thence northwards along the Afghan frontier and back to Mashad. He is not the only Russian that has visited these parts.

Topog. Dy. No. 732

W. J. A. A.
March 1894.

Shakhin.

4. This buluk I am rather doubtful about, as my informant did not seem very reliable, and this part has been so little explored that the places cannot be checked on the map. Perhaps it is the buluk called by Bellew Shahwa. It is said to contain the following villages :—

Village.	Houses.	Remarks.
* Gask	100	40 cattle, 400 sheep, and 50 donkeys.
* Duruksh	1,000	300 cattle, 3,000 sheep, 30 camels, and 500 donkeys.
Asiabab		
Baghistan	10	.....
Fazlabad	20	.....
Birkhus	8	.....
Kubshruabad ... ..	.....	.....
Furjan ... ..	.....	.....
Ujan ... ..	.....	.....
Mirheb ... ..	.....	.....
Khunuk ... ..	.....	.....
* Hassanabad ... ..	.....	.....
* Jafirabad ... ..	.....	.....
Rawukht ... ..	.....	.....
* Mask ... ..	.....	.....
Malikabad ... ..	.....	.....

* Marked on the map.

Taking an average of 50 houses where not specified, the total is 1,588 houses, or 6,352 inhabitants.

The people are Shiabs, partly Persian, partly Tajik.

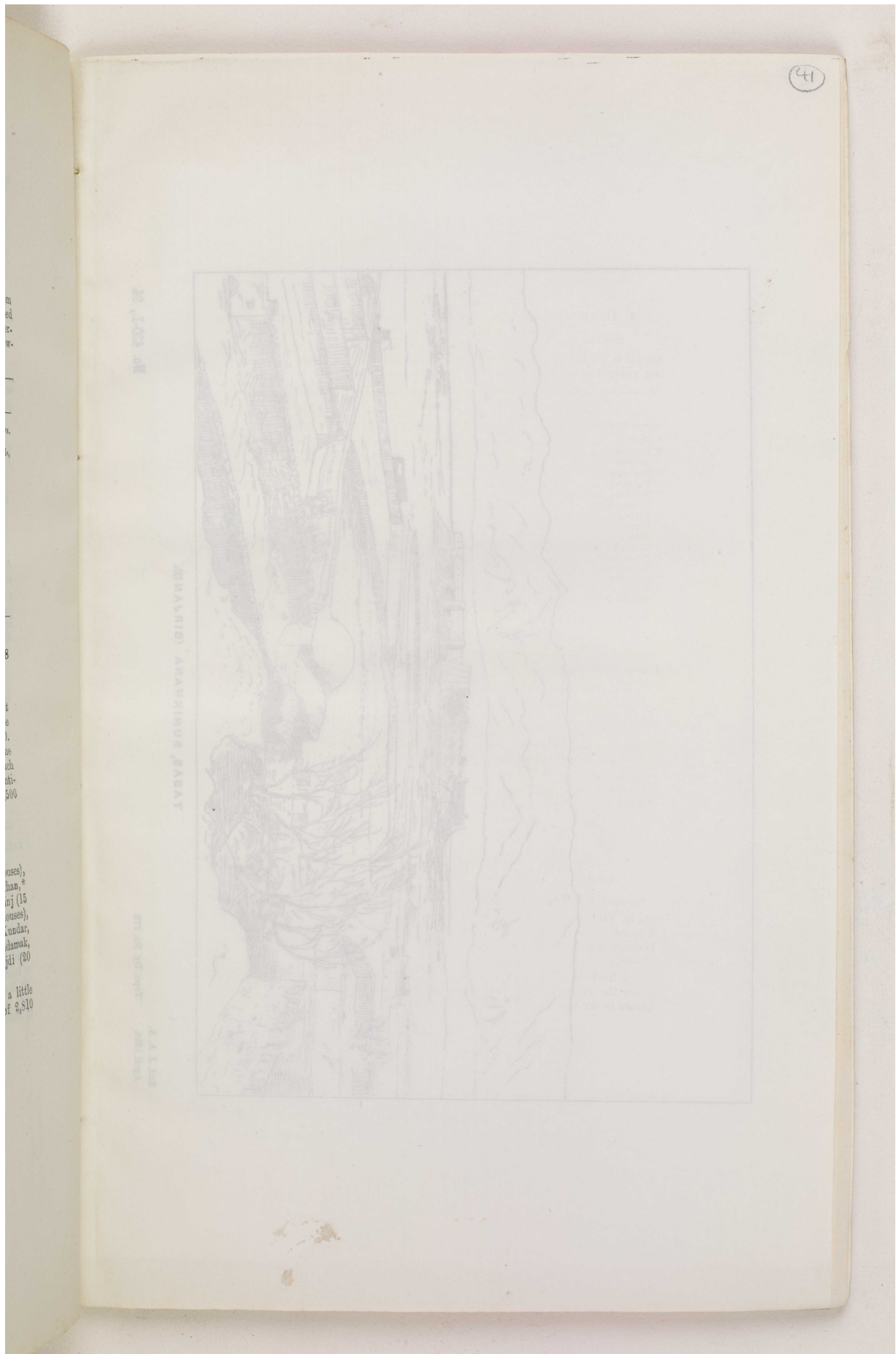
Duruksh is the village from whence come the best Kain carpets, and it does a great trade with Russia. The best carpets, a little larger than a hearthrug, fetch from Rs. 150 to Rs. 200.
Duruksh and the two villages near it lie in the centre of a stony ravine with bare steep hill slopes on either side. Consequently there is not much room for cultivation. There are, however, some fine orchards and a plentiful supply of water from springs. The maliyat of Duruksh is 1,500 tomans (Rs. 6,000).

Alkor.

5. Contains the following villages (Bellew) :—Mahiabad* (15 houses),
Alkor. Pisukh,* Ghiuk,* Gazar,* Nokhan,* Chahikhan,*
Huseinabad,* Ishkambarabad (20 houses), Firinj (15
* Marked on the map. houses), Ismailabad, Aldang, Naodib, Arur (150 houses),
Zarwi (150 houses), Pistakhan, Mayun, Barkuh, Zamini, Taghab, Kundar,
Khushk, Birinjan, Khank, Rashawand, Nayk, Sihchah, Teghdar, Badamak,
Haiderabad, Agha Mirza, Ayasik, Sihdih (250 houses), Mark, Bujdi (20
houses).

I have added no villages to this list; so taking the remainder at a little below the average of the ones specified, say 80 houses each, a total of 2,810 houses is arrived at, or 11,240 inhabitants.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [41r] (86/118)



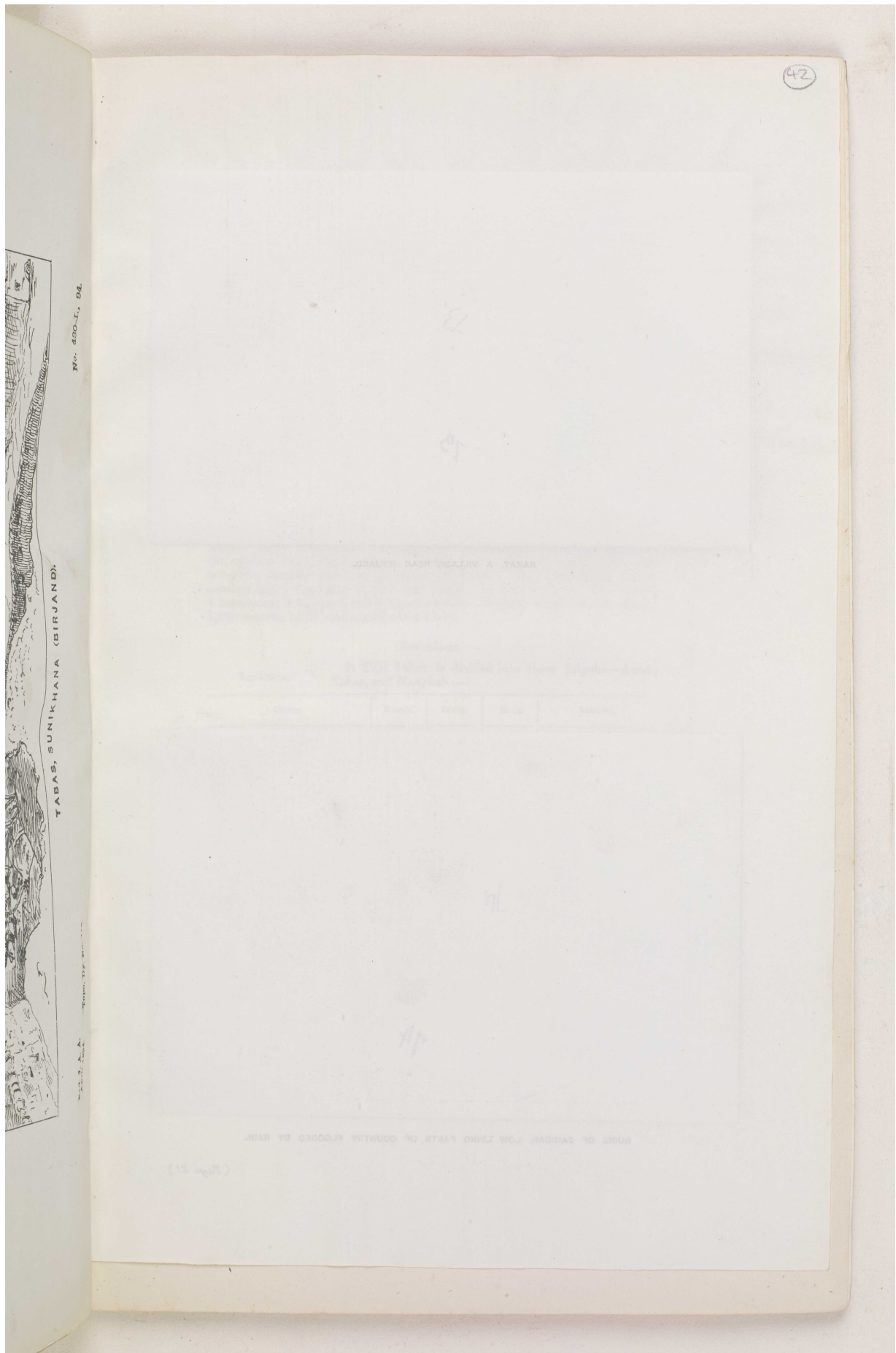


TABAS, SUNIKHANA (BIRJAND).

Exd. J. A. A.
April 1894. Topo. Dy. No. 776.

No. 430-I, 94.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [42r] (88/118)



'Rakat, A Village Near Birjand.' [42v] (1/1)



RAKAT, A VILLAGE NEAR BIRJAND.



RUINS OF ZAHIDAN, LOW LYING PARTS OF COUNTRY FLOODED BY RAIN.

(Page 21).

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* Hindav
* Burin

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Narjun.

6. Contains the following villages (Bellew and Bell) :—Sarbesha* (300 houses), Huseinabad* (200 houses), Duruh* (300 houses), Mud* (300 houses), Nanfiris* (350 houses), * Marked on the map. Bojd* (100 houses), Birjand* (1,850 houses), Dastagh-ich,* Bydar,* Beja (300 houses), Bahulgird (300 houses), Ghughu, Zulish, Shika, Buska, Fanud, Arwand Murtawang, Yaka Darakht, Hajjabad, Mazrua, Aliabad, Ispardih, Amirabad, Barkot, Akvarieh,* Kalata Awadi,* Kalata-i-Haji, Rakat-i-Bala,* Rakat-i-Pain.

This makes a total of 30 villages, of which 9 contain 4,000 houses. Taking the remainder at an average of 50 houses each, gives a total of 5,050 houses or 20,200 inhabitants.

A description of Birjand, the seat of the Amir of Kain, is given in the Persian Gazetteer.

It is situated low down on the northern slopes of a barren stony valley. It is an open town, but contains a ruined fort and "ark," in which are kept six ancient-looking guns. The garrison consists of one regiment of infantry of about 600 men, 400 sowars, and 36 gunners. Some of these are out on detachment in the principal villages, such as Neh and Gazik; and there is besides another regiment quartered in Sistan. The whole place has a desolate look; the bazar is bad and dirty. In the town are 250 shops, 4 hammams, 3 mosques, and 5 caravanserais. Birjand owns 20,000 sheep, 1,000 camels, 1,200 cattle, and a few mules.

Sunikhana.

7. This buluk is divided into three julgehs—Awaz, Sunikhana, Tabas, and Naoghab :—

Village.	Houses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Remarks.
*1. Awaz	100	80	6,000	
Kaleh Nao	20	12	1,000	
Gawinj	30	20	1,500	
* Ab-i-garm	50	12	1,000	
Nasratudin	10	4	1,000	
* Gazik	600	60	5,000	5 watermills.
*2. Tabas	200	60	2,400	14 camels, 41 windmills.
* Aliabad	40	30	500	
Madawa	40	30	500	
* Dastgird	40	30	1,800	
Faizabad	100	24	1,500	
Khoramak	4	4	...	
Ahmedabad	12	10	...	
* Burg	400	64	2,000	
* Darmiyan	500	64	...	50 horses.
* Doshingan	2	4	...	
Alian	2	2	...	
Darsihi	2	2	...	
Bijni	3	4	...	An average of 2 donkeys to every 3 houses may be taken throughout.
*3. Naoghab	70	40	1,500	
Gushkak	50	20	1,000	
Sarb	50	40	1,000	
* Taghnu	50	30	1,200	
Nakh	10	4	...	
Daricharm	5	4	...	
* Hindawalan	100	40	1,500	
* Burin	50	20	500	
TOTAL	2,600	714	30,500	* Marked on the map.

(Page 21.)

The population therefore amounts to 10,400. I estimate the grain crop at 9,640 kharwars, which gives a deficit of 360 kharwars (104 tons). The district round Tabas is very fertile, but at Gazik fruit trees are more cultivated than wheat, and they buy wheat and barley from Tabas and from Zirkuh.

At Gazik there is a garrison of 100 soldiers and 40 sowars. It is a flourishing place, and pays a maliyat of 750 tomans.

Tabas is an old polygonal shaped fort, with bastions at close intervals, and surrounded by a deep ditch 45 feet broad. Though now crumbling to pieces, it has been a strong place.

There is a naib of Tabas who usually resides in Darmiyan, a large village on the road to Birjand, up a fertile ravine, which produces excellent fruit, and is remarkable for its magnificent walnut trees. At the entrance to this ravine is a very picturesque and well-built fort that looks like a castle called Furg. The hills behind, however, command it, and it has been captured by a former Amir of Kain. It is the only fort I have seen in Persia built of solid masonry. They are generally made of mud or sun-dried bricks.

The inhabitants of this buluk are all Sunnis. It is peculiar that the Sunni religion should have survived here, while the people of Zirkuh, who are more in touch with Afghanistan, are Shiabs.

In 1747 all this country was taken from Persia by the Afghans.

The people of Sunikhana seem to keep pretty much to themselves. A guide who accompanied me from Furg to Gask refused to stay the night in the latter village because they were Shiabs. They, however, furnish some of the best recruits for the two regiments of the Amir of Birjand.

Khushf, including Kaisabad.

8. Contains the following villages:— Khushf* (600 houses), Shazileh* (100 houses), Fidishk* (70 houses), Mahsumabad (100 houses), Naoghab (50 houses), Siaojan* (50 houses),
* Marked on the map. Taghal* (50 houses), Dehgia (30 houses), $\frac{1}{2}$ Khur* (200 houses), Kusha (Gosha), Nasirabad, Chahak* (60 houses), Mahalla,† Yaomiyan,† Gulfris,† Shakun,† Haman* (60 houses).
† Bellew.

The numbers of houses in these villages are rather uncertain, but accepting them, and taking an average of 50 houses for those not specified, gives a total of 1,670 houses.

Kaisabad is said to lie to the south of Khushf, between it and Arabkhana, and to contain the following hamlets, consisting of 3 to 15 houses each:—

Kaisabad, Kalata-i-Arab, Busaid, Shah Mahmud, Afzalabad, Guishe, Huseinabad-i-Sarhang, Akbarabad, Wa'adaabad, Kah,* Gulun, Majun, Gurgu, Muhammadabad, Karimabad, Aliabad; 16 villages, at an average of 9 houses each, added to the former, makes a total of 1,814 houses or 7,256 inhabitants, consisting of Nakhis, Zanguis, and Persians, of which the Nakhi tribe predominate.

Khushf is the head-quarters of the Nakhi tribe, which used to be governed by its hereditary chief. Mailzar Khan was the last one. He was murdered by his nephew, who was in turn killed by Mailzar Khan's son. The son now lives in Mahsumabad, but has no official position.

CASTLE OF FURG (BIRJAND).

'Castle of Furg (Birjand).' [44r] (1/1)



CASTLE OF FURG (BIRJAND).

Exc. J. A. A.
March 1894.

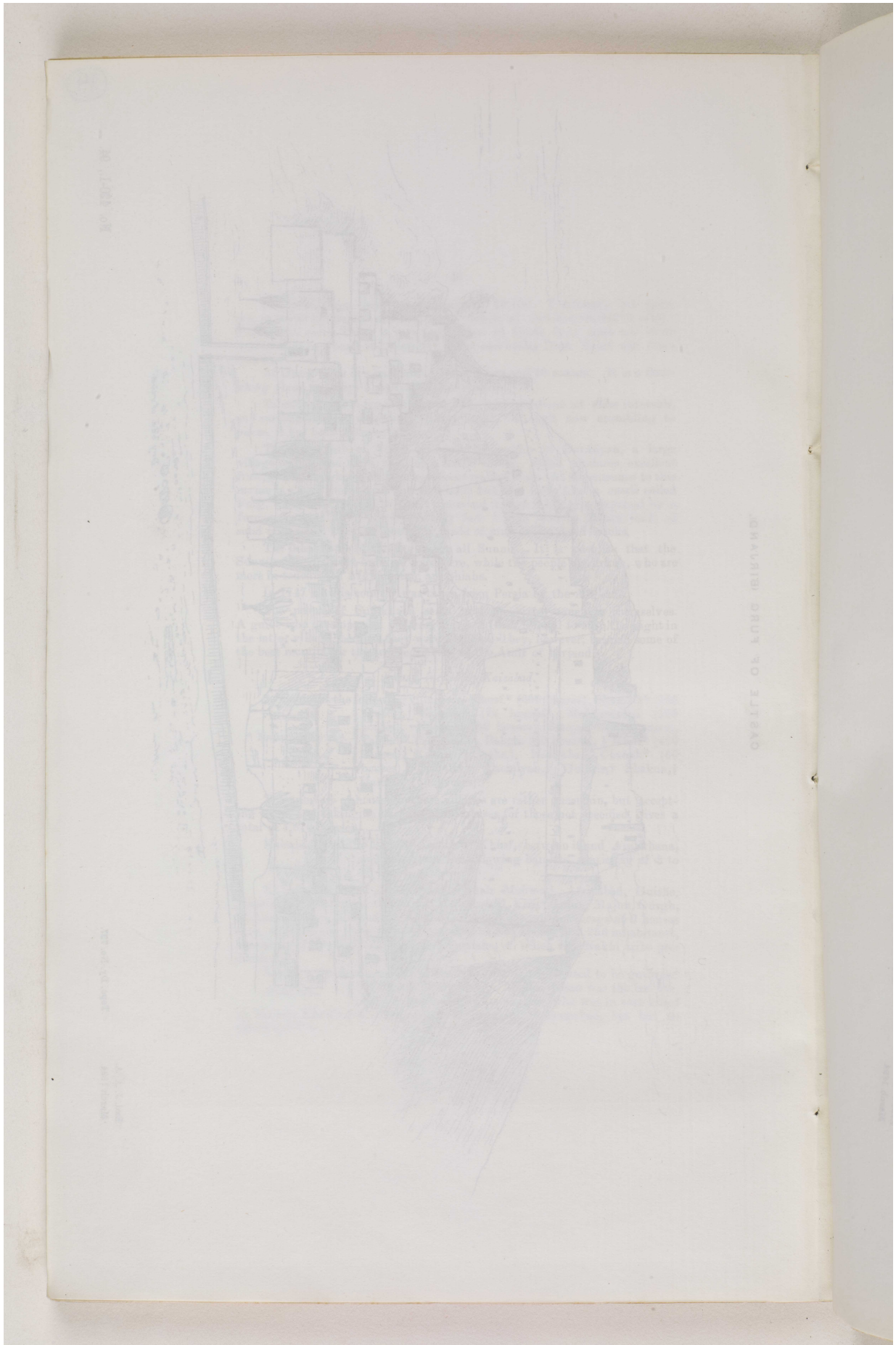
Topo. Dr. No. 737.

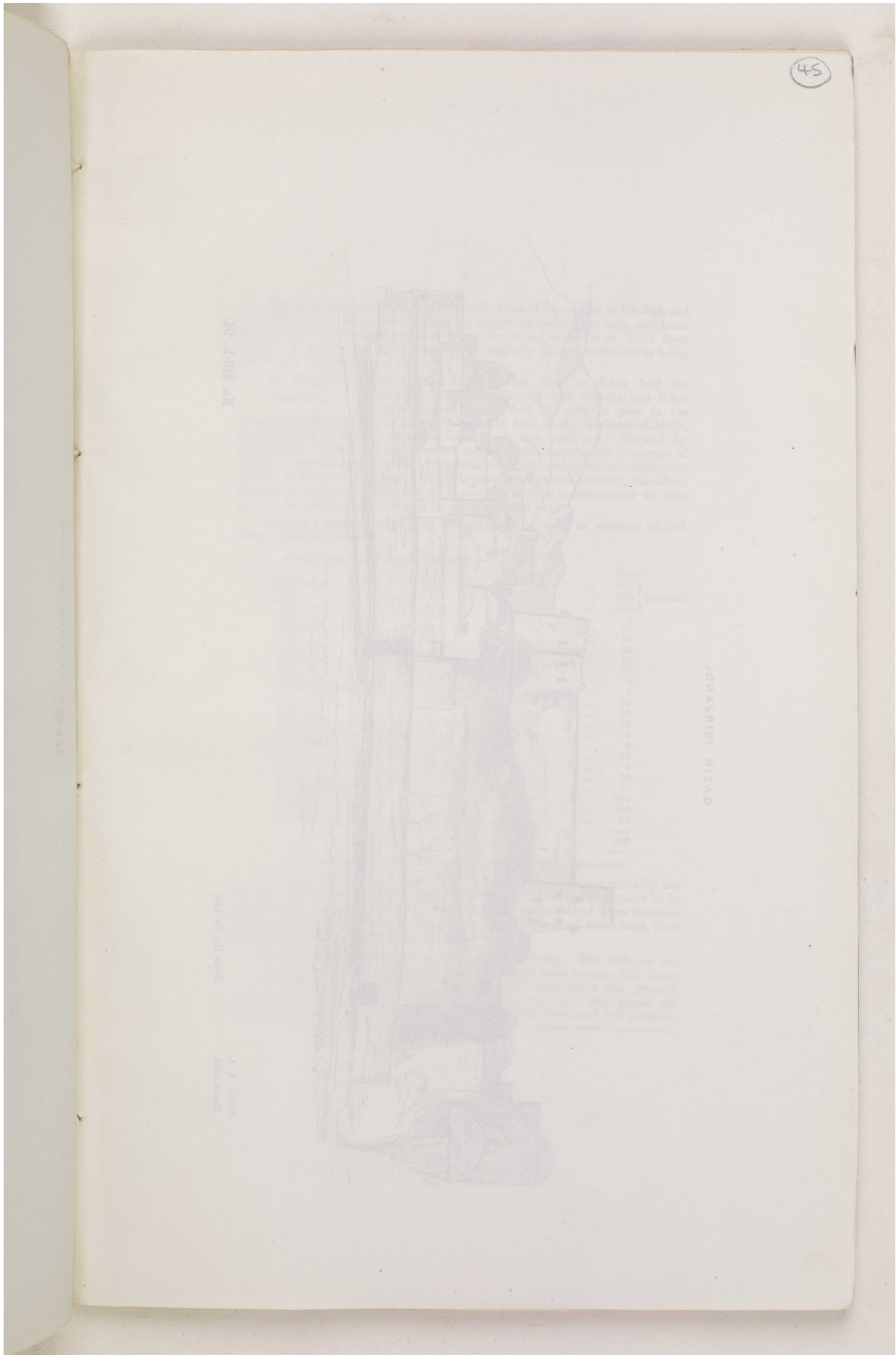
No. 420-I, 94.

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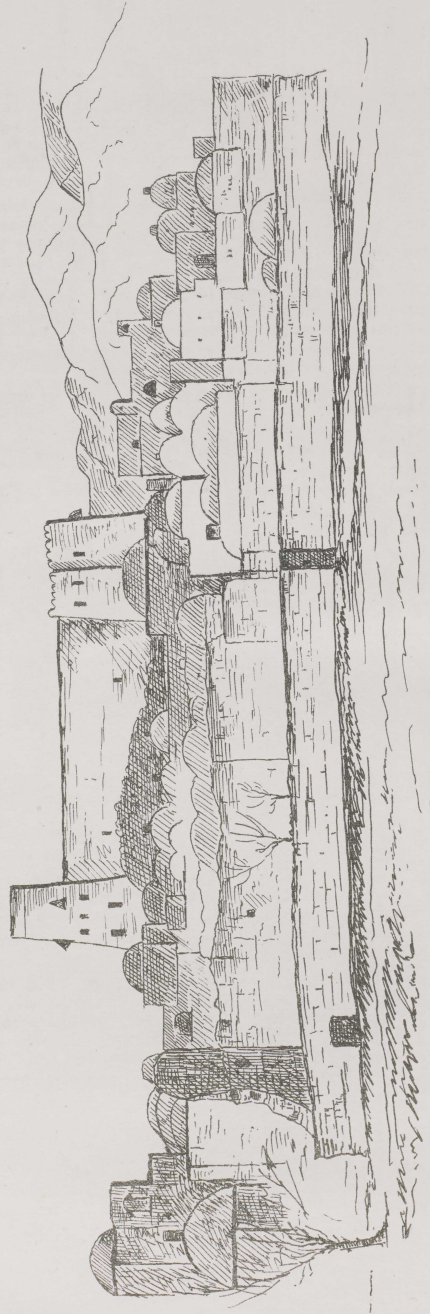
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'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [44v] (93/118)





GAZIK (BIRJAND).



No. 419-I., 94.

Topo. Dr. No. 730.

Expd. J. A. A.
March 1894.

46

No. 419-L. 94.

The tribe numbers perhaps 5,000 souls, some of whom live in Chabak and the hills round. They fancy themselves somewhat as fighting-men, and boast that they used to beat the Baluchis when they raided up as far as Khur from Sistan. I saw a few good men, but the majority did not strike me as being superior to the Persians of this part.

The Zangui tribe belongs properly to Tabas. Thus at Khur half the population being Zanguis and half Nakhis, and Khur being a frontier village, half the revenue goes to the Amad-ul-mulk, the Governor of Tabas, and half to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, the Governor of Sistan, who has been given this portion of Birjand by his brother. This latter arrangement is convenient, because the Governor of Sistan is married to a daughter of the Amad-ul-Mulk, and spends a considerable portion of his time at Tabas. He has to pass through this country, therefore, frequently to get to Tabas, and its acquisition is some compensation to him for the loss of Birjand, of which he is the rightful heir.

It is not a great corn-growing country, but is said to contain 45,000 sheep and 1,000 camels.

9. Arabkhana, including Mukhtarun :—

	Houses.	
*Mukhtarun	300	} doubtful.
*Gul	200	
*Gib	100	
Gilir	3	
Malaghun	10	
Fang	15	
Hassanabad	20	
Khunik	15	
Mawadi	20	
Hardangan	2	
Mihrabad (Arabkhana)	2	
Kalata-i-nao	10	
Dozangun	15	
Bargun	15	
Tarasun	5	
Huseinabad	6	
Liski	10	
Darehgurun	8	
Dihak	20	
Mir Muhammad	10	
Zainulabad	100	
Solakhun	100	
Hashtakhun	10	
	996	

There are three or four other villages marked on the map in this district not included.

Only a portion of this country has been explored; there are probably not less than 1,300 houses and 5,200 inhabitants. Mukhtarun appears to be administered separately from Arabkhana, but I have classed them together because the inhabitants of both are Arabs. The headman of Arabkhana lives in or near Dihak. His name is Mir Ali.

Arabkhana is a singularly desolate looking country. The villages are insignificant and the houses are mere hovels; the floors of the houses are sunk about a foot below the ground, which makes them look even smaller than they are, and the people are undersized. They own 10,000 sheep, 200 camels, 100 cows, and 300 donkeys.

* Marked on the map.

Topo. Dy. No. 710.

Ed. J. A. A.
March 1894.

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [46v] (97/118)

48

The Arabs of Mukhtarun, on the other hand, are fine men.

10. Neh-Bandun contains the following villages:—

				Houses.
* †Neh	...	...	...	200
* †Bandun	...	...	...	70
* Khunuk	...	...	...	100
* Charfarsakh	...	...	...	160
†Dahkoba	...	...	...	...
†Jufrud	...	...	...	...
Bichin	...	...	...	...
				530

* Marked on the map. † Bellew.

Besides these there are 25 others, † which, taken at an average of 30 houses each, give a total of 1,370 houses or 5,480 inhabitants.

† Bellew.

Neh is a large open village, standing in a barren stony plain, and surrounded by hills. About two miles to the north the routes from Khur and Birjand converging towards one another issue out on to the plain. They follow two valleys separated from each other by a narrow ridge, and down these valleys the wind sweeps with terrific violence. It is an ill wind that blows no one any good. There are about 30 windmills in Neh.

Most of the grain in this buluk comes from Sistan.

Neh owns about 1,500 camels. There are eight kanats of water and a fair amount of cultivation south of the village.

Prices in February 1893 were—

At Neh	...	1 kharwar (650 lbs.)	barley	...	40
"	...	"	chaff	...	7
At Haman	...	"	barley	...	50
"	...	"	chaff	...	20
At Khur	...	"	barley	...	50
"	...	"	chaff	...	24
"	...	20 maunds (130 lbs.)	firewood	...	1

Thus, to recapitulate, according to the above:—

Nimbuluk has	32 villages, containing	6,224 inhabitants.
Kain	31 " "	11,200 "
Population of Bir-	Zirkuh 25 " "	6,440 "
jand.	Shakhin 16 " "	6,352 "
	Alkor 34 " "	11,240 "
	Narjun 30 " "	20,200 "
	Sunikhana 27 " "	10,400 "
	Khusf 33 " "	7,256 "
	Arabkhana 23 " "	3,984 "
	Nehbandun 32 " "	5,480 "
	283	88,776

At Birjand I was informed that the country contained in all 340 villages and "kalata." Add to the above list 57 kalata at an average of 15 houses each, and the total number of inhabitants for the whole of Birjand becomes about 92,200.

47

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Taking them as a whole, the inhabitants of Birjand are a fine race, and properly trained under European officers, they would make fairly good soldiers.

When their late Amir was besieged in Nasirabad by the Sistanis, a force marched from Birjand to his relief, variously estimated at from 6,000 to 12,000 men. In view of such contingencies in the future, the Amir is said to have stored some thousands of guns in Birjand with which to arm the peasantry.

As soldiers. These would be, no doubt, guns of native manufacture, but they shoot very straight up to 100 yards.

Persians live much better than Indians. Their dome-roofed mud houses are superior to those of an Indian village. Very good bread can be obtained anywhere. It is made of whole meal, wheat and barley mixed.

Mode of life. Even the poorest people eat meat, and generally very good mutton, which can be bought in any bazar. Wages are more than twice as high as in India.

I regret that the above report is not as complete and may not be as reliable as I could have wished. I had, however, several difficulties to contend against. First, the munshi supplied to me by the Consulate at Mashad, and on whom I was dependent for a great part of my information, was not at all a reliable man. Secondly, I was followed by spies from the Russian Consulate, who, it is feared, succeeded in bribing my munshi. I do not think he supplied them with more than general information regarding my movements and dealings with the chiefs. The details he had written down in a book, which I took from him before he knew that he was suspected of double dealing. Thirdly, the Amir of Birjand was openly hostile to me, and I could only obtain information when I threw his spies off the scent. For instance, on my return journey he had me followed to Kain; thence I made one march in the Khaf direction, which satisfied his emissary that I was leaving the country, and he returned to Kain. I then traversed Zirkuh and Sunikhana, finding the people most friendly, until I was again found out. The Amir of Birjand was, I believe, acting under orders from the Governor of Mashad, who had opposed my journey from the commencement.

Persian munshi. Lastly, it was originally intended that I should spend two seasons in Sistan, so I had calculated on being able to verify and complete my report.

Still I think on the whole the estimate of the population and resources of the country is fairly correct. To obtain absolutely accurate information is of course impossible, for the people themselves even with the best intentions could not furnish it.

CHAPTER IV.

ROADS AND STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Regarding roads, a detailed account of the routes I traversed in this part of Persia and round the God-i-Zirreh is being incorporated in the next edition of the Route Book, and will not therefore be reproduced in this report.

I will here only give a general description of the various routes between Mashad and Sistan, combining my own information with that already given in the Persian Route Book.

The routes between Mashad and Sistan may be divided into two main branches—western and eastern. The western is as follows:—

1. Mashad, Shurhisar, Turbat-i-Haidari, Mihneh, Bajistan, Kakh, Kain, Kum, Birjand, Mud, Saribesha, Neh, Alibad, Bandun, Barang, Nasirabad.

1. (a) Mashad to Mihneh as before; Rabat-i-Imrani, Gunabad, Kakh to Nasirabad as before.

1. (b) Mashad to Rabat-i-Imrani as in 1 (a); Kakh, Kidri, Muhammdabad, Birjand, Mukhtarun, Tark, Khusp, Bandun to Nasirabad as before.

1. (c) Mashad to Turbat-i-Haidari as in 1; Aliabad, Sangal, Gunabad to Neh as before; Sufidawa, Warmal, Sihkuha.

1. (d) Mashad to Bajistan as in 1; Tun, Khur, Neh, Nasirabad.

The eastern routes are—

2. Mashad, Faraiman, Langar, Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam, Karez, Karat, Sangun, Muzuabad, Ahingeran, Gazik, Tabas, Duruh, Guishe, Bandun.

2. (a) Mashad to Duruh as before; Chah-i-Sagak, Lash Juwain, Nasirabad.

2. (b) Mashad, Kafta Minar Pass, Shahr-i-Nao, Rui, Isfidin, Duruksh, Tabas, Duruh to Nasirabad as before.

2. (c) Mashad, Daban-i-Khisht-i-Pukhta, Sangun, Rui, Nasirabad.

The chief lateral lines of communication are—

1. L. Faraiman, Shurhisar.

2. „ Karez, Shahr-i-Nao, Turbat-i-Haidari.

3. „ Rui, Nandpishan, Jumain.

4. „ Rui, Kain, Afriz, Khur.

5. „ Awiz, Isfidin, Kain.

6. „ Gazik, Gask, Birjand.

7. „ Tabas, Darmiyan, Birjand.

8. „ Duruh, Saribesha.

1. The road to Turbat-i-Haidari is hilly, but good and passable for all arms, until the Kuh-i-Baidar (6,700 feet) is reached, a little beyond Shurhisar. Here there is a short, but steep, ascent of 17°; laden mules take ten minutes to climb it. There is said to be an easier road 5 miles to the east by which artillery could pass. The distance from Mashad to Turbat-i-Haidari is 82 miles. Eight villages are passed on the road, namely, Bazahaoz (100 houses), Sharifabad (120 houses), Shatagir (40 houses), Kaleh Kafir (50 houses), Bazeh Hur (50 houses), Asadabad (25 houses), Shurhisar (15 houses), Muhammadabad (4 houses), and there is plenty of water and camel grazing along the road. From Turbat-i-Haidari to Bajistan there appear to be no impediments to the passage of all arms. The distance is 87 miles, and the villages of Abdulabad (500 houses), Huseinabad, Fyzabad, Miandih (80 houses), Yunsi (250 houses, bad water) are passed *en route*.

From Bajistan to Kain the distance is 93 miles. The first part of it, 28 miles to Zihbud (200 houses), is bad, and would require some work before artillery could pass. Thence to Dasht-i-Piaz the route is well populated, but hilly. The pass between Kakh and Dasht-i-Piaz is easy; only at two places are the gradients too steep for artillery, and these are for short distances, and could be made practicable without much trouble. Between Dasht-i-Piaz and Kain there is the Godar-i-God, 6,000 feet (1,200 feet above Kain), presumably passable for artillery, as the contrary is not stated.* From Kain

to Birjand the distance is 66 miles. On leaving Kain the path leading up to Rum would require a little work, but the remainder of the road, though hilly, is practicable. The following villages are passed:—Rum (80 houses), Sindh (280 houses), Ghibk (80 houses), Pisukh and Mahiabad (15 houses).

From Birjand to Sistan the distance is 237 miles. The road is practicable for artillery throughout. Ten villages are passed between Birjand and Neh, a distance of 129 miles, where water and supplies are procurable. Between Neh and Bandun, 52 miles, are two villages—Khunuk (100 houses), 5 miles, and Aliabad (20 houses), 25 miles from Neh. Then from Bandun to Nasirabad are 56 miles of waste with no habitations till Afzulabad is reached, 5 miles short of Nasirabad. Water is only to be had at one stage, Barang, in between, 31 miles from Bandun.

The total distance is therefore 565 miles from Mashad to Nasirabad.

1. (a) From Mashad to Turbat-i-Haidari, 82 miles, as above described. From Turbat-i-Haidari to Mihneh, 32 miles, the road lies through a populous country, and presents no difficulties. From Mihneh to Kakh, 66 miles, 50 miles as far as the confines of Gunabad being over a very sparsely populated, but level, country, passing only one village *en route* at the 32nd mile, namely—Rabat-i-Imrani, where there are only 40 houses, and the water is brackish, but drinkable. From Kakh to Kain the distance is 50 miles, and, as described in (1), also is the route between Kain and Sistan, 303 miles: total 533 miles.

1. (b) From Mashad to Kakh as in (1a) 180 miles, and from Kakh to Birjand 118 miles. This leads over the same pass from Kakh as in the former routes, but, instead of going by Kain, strikes across from Kidri nearly due south to Muhammadabad. Between Kidri and Naoghab, 19½ miles, the road crosses the mountains by fairly easy ascents, the steepest gradient being 15°; but in some places it follows up a stony river bed, and in others it is only a footpath, which would have to be widened for the passage of troops—easily done as these places are earth slopes. The descent from Naoghab is practicable for all arms, and there is no difficulty until the Kalata-i-Yusuf is reached at the 99th mile. There again a pass is crossed, and, though the gradients are not excessive, the road would have to be widened. The descent is easy, over low spurs, at the foot of which lies Birjand. As far as Birjand this route is almost exactly the same length as 1(a), namely, 299 miles as against 297; but it is not so well populated.

Between Kidri and Birjand, 101 miles, the only villages on the road are Naoghab (30 houses) 19½ miles, Tirghab (150 houses) 12¾ miles, Muhammadabad (250 houses) 9 miles, Chahak (60 houses) 19½ miles, and Rabat-i-Yusuf (3 houses) 21¾ miles, intermediate.

From Birjand to Sistan, 225 miles, the road goes round the western slopes of the Kuh-i-Bagheran *via* Mukhtarun, 48 miles; there are villages

with water and supplies every 12 or 14 miles. Then from Mukhtarun over a good road past the villages of Kundur (15 houses) 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles, Ismailabad (50 houses, water brackish) 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles, and Tark (150 houses) 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Just before Tark the road is hilly, and just beyond it would require widening for guns; this might be avoided by sending guns by a lower road from Ismailabad to Shusp passing below Tark.

Between Tark and Zainulabad near Bandun, 53 miles, there is only one village, Shusp (10 houses), 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles beyond Tark, and one other halting place by a brackish stream at the 28th mile; but the road is good and level.

From Bandun to Sistan, 56 miles, as before described. The total distance is 523 miles. Only small bodies of troops would take this road.

1. (c) From Mashad to Turbat-i-Haidari as before, 82 miles. From Turbat-i-Haidari to Gunabad, not given in the Route Book apparently, but marked on the map, 79 miles, passing the villages of Allahabad, Fazalmand, Janatabad, Sangal, and Roshanawan evidently over a barren and little inhabited tract.

Then from Gunabad to Neh as in 1 (a), 260 miles. Thence southwards over an uninhabited region for 133 miles to Sihkuba. Khunuk, 5 miles south of Neh, is the last village of Birjand, and the stages after that, where water is procurable, are Madai (karez) 36 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Neh, Safidawa (small spring) 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles, Langar (rain-water in winter) 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Tapa Nimaki (wells) 29 miles, Lutak near Sihkuba, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles intermediate. The latter part of this route, like all others entering Sistan from the north, is liable to be flooded. Camel grazing and firewood to a limited extent are to be had, but the lack of water would prevent any but a very small force from using this road. The total distance is 554 miles.

1. (d) From Mashad to Bajistan as in (1), 169 miles. From Bajistan to Tun, not given in Route Book, and apparently not properly explored, 35 miles on the map, with two doubtful villages on the road. From Tun to Khur, also not much explored, but the natives give the following stages:—Sarayun (village) 24 miles, Sihkala (village 20 houses) 16 miles, Jamkird (water brackish, well) 20 miles, Chashm-i-Khuri (well) 20 miles: total 100 miles. From Khur to Neh, 151 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles, over a very barren country, with few hamlets and but little water. Stages about 20 miles each.

From Neh to Sistan, 108 miles as in (1).

Total 563 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles. This also would be only traversed by small bodies of troops.

Eastern.

2. From Mashad to Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam, 100 miles. Between Mashad and Sangbast the road is stony, and there is a little high ground to be crossed, as also between Sangbast and Feraiman. From Feraiman the road leads down the Jam valley, and presents no difficulties to the passage of all arms. The ground is level, there is plenty of water, and villages with supplies are fairly numerous. From Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam the road bends southwards, and descends gradually over a bare plain to Karez, 32 miles. The only village on the road now inhabited is Mohsinabad (200 houses), 7 miles north of Karez, and there is no water elsewhere, excepting a stagnant pool in the Abambar of the ruined village of Abbasabad. There is plenty of camel-grazing, and in spring grass.

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From Karez to Karat through Hashtadan, 24 miles, the road is good, but very few villages are met with, Taiabad at the 6th mile being the only one on the road. Karat is a small, but well preserved and fortified, village containing 20 houses. From Karat to Fundukht, 70 miles, pass over the hills by the Rui road through a narrow stony gorge for half an hour, passable for all arms; then through Sangun (400 houses), and on 17 miles to Muznabad; thence over a nearly level plain to the foot of the Ahingeran, and up a gradual slope to Fundukht. From Fundukht the road goes along the eastern slopes of the range as far as the village of Ahingeran. Thence through the pass of Amrutak and along the western slopes of the range past Gazik to Tabas, about 90 miles. $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond Ahingeran the road over the pass would need a little work before guns could pass, but altogether the road is not difficult.

Between Ahingeran and Gazik, $34\frac{1}{2}$ miles, there is only one wretched hamlet with water, but containing no supplies.

* It is not necessary to go to Duruh. At the foot of the Godar-i-Mashad on the south side, 11 miles from Huseinabad, is a natural reservoir called Chah-i-Bannah, 8 feet to 10 feet deep by 5 feet diameter; good water; no village. From Chah-i-Bannah to Chazir (spring), 20 miles, and Khwaja, 4 miles further. (Bellew and native information).

Gazik and Tabas are both large and flourishing villages. From Tabas to Huseinabad, not in Route Book, but measures $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles on the map, and is called 7 farsakhs by the natives, probably passable for all arms. Huseinabad has a fort, and contains 200 houses and a karez of briny water (Bellew). From Huseinabad to Duruh,* 27 miles over the Godari Mesham pass, 950 feet above Duruh. The path here would require some preparation for the passage of guns. Duruh is a flourishing village of 300 houses (Bellew).

From Duruh to Khwaja 26 miles,† Guisha 10 miles,‡ Bandun 24 miles† intermediate. At Khwaja there is no village, but wells with good water. At Guisha are wells

† Map measurements. of bitter water; no village. The road is probably level (native information). Bandun to Nasirabad as before, 56 miles. Total distance from Meshed, $492\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

2a. From Mashad to Duruh as in (2), $366\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Duruh to Nasirabad, 163 miles (Bellew). Between Duruh and Chah-i-Sagak, 28 miles, the road is bad and hilly, but presumably passable for all arms. At Chah-i-Sagak enter Afghan territory. Here is a shallow well of putrid, brackish water; no village. Thence to Harut Rud, 24 miles, passing a well of dirty water *en route* at Chah-i-Damdan. At Harut Rud water is obtained by digging in the river bed when dry; no village. Thence to Kalah Kab, 15 miles, where are several villages. Thence to Lash, 37 miles, over the same desolate waste, passing to village of Panjdeh at the 31st mile. From Lash to Nasirabad, 53 miles, past Khairabad, and through the Naizar over 30 miles of uninhabited country.

Total distance from Mashad, $529\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

This route appears to have nothing to recommend it except that, when the country is in flood, the breadth of the swamp is probably less here than *via* Barang.

2b. From Mashad *via* Faraiman (*vide* 2) to Shahr-i-Nao‡ over the † MacGregor, Route Minar pass, $90\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The pass could easily be made practicable for artillery, and the defile affords a very strong defensive position. There is excellent pasture all down the valley

even in July, and plenty of water and fuel. From Shahr-i-Nao to Mashad-i-Riza, 25 miles, no villages nor water between. From Mashad-i-Riza to Rui, 30 miles, over the Dahan-i-Shejan, apparently not given in the Route Book, but probably an easy pass. From Rui to Duruksh, 126½ miles, *via* Sultanabad, 29¾ miles (several villages in between), Garmab 27½ (water on the road), Isfidin 19¾, Zehun 17½, Duruksh 32 miles (water on the road), hilly near Duruksh, but passable for artillery. From Duruksh to Tabas *via* Hindawalan, 43 miles, down the valley of the Fakh Rud. At Hindawalan, 17 miles, and at Taghun, 10 miles further, are water and supplies.

From Tabas *via* Duruh to Nasirabad as in (2), 166½ miles—480 miles in all from Mashad to Nasirabad.

2c. From Mashad to Rui, 126 miles,* *via* Sangbast and the Daban-i-Khisht-i-Pukhta (6,400'), which is quite impracticable for wheeled guns to Sangun, a large and strongly fortified village; thence along the road from Turbat-i-Haidari to Rui. This is a well-populated route and much the shortest to Rui. From Rui to Nasirabad as in (2b), 135½ miles: total 461½ miles.

This would be undoubtedly the best route if it were practicable for artillery.

As regards the lateral lines of communication—

No. 1. Between Faraiman and Shurhisar is over undulating country, a distance of 40 miles measured on the map.

No. 2. † From Karez *via* Shahr-i-Nao up a fertile valley, with numerous villages to Turbat-i-Haidari, about 97 miles.

† Bell.

No. 3. From Rui to Gunabad, 77½ miles, over a bare and hilly country; 42 miles between Asadabad and Nandpishan, destitute of villages or water.

No. 4. Rui to Khur, 162½ miles, 82 miles to Kain over desolate country and stony hills not practicable for artillery; four stages and only two villages *en route*.

Kain to Khur, 80½ miles, crossing the range near Kain at the Kalat-i-Sarab, a pass practicable for all arms. Thence past the villages of Afriz and Chahak over an open plain, very scantily populated, and down a valley to Khur. Stages about 20 miles; supplies scarce.

No. 5. From Awiz (Abiz) to Isfidin, about 19 miles, through the pass of Bushiru; and from Isfidin to Kain, 27 miles. Both Awiz and Isfidin are flourishing villages; the latter is situated in a fertile valley, and could furnish considerable supplies. Total distance 46 miles.

No. 6. From Gazik to Gask *via* Hindawalan over a broad plain about 33 miles. From Gask† to Sar-i-Chah a village with a strong fort (altitude 6,700'), 9 miles; Sar-i-Chah to Marak, 11 miles, over a very hilly road; thence to Birjaand† over a plain; total 64 miles.

† Stewart, Route Book, No. 291.

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No. 7. Tabas to Birjand, 17 miles to Furg-i-Darriyan, over a plain and up a gradual ascent. Thence *via* Isfizar pass to Birjand, 47 miles, passing the villages of Darriyan at the 2nd, Doshingan the 7th, Isfizar the 21st, Bojd the 40th mile. The pass is 7,600 feet high. I failed to cross it on the 1st March 1893 owing to the snow. The villagers say it is always closed for several months during the winter: total 60 miles.

No. 8. Huseinabad to Saribesha,* 29 miles, over an upland plateau, with thick vegetation, past a spring of water, and then over the Godar-i-Ghunda Koh (6,900'), not practicable for artillery in its present state.

The chief centres of supplies along these roads would be Turbat-i-Haidari, Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam, Gunabad, Taiabad, Rui, Kain, Isfidin, Tabas (Sunikhana), Birjand, Durub, and Neh.

The best time for military operations is the spring. About the middle of February the grass begins to sprout, and round the villages are crops of lucern, etc. At other times of the year, *i.e.*, from July to February, being entirely dependent for fodder on the supplies of chopped straw, it would be most difficult to feed even a very moderate force of cavalry, not to mention the numerous baggage animals, other than camels, that would probably accompany an army in the field. There is generally some rain in the spring that would tend to make the roads worse than they usually are, as a great deal of the soil is of a light clay, but the question of forage outweighs that. In the winter the snow blocks many of the passes. Firewood is very scarce at all times.

I have described the country and its roads, commencing from the north, because, in the event of any operations in connection with Sistan, it is extremely unlikely that we would march northwards against a Russian force through Persia. Probably the utmost that we would attempt in that direction would be to impede Russia's advance, and the best position for doing so, if we went beyond the confines of Sistan, would appear to be along the line of the Koleh Kuh, commanding the Isfizar pass and the plain of Isfidin from the village of Ahingeran to Afih; thence south-west guarding the passes to the north of Birjand. Here the zone of inhabited country through which an army would advance from Mashad to Sistan is narrowest.

Sistan is undeniably a place of great strategic importance. If we were already established there, we might on the outbreak of hostilities be able to send a force to the relief of Herat. Sistan is only 270 miles, while Chaman *via* Kandahar is 487 miles distant from Herat.

The communications of a force marching from Sistan on Herat would be in a great measure protected on the left flank by the stretch of waste country, some 70 miles across, that intervenes between Persia and Afghanistan from Sistan to Hashtadan; and Sistan itself could be held against an enemy by a small force. But if we neglect Sistan, our example is not likely to be followed by the Russians. They have shown such activity of late in this direction as to lead one to believe that they would endeavour to occupy it in case of war. They would then find themselves on the flank of the Kandahar army, and a very small contingent of Russians there would tend to distract the attention of the Kandahar force from the task of defending the more northern part of Afghanistan, and would in any case be of immense advantage to Russia both strategically and morally.

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Situated as the two rival powers are at present as regards Sistan, we have a distinct advantage over Russia in point of distance, only when taking into account Afghan routes.

Russia is at least 650 miles from Sistan, taking Askabad as her starting point; whereas we are 527 miles measured from Quetta through Baluchistan, 515 miles measured from Chahbar on the Persian Gulf, 432 taken from Quetta *via* Nushki and the Helmund, and 439 miles taken from Chaman *via* Kandahar and the Helmund.

It would probably take us as long or longer to disembark a force at Chahbar, and march 515 miles over a difficult, little-explored, and almost uninhabited country, or to send a force through Baluchistan, 527 miles, with all the necessary arrangements for water, etc., than the time necessary for the Russians to reach Sistan over 650 miles, of which 170 miles are along a broad carriage road between Askabad and Mashad,* and 480 miles are over moderately difficult country. Supposing the Russians were to seize Northern Khorasan and establish themselves permanently at Mashad before disturbing Afghanistan, we might then, without going to war with Russia, find ourselves obliged to send a force to Sistan by one of the routes outside Afghanistan; and in that case we should have no time to lose. Russia, we may suppose, would take some little time in settling affairs at Mashad before moving on, but any hesitation on our part would mean the loss of Sistan.

If, however, the Russians violate the Afghan frontier either before or simultaneously with that of Persia, we shall then certainly be able to make use of the Helmund valley routes and secure our position in Sistan long before the Russians can arrive.

* NOTE.—The Askabad road is excellent in dry weather, but being unmetalled, the part where it leaves the mountains and traverses the light clay soil of the Kuchan plain becomes very difficult for carriages after a few days' rain.

H. D. NAPIER,
Staff Lieutenant.

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Meteorological Observations.

Name of place.	Date.	THERMOMETER.			* Heights from barometric and hypsometric observations.	REMARKS.
		7-0 A. M.	2-0 P. M.	9-0 P. M.		
Tumk	1st and 2nd November	33°	.....	.....	Fect.	
Sharfabad	2nd and 3rd "	32°	.....	.....	2,860	
Babat-i-Sarif	4th "	31°	.....	.....	4,600	
Shurhiz	5th "	43°	.....	.....	5,000	
Turbat-i-Haidari	6th "	45°	.....	.....	5,150	
Zahirabad	8th and 9th "	46°	56° at 4-30 P. M.	55°	4,143	Height of Meshed as determined by the Afghan Boundary Commission is 3,180 feet, to be slightly higher than this, say, 3,300 feet. J. E.
Fyabad	10th "	..	.....	.....	3,650	Weather clear and still.
Babat-i-Jirani	11th "	34°	.....	.....	2,600	Cloudy; light north-east wind.
Gumbad	12th "	41°	.....	.....	3,800	
Kach	13th "	40°	.....	.....	4,913	Weather cloudy and still rain.
Kidri	14th and 15th "	34°	.....	41°	..	
Noghab	15th and 16th "	45°	.....	39°	5,300	
Muhammadabad	16th and 17th "	41°	65°	50°	3,958	
Chahak	17th and 18th "	41°	64°	41°	4,100	Heavy rain and strong south-west wind with thunderstorms.
Kabat-i-Yusuf	18th and 19th "	55°	63°	41°	4,850	

* Computed by the Survey Department.

Meteorological Observations—contd.

Name of place.	Date.	Thermometer.			Heights from barometric observations.	REMARKS.
		7-0 A. M.	2-0 P. M.	9-0 P. M.		
Bigland	22nd November	28°	41° at 4 P. M.	43°	Fet.	
"	23rd and 24th November	38°	40°	38°	4,408	4,740 by Major Gore.
Bakht "	24th and 25th "	32°	"	38°	4,450	Note.—The meteorological authorities assert that in the Central Asian region the heights are higher in the winter than in the summer, so that the heights as determined by aneroid barometer may differ by some 600 feet in the two seasons. This may account to some extent for the noted opposite results recorded opposite Turckah and Bigland.
Gul "	25th and 26th "	31° 30'	37°	38°	5,150	J. E.
Mukhtarun "	26th and 27th "	41°	55° 30'	33°	P	
Kuudar "	27th and 28th "	35°	69°	50°	P	
Imalabad "	29th "	42°	54°	61°	5,300	
Turk "	1st December	42°	"	"	3,350	
Tower Camp "	2nd and 3rd December	52°	44°	55°	2,081	This is taken through the night of the 30th November.
Bardun "	3rd and 4th "	"	"	56°	1,073	Heavy rain and mist.
Bareng "	5th "	33°	63° (at noon)	47°	800	
Nasrabad "	6th and 7th "	47°	65° (at 4-0 P. M.)	47°	950	
"	8th "	34°	50° 30'	"	930	
"	9th "	38°	59° 30'	40°	984	
"	10th "	38°	"	"	1,060	
Kuchwan (Kuchwan)	10th and 11th "	38°	"	39°	P	Bitter north wind from 10 A. M. to 2 P. M.
Dehano "	11th and 12th December	28°	"	41° 30'	1,050	
Jelalabad "	13th and 14th "	33°	62°	38°	1,000	
Tilpak "	14th and 15th "	28°	63°	34°	1,150	

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Kimak	16th	41°	62°	30°	
"	18th	40°	64°	44°	
Burg Alan Khan	20th	41° 5'	
Behramabad	20th and 21st	27°	46°	1,101	
Chiling	22nd	28°	.....	38°	.....	.....
"	23rd	33°	.....	.....	.....	.....
"	24th	48°	.....	.....	.....	.....
Sihkaha	27th	40°	.....	.....	1,071	.....
Camp 1	27th and 28th	48°	.....	48°	1,169	.....	Very heavy rain during night of 27th December.
" 2	28th	48°	.....	44°	1,138	.....	Rain till 11.0 A. M. and a thick mist.
" 3	30th	.....	.....	56°	1,132	.....	Rain during the night.
" 4	31st	47°	55° (at 1.0 P. M.)	.....	1,150	.....
" 5	31st	40°	.....	.....	1,069	.....
" 6	1st January	52°	.....	57	1,017	.....
" 7	2nd	45°	.....	.....	1,502	.....	Rain during the night.
" 8	2nd and 3rd January	40°	.....	53	2,250	.....	Rain and a strong north-west wind.
Chah Amir	4th January	.....	55°	48°	3,370	.....
"	5th	38°	.....	.....	.....	.....
Camp 1-B	6th	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,850	
" 2-B	6th and 7th January	43°	.....	48° (at 1.0 A. M.)	.....	1,230	
" 3-B	7th and 8th	40°	.....	60° (at 12.0 mid- night)	1,587	.....
" 4-B	8th and 9th	54°	.....	46°	1,400	.....
Sihkaha (Sakohar)	13th	.....	62°	.....	1,400	.....
"	14th and 15th	.....	.....	56°	1,406	.....
"	16th	39°	.....	.....	.....	.....
Tapa Nimaki	18th and 19th	38°	.....	.....	4,300	.....
Camp B	19th and 20th	58°	.....	51°	1,189	.....
"	.....	.....	.....	40°	1,400	.....

Meteorological Observations — conclud.

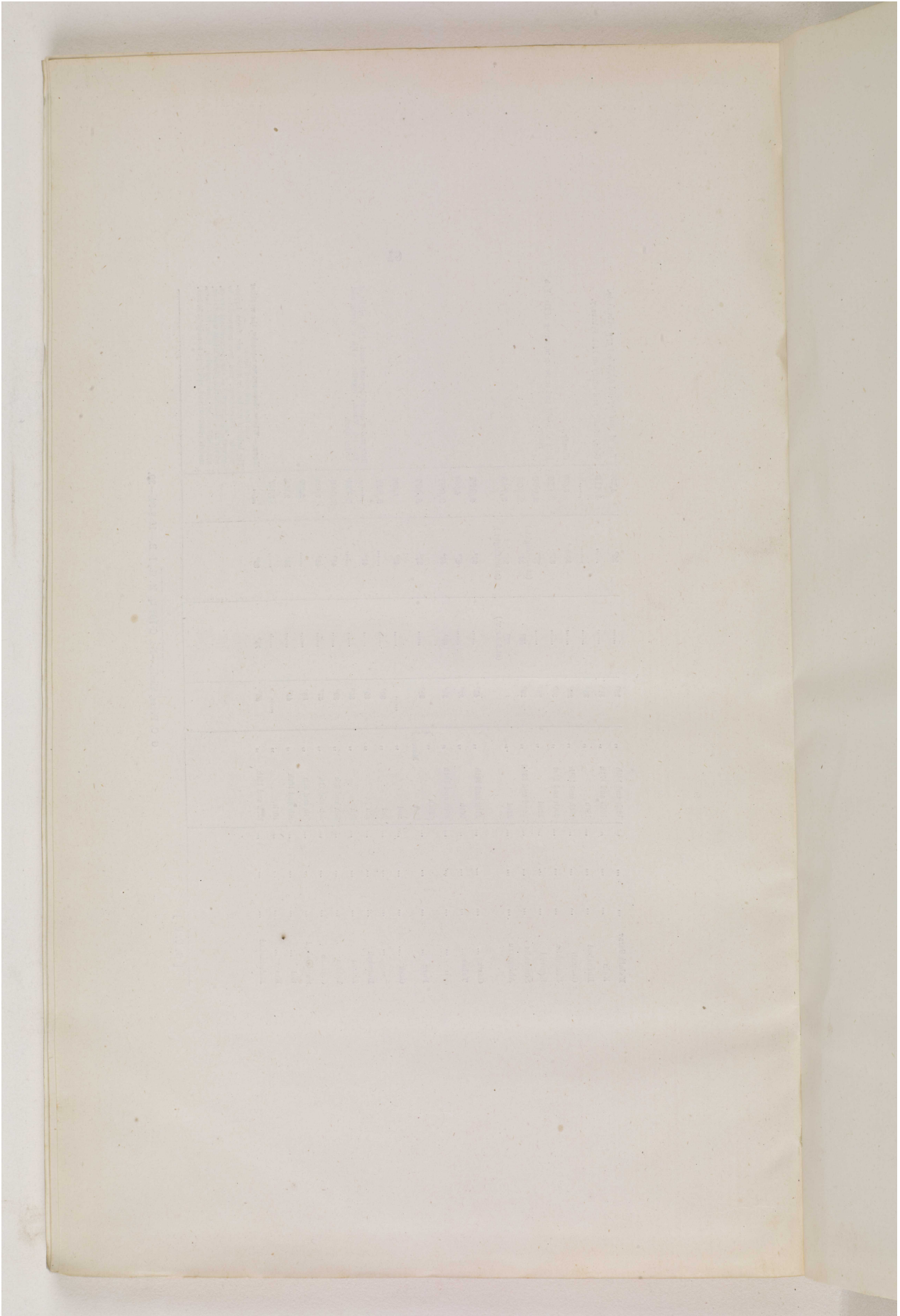
Name of place.	Date.	THERMOMETER.			Heights from barometric observations.	REMARKS.
		7.0 A. M.	2.0 P. M.	9.0 P. M.		
Camp C	20th January	.....	67°	.....	1,200 Feet.	
" D	21st and 22nd "	49°	.....	56°	1,651	
Sufilawa	22nd and 23rd "	42°	.....	65°	2,700	
Madni	23rd and 24th "	27°	.....	40°	3,050	
Camp G	24th and 25th "	31°	.....	38°	3,250	
Neh	27th and 28th "	35°	.....	37°	4,023	Dust storm followed by a hurricane of wind and rain.
Chardeshkh	28th and 29th "	14	.....	.....	4,550	Weather fine and cold; strong wind from 10.0 A.M. to sunset.
Sabbah	30th and 31st "	18°	.....	15°	5,471	Weather bright and still; sharp frost.
Sinak	31st January and 1st February	26°	44° (55° in sun)	18°	6,700	Dark and cloudy day; strong wind and slight fall of snow.
Sang-i-Sufel	1st February	8 5°	.....	29°	4,700	Snow storm during night of 31st January.
Haman	2nd and 3rd "	33°	.....	24°	4,400	Strong and bitter north-west wind.
"	3rd "	.....	.....	30°	4,400	February 2nd, weather clear, bright, and still; snow on the ground.
Rud-i-Shar (Rud-i-Khusf)	6th "	15°	.....	30°	3,800	3 inches of snow fell on night of 3rd and up to 11.0 A.M. on the 4th.
Khur	7th "	.....	.....	.....	.....	Bright, warm weather; snow melting.
"	8th "	31°	.....	43°	.....
"	9th "	44°	.....	44°	.....
"	10th and 11th "	38°	.....	44°	3,296	Fall of snow in afternoon.
Dehm	12th "	29°	4,800	Bright, clear, and frosty.
Chahak	12th and 13th "	25°	38°	4,300	Ditto ditto.

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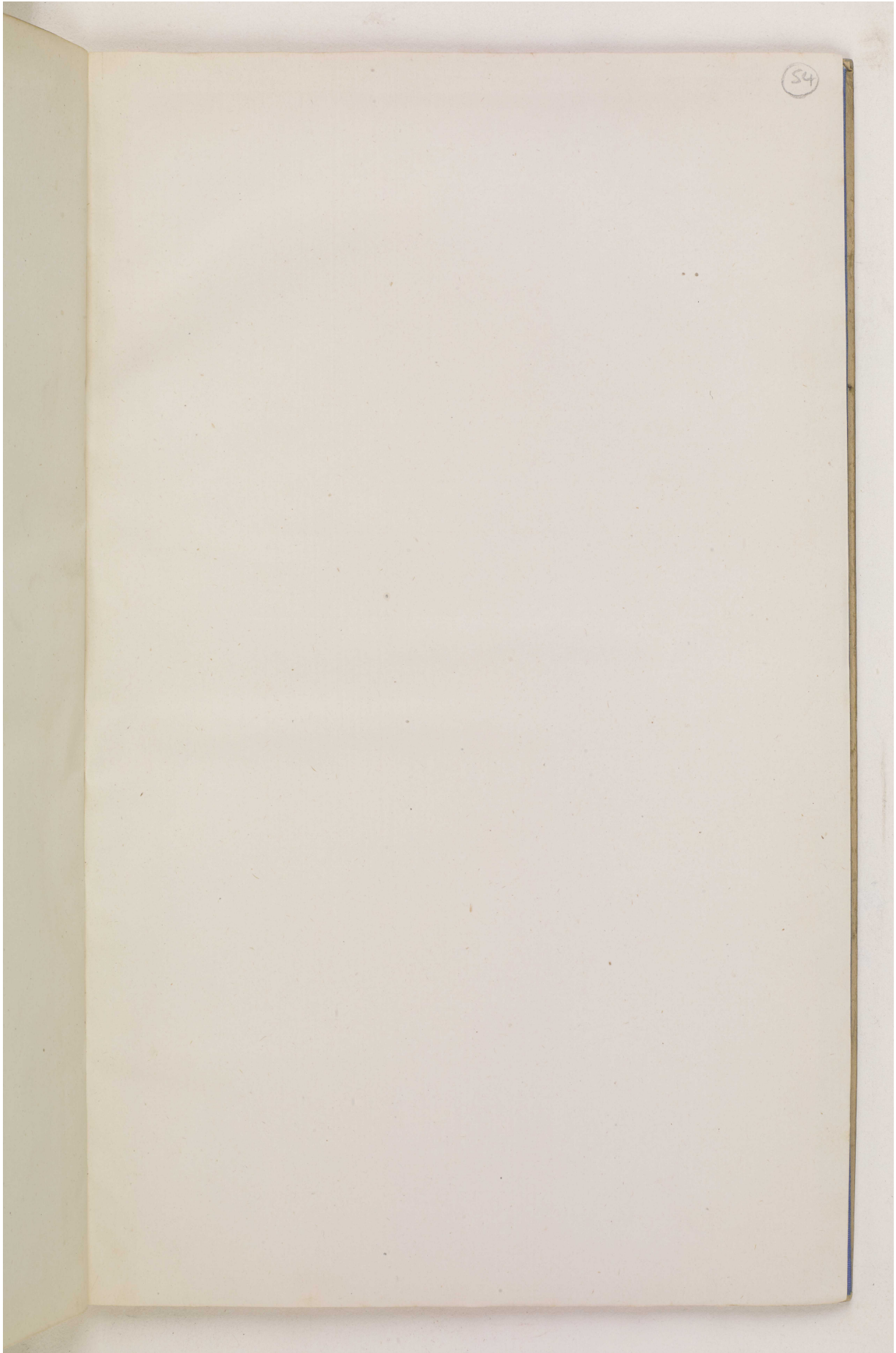
Kalate Saray	28°	4,350	Top of pass beyond 6,554 feet approximately.
Kain	31°	4,410	Cold, cloudy, and windy on 14th February.
Buznabad	...	...	...	33°	...	...	...	...	...	Cloudy.
Gurnab	...	...	...	29°	...	...	...	...	3,600	Rain all night and snow on morning of 21st February.
Fandakht	...	...	...	30°	...	...	...	...	3,627	
Bamrud	...	...	...	23°	...	...	...	...	2,500	
Sharakh	...	...	...	29°	56°	...	...	...	2,303	
Alingetan	...	...	...	29°	57°	...	...	...	3,743	
	...	...	...	47°	...	...	...	...	4,267	
Gask	...	...	...	37°	...	...	...	...	4,060	
Tebas	...	...	...	25°	67°	...	...	...	3,087	
	...	...	...	35°	...	...	...	...	5,327	
Furg	...	...	...	35°	...	...	...	...	5,000	
Gask	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,547	
Duruksh	...	...	...	30°	...	...	...	...	...	Rain and snow all day and most of the night of the 2th March, together with a strong and bitter wind.
Zehan	...	...	...	38°	...	...	...	...	...
Isidin	...	...	...	35°	...	...	...	...	5,121	
Garnab	...	...	...	39°	...	...	...	...	3,646	
Saltanabad	...	...	...	37°	...	...	...	...	3,900	
Rei	...	...	...	63°	...	...	...	...	2,309	
Karat	...	...	...	45°	...	...	...	...	2,682	
Mokimabad	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,157	
	...	...	...	63°	73°	...	...	...	...	Norm.—Where these are the countries, the weather-observations, and are assumed to be metric observations, where no hypsometric observations were taken, are deduced by interpolation from the barometric observations, and kept to nearest 50 feet.

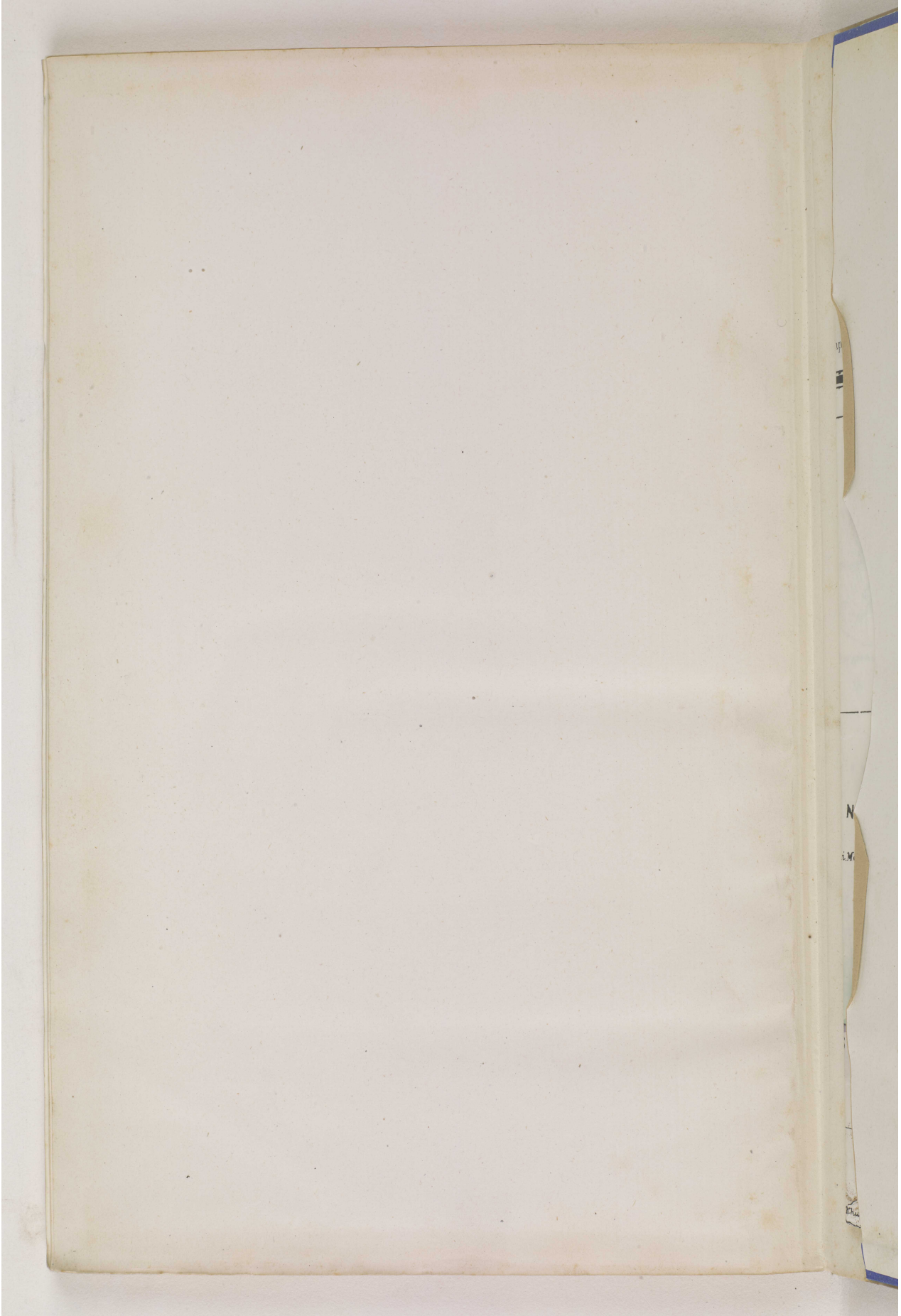
G. C. Press, Simla.—No. C-102 Q. M. G., I. B.—10-8-04.—30.

[G. C. F.]

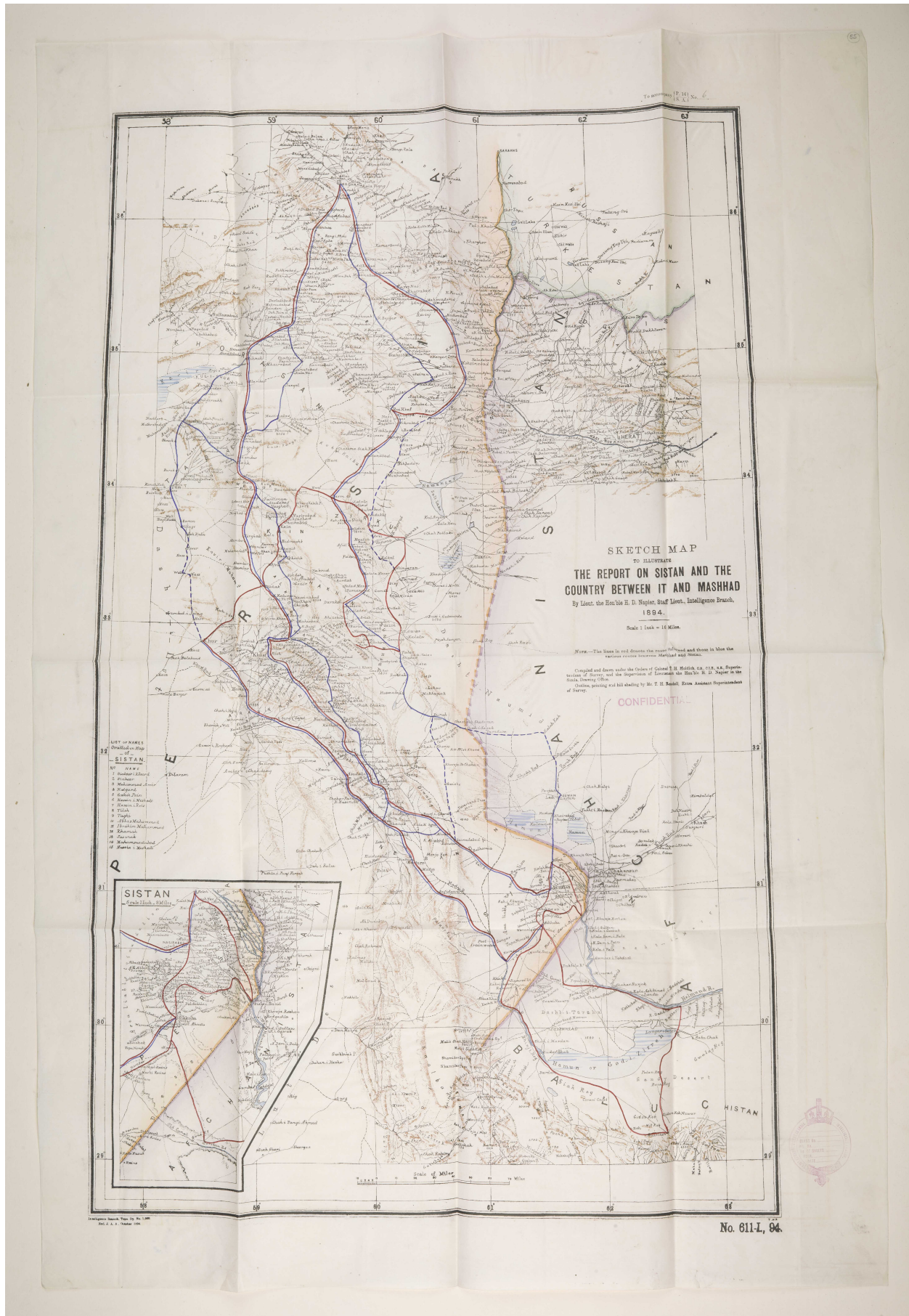


'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [54r] (112/118)





'Sketch Map to Illustrate the Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [55r] (1/2)



'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [56r] (116/118)

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It is requested that in any future communication on this subject, the number and date of this memo. may be quoted and the cover addressed as follows:—
The Assistant Quarter Master General,
Intelligence Branch,
Simla.

No. 945 1.

Office of Quarter Master General in India,
Intelligence Branch,
ARMY HEAD QUARTERS,
Simla, 5th April 1895.

Secret

FROM
THE QUARTER MASTER GENERAL
IN INDIA,
INTELLIGENCE BRANCH,
TO
The Private Secretary
to H. E. the Viceroy

Persia.

Memorandum.

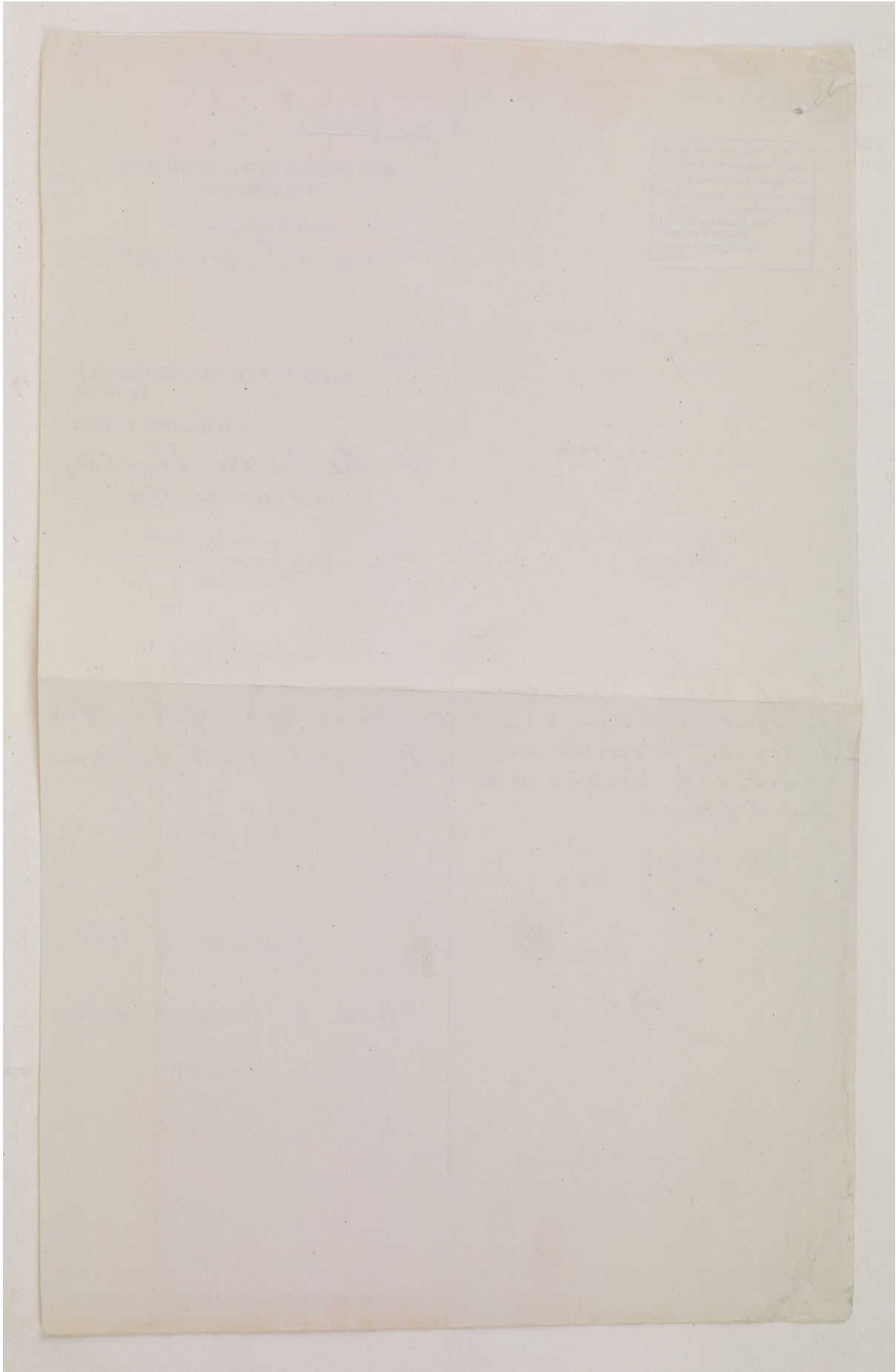
Sketch map to illustrate
the report on Sistan and
the country between it and
Mashad by Lieutenant the
Hon. H. D. Napier

(one copy)
↙

Forwarded in
continuation of this Office
No. 2149. J. dated 27th August
1894.

S. M. Swayne Capt
for Q. M. General in India

'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [56v] (117/118)



'Report on Sistan and the Country Between It and Mashad' [58r] (118/118)

