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THE  
MILITARY GEOGRAPHY

OF

AFGHANISTAN.

PART V.

FARAH AND KANDAHAR.

BY

COLONEL E. R. ELLES,  
A. Q. M. G., INTELLIGENCE BRANCH.



CALCUTTA:

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF GOVERNMENT PRINTING, INDIA.  
1893.

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## NOTE.

"The Military Geography of Afghanistan" has been compiled in five parts, namely:—

Part I. *Badakhshan*, by Major E. G. Barrow, Indian Staff Corps.

Part II. *Afghan Turkistan*, by Major E. G. Barrow, Indian Staff Corps.

Part III. *Herat*, by Major E. G. Barrow, Indian Staff Corps.

Part IV. *Kabul*, by Captain A. H. Mason, D. S. O., Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master General, Intelligence Branch.

Part V. *Farah and Kandahar*, by Colonel E. B. Elles, Assistant Quarter-Master General, Intelligence Branch.

The object of this work is to present in a concise and readable form information about the several provinces of Afghanistan of interest from a military point of view. This information has been compiled from reports, gazetteers, route books, and the records of the Intelligence party with the Afghan Boundary Commission.

The work was commenced in 1891 and finished in 1893, before the Kabul Mission took place. It is important to remember this as events are constantly happening, and fresh knowledge is being acquired, which tend to modify statements and opinions contained in this work. For instance, on page 2 of Part I, Major Barrow in writing of the road from the Baroghil pass to Mastuj *via* the Yarkhun valley, describes it as "an impassable route in summer and very difficult in winter." From reports lately received from Captain F. E. Younghusband, C.I.E., and Lieutenant G. K. Cockerill, who examined this route in October and November 1893, respectively, it appears that the route in question is easy for eight months in the year, namely, from September to May, and that when it is closed, there is an alternative route *via* the Kankhun pass which is open during the summer.

It should also be remembered that any opinions given or deductions made, are only the personal views of the writers and have no official authority.

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



**CUSTODY AND DISPOSAL OF SECRET BOOKS, REPORTS, ETC., 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, etc., 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:—

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

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

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





## PART V.

# FARAH AND KANDAHAR.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The provinces of Farah and Kandahar are the fifth and sixth great geographical divisions of Afghanistan, and they have been treated together, as it is not possible to disconnect the strategical considerations concerning them.

#### THE PROVINCE OF FARAH.

The province of Farah occupies the south-west corner of Afghanistan, and is bounded on the north by the Herat Province, on the east by Kandahar, on the south by the deserts of Baluchistan, and on the west by Persia. Our information regarding this province is not nearly so complete as that regarding the other provinces of Afghanistan; it has never been occupied, as in the case of Kabul and Kandahar, or completely explored as in that of Herat and Turkestan. The Afghan Boundary Commission passed through part of it from Khwaja Ali on the Helmand to Lash-Juwain, and some native members of the Commission traversed the main routes between Kandahar and Herat, but the information given is meagre owing to their rapid march through the country being limited to the lines of roads. Lieutenant-Colonel at Yalso proceeded from Kandahar to Herat *via* Farah in May 1893, and the information obtained by him has been embodied.

The inhabitants are mainly Duranis with Nahrui and Sinjarani Baluchis in Sistan and Garmseel.

#### PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The northern portion of the province is alone mountainous, forming the foot slopes of the mass of mountains occupying the central belt of Afghanistan, at the base of which runs the main road from Girishk to Farah.

The highest peak, as far as is known, in Lat.  $32^{\circ}55'$ , Long.  $63^{\circ}45'$ , 12,367 feet, is on the border of the Ghorat, but the hills in this portion rapidly sink into the plains, which have an average altitude of 2,650 feet, Girishk being 2,880, and Farah 2,460. From line Girishk-Farah the country has a slight general fall towards the *hamuns* or lakes of Sistan, which form a depression at a minimum altitude of 1,500 feet and receive the whole water from the province. The rivers running into this depression are the Helmand, Kash-rud, Rud-i-Khar, Rud-i-Khuspas, Farah-rud. The Harut running into the *hamun* in the western part of the Lash-Juwain district cannot be said to belong to the province. Between these rivers lie "dashi" or gravelly, flat plateaus, as a rule waterless, except in depressions or beds of old streams, and uninhabited; the largest of these plateaus lies between the Helmand and Kash-rud and in its southern part is known as the Dasht-i-Margo. It is about 150 miles in length in a north-east to south-west direction and 80 or 90 miles in width. It is only crossed by one or two tracks, and may be considered impracticable for troops.

*The Helmand.*—The Helmand rises near the Unai Pass in the Kabul Province, traverses the Hazarajat in a south-west direction and enters the Farah Province in the Zamindawar district. It continues to flow generally south-west up to Khwaja Ali, whence it runs west to Band-i-Kamal Khan and thence turns

due north to the Lash-Juwain *hamuns*, thus encircling the province almost entirely on three sides. On leaving the hills the Helmand flows in a narrow valley or trough, about 1 mile wide, hemmed in by the desert plateaus, which lie some 100 to 300 feet above the river bed and abut on it in broken cliffs. There is considerable cultivation and a good many inhabitants on the flats on each side of the actual bed, within the valley or trough, between Girishk and Mala Khan,\* but beyond there is very little cultivation and few habitations, the valley or trough being much wooded.

The Khash or Kash-rud rises in the Siahband range near the Baghran sub-district of Zamindawar, and runs in a south-westerly direction, past Dilaram on the Girishk-Farah road, and thence through desert until Kash is reached. From here to Chakansur a few small hamlets and some cultivation is met with, it runs into the Ashkan-i-Chakansur or reedy fringe of the *hamuns* at the mouth of the Kash-rud and Helmand. In May 1893, when Lieutenant-Colonel Yate crossed it at Bar on the Girishk-Farah road, it was a fine stream 30 or 40 yards broad and 2 feet deep.

The Rud-i-Khar and Rud-i-Khuspas are small and unimportant streams, with no villages upon them, running into the reed beds east of the *hamuns*.

The Farah-rud rises in the Taimani country, north of Ghor, and runs in a general south-west direction through the Shahiwan, Farah and Lash-Juwain districts; its course has a number of villages upon it, and it crosses the Girishk-Farah-Herat road at Farah.

The river, except in the flood season in spring, becomes exhausted in cultivation before reaching Lash-Juwain; it is fordable except in spring and early summer, when the melting of the snow brings down a volume of water.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS.

The province of Farah was formerly divided between those of Herat and Kandahar, the Pusht-i-rud belonging to the latter, and the western portion to the former; the southern portion, Garmsel and Sistan, were practically independent. There are now, as far as can be ascertained, the following districts or sub-districts:—

Lash-Juwain or Hokat			
Farah			
Sistan or Chakansur			
Shahiwan			
Gulistan			
Bakwa			
	Pusht-i-rud	Pusht-i-rud proper or Girishk	Sarwan Kala Kala Gaz Chaghrak Girishk Washir
		Zamindawar	Baghran Baghni Khunai Zamindawar Musa Kala

The Governor of the province resides at Farah, and the districts are apparently governed by *Hakims* who report direct to him.† In the Pusht-i-rud district the *Hakim* resides at Girishk, and the four sub-districts are administered by *Naiibs*, who report direct to him. The only town in the district is Farah, which, however, is almost deserted, except by the Afghan troops who form the Governor's escort. The whole place is in ruins, the only habitation being the quarters of the garrison.‡

\* For details of the river, vide Pusht-i-rud district, p. 14; and Afghan Boundary Commission Routes for description of crossing places.

† But see note to page 13.

‡ Confirmed by Lieutenant-Colonel Yate in May 1893.

## CLIMATE.

The difference of climate found in the province is due to that of elevation; the northern hilly districts have a cold winter with snow at the higher altitudes in Baghran, Khunai and Gulistan; the semi-nomad population graze their flocks in the hill districts in summer, and in winter move down to Garmsel for the warmer climate and food for their flocks and herds. In the summer the heat, owing to the surrounding deserts, is very great in the southern part of the province, and in the winter there is considerable cold with frosts at night.

In Sistan, including Lash-Juwain, the winter is short but hard frosts prevail and snow is known to have fallen; a strong north wind often blows; in summer, which is long and very hot, a strong north wind blows for 120 days, from the 15th May to 13th September. This wind is utilised to work windmills, which are a feature of the country.

The floods, due to the melting of the snows, come in March and April\* (Maitland), after which the climate is too hot to admit of military operations; when the north wind ceases, malaria spreads over the district with its accompanying plague of stinging flies and mosquitoes, due to the presence of the stagnant swamps, known as *hamuns*. The country is quite unsuited to military movements before the end of September. The climate of Sistan may be generally described as pestilential and most unsuited to European constitutions, except during the winter.

## SUPPLIES.

The question of supplies is dealt with in the descriptions of the several districts in Chapter II; the northern hilly districts are very fertile, and contain a large amount of supplies for a force marching along the Kandahar-Farah road. Ayub Khan's force leaving Herat in June had no difficulty. At Farah he must have had nearly 9,000 men, and his force increased daily (*vide* Appendix A). Along the Helmand there is little or nothing to be obtained except sheep and goats during the winter.† From Lieutenant-Colonel Yate's reports, 1893, the valleys of the Helmand, Kash-rud and Farah-rud are of great fertility, and would furnish large quantities of supplies.

Afghan Sistan, including Lash-Juwain, would not furnish grain-supplies, except in small quantities; but large flocks of sheep and cattle exist, and report says 15,000 sheep and 10,000 cattle graze on the Naizar or reed beds fringing the *hamuns*. Persian Sistan is popularly supposed to contain large quantities of supplies and to be richer than the richest province of Herat.‡ Its revenue alone is stated to be 172,000 Indian maunds of grain, and its surplus grain to be 280,000 maunds.§ Mr. Merk, of the Boundary Commission, traversed its western edge outside the cultivated area, and states that in years of drought, Sistan by reason of its abundant supply of water, enjoys good crops; in years of plenty elsewhere, it is flooded. In October 1884, when the Boundary Commission passed through Afghan Sistan the waters of the *hamuns* were apparently at about their lowest, but in April 1885 heavy floods occurred and submerged the whole tract shown on N. W. T. F. Sheet No. 13, 1 inch=8 miles, as "laible to inundation;" the level of the water was slowly falling when Merk passed through, and he estimated that it would take several years for the *hamuns* to shrink to the area shown as being permanently under water on the map quoted above. During such a state of affairs all ingress to and egress from Persian Sistan for transport animals is confined to the road along the left bank of the Helmand, which is not fordable during the flood season, April to July, anywhere near Sistan, and during the remainder of the year only above (up stream) Kala-i-fath. Persian Sistan is thus often a peninsula from which supplies could only, with great difficulty be drawn unless a causeway were constructed from Nasirabad to Lash-Juwain between the two permanent *hamuns*. There

\* Bellew says June, July, August.

† *Vide* Afghan Boundary Commission Records, Vol. 5, page 17, Report by Major Rind, and A. B. G. Routes, Helmand Series, Introduction, pp. xix and xx.

‡ Afghan Boundary Commission Records, Vol. V, report by Major Rind, Deputy Assistant Commissary General.

§ Lieutenant the Hon'ble H. D. Napier, who visited Sistan in the winter of 1892-93.

appears little doubt that the productivity of the Sistan basin might be considerably increased with a larger population and re-opening of disused canals, for there are signs of a larger population in the ruins all over the country, and Sistan has suffered in the past by being an oasis in the path of various invaders, both from the Persian and Afghan sides.

Lieutenant-Colonel Yate in May 1893 reported that the Amir had lately ordered 60,000 maunds of grain to be always kept stored at Girishk and 40,000 at Farah.

#### ARMY.

According to the latest information there is only 1 battalion of regular infantry quartered in this province.\* In addition apparently some 1,300 Khasadars and 10 guns (probably old guns at Girishk and Farah) are maintained. Of these, some 400 men are in garrison at Girishk, and the remainder in Chakansur and Farah. When necessity arises the Amir sends troops into the province, thus in 1885 there were reported to be two infantry battalions in garrison at Farah, one 1,000 strong, armed with Snider rifles, and some local irregular Durani cavalry.

#### ROADS.†

It will be noted that the roads between Herat and Kandahar passing through the district are compressed all the way into a comparatively narrow space, between hills on the one side and desert on the other. The main route runs west from Girishk (bridge at Haidarabad over the Helmand), 77 miles from Kandahar *via* Washir, Dilaram, and Farah, where it turns nearly due north to Herat. For an unopposed march of troops, two distinct routes can be used between Herat and Kandahar and *vice versa*; they are however too far apart, near Farah, to enable troops to concentrate rapidly for action:—

I.—Kandahar, Haidarabad, Washir, Daulatabad, Khwaja Uria, Roza-bagh, 354 miles.

II.—Kandahar, Girishk, Dilaram, Farah, Sabzawar, Sher Baksh, Parah:—

By desert road to Dilaram, 390 miles.

By northern route through Washir, 405½ miles.

The other routes of any importance are—

III.—Down the Helmand from Girishk (joined by a direct route from Kandahar at Kala Bist). There is a road down both banks; the Sistan Boundary Commission marched down the left bank in 1872. At Khwaja Ali this route is joined by that from Nushki, followed by the Afghan Boundary Commission in 1884. The distance to Lash-Juwain from Girishk is 343 miles.

IV.—Farah to Lash-Juwain along the Farah-rud, 60 miles.

Desert routes exist between the Helmand and the Kash-rud, but have more or less waterless tracts of uninhabited country, 80 to 100 miles wide, to cross.

It remains to note the routes from Girishk or Haidarabad, northwards through Zamindawar and the Taimani country or Ghorat, to Herat.

The best of these appears to be—

	Miles.
Girishk to Taiwara . . . . .	160
Taiwara to Farsi . . . . .	94
Farsi to Herat . . . . .	86
	<hr/>
	340

as compared with Route I above from the Helmand, of 286 miles, and Route II above, of 313 miles, by desert route, or 328 through Washir.

\* Five companies of Kabuli Infantry and 3 guns—2 S. B. field and 1 mountain—when visited by Lieutenant-Colonel Yate in May 1893.

† For full details, *vide* the valuable note by Colonel Maitland—Introductory Note, Afghan Boundary Commission Routes, Helmand Series; also very full report of route Kandahar-Herat, by Lieutenant-Colonel Yate, May 1893.

The route from Lash-Juwain direct to Nasirabad (56 miles) and Sekoha (79 miles) is important, as upon it depends the power of movement of any force, based on Sistan, northwards (*vide p. 27*). The *hamun* has to be crossed at its narrowest part between the two permanent lakes. This neck is sometimes dry for several years in succession. In March 1872, it was said to have been dry for four years. On the other hand, after a big flood in the Helmand, as in the spring of 1885, it will probably continue under water for several years. Any permanent road across the Naizar would have to be carried for miles on a causeway, which would perhaps not require to be more than 8 feet high, but waterways would have to be left and bridged over. Wood for bridging would be obtainable from the Helmand valley above Chahar Burjak.

The routes leading from the Helmand through Baluchistan *vid* Shah Ismail and Chageh to Nushki and Quetta have been remarked on under the district of Garmseel (*vide p. 15*).

### THE PROVINCE OF KANDAHAR.

The province of Kandahar occupies the south-east corner of Afghanistan, and is bounded on the north by that of Kabul, on the west by Farah, on the south by the Baluchistan deserts, and on the east by British territory.

The city of Kandahar was occupied from April 1839 to August 1843 by the army of the Indus, with outposts at Girishk (1839-43) and Kalat-i-Ghilzai (in 1841-43). It was again occupied in January 1879 by Sir Donald Stewart, and continued so occupied until April 1881. Detachments occupied Kalat-i-Ghilzai for a few weeks from January 1879 to early in March, and Girishk was visited, but not occupied. Kalat-i-Ghilzai was again occupied in September 1879, and remained garrisoned until August 1880, when the garrison joined Sir F. Roberts' force marching to the relief of Kandahar. Notwithstanding the duration of our occupation of the Kandahar province, the information regarding the northern portions is vague, except along the main routes to Kabul; this is due to the fact that though we held Kandahar in strength, the surrounding country, except near Kandahar, was never under our rule. The Durani rebellion in 1841-42 kept the country in a blaze, and in 1880 Primrose's force was beset by Ayub Khan in Kandahar. Under these circumstances many of the outlying districts, Maruf, the Kalat-i-Ghilzai sub-districts furthest from the main route, and Tirin, Derawat, Nish and part of Dahla, were never visited in 1879-80, and very little is known about them.

The inhabitants are almost entirely Duranis,\* amongst whom it was divided by Nadir Shah. They belong to two great classes—Zirak and Panjpai, but are most generally heard of under the names of their sub-divisions.

#### *Zirak.*

Barakzai.  
Fufalzai or Popalzai.  
Alikozai.  
Achakzai.

#### *Panjpai.*

Nurzai.  
Alizai.  
Ishakzai (vulg. Sagzai).  
Khugiani.  
Maku.

There are also Ghilzai in the Kalat-i-Ghilzai and in the Kandahar districts. Parsiwans and Hindus are found in Kandahar itself, in which one-fourth of the population are Parsiwans and about 5,000 are Hindus.

### PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The province is divided into two clearly marked parts by the Kadanai river which joins the Arghastan; the combined river is known as the Dori, which again runs into the Arghandab almost west of Kandahar, and finally joins the Helmand at Kala Bist. North of this dividing line the country is hilly, and consists of a number of valleys running south-west and watered by the following rivers (from east to west),—the Arghastan, Kushk-i-rud, Tarnak, Arghandab, Kushk-i-Nakhud, and the main stream of the Helmand. These streams all flow

\* *Vide* article Kandahar City, and Appendix I, Report on Duranis, by Major Rawlinson in Gazetteer of Afghanistan, Part II.

into the Kadanai-Dori-Arghandab joint stream running from east to west, and the valleys all fall from north-east to south-west. The dividing ranges, running in some cases up to 9,000 feet, gradually sink down to the plain along the north bank of the Kadanai-Dori-Arghandab stream, which falls from about 4,000 feet at Gatai, near which the Chaman-Kandahar road crosses the Kadanai, to about 2,750 at Kala Bist. The northern part of the province is the cultivated and inhabited portion. The half of the province south of the Kadanai-Dori-Arghandab stream consists of the Registan or sandy desert extending from the Helmand to the Khwaja Amran and Sarlat ranges of Peshin, with the exception of the small Shorawak district watered by the Peshin Lora where it leaves the hills.

Nearly the whole of this tract is absolutely uninhabited, and consists of sandhills rising to 200 feet, and even 500 feet in height. The sand ridges run parallel to one another in broken billows, with an apparent general direction of north-north-west to south-south-east. The north-east or lee-side of the sandhills slopes at a natural angle of  $45^{\circ}$  towards the crest, which is often sharp. Along the borders it is not entirely desert, but carries some vegetation, and after rain grows some grass. This half desert or Nim Chol,\* as it is called, affords pasturage to numerous flocks of sheep and herds of camels and is said to extend for 5 to 10 miles inwards. A few Baluch and Brahui nomads are found in it.

It may be considered entirely out of the question to move troops in this southern area, until the route is reached followed by the Boundary Commission from Nushki to Khwaja Ali, which could, with preparation, be traversed by a small body of troops.

*Helmand.*—The river Helmand only traverses the Derawat district of this province, the lower course south of Lat.  $32^{\circ} 20''$  (about) being included in the Farah Province along both banks.

*Arghastan.*—The Arghastan rises in the Maruf District and flows west-south-west until it joins the Kadanai nearly due south of Kandahar, it is then known as the Dori, until it joins the Arghandab west-south-west of Kandahar. Its course is only known from a point about 6 miles north of the well known Narin Peak (8,310) and 62 miles almost due east of Kandahar, where it has an elevation of 4,400 feet above the sea; it is soon joined by the Lora rising near the Ab-i-Istada lake and flowing south-west in a valley parallel to the Kushk-i-rud, and a little further on by the Kushk-i-rud. The Arghastan is fordable except when in flood from rain or snow, and in the autumn and summer is usually dry.† The valley is divided from that of the Kushk-i-rud in the northern half by a long, narrow, very rugged, bare range of hills, some 7,000 feet high at the northern end and gradually falling to 5,000; in its southern half the valley of the Arghastan is divided from that of the Kushk-i-rud by a broad plateau which runs parallel to the river.

*Kushk-i-rud.*—One of the principal affluents of the Arghastan river, which it joins at Umar. It rises a few miles south-east of Kalat-i-Ghilzai and flows south-west. The valley is divided from that of the Tarnak by a range of hills 5,000 to 6,000 feet high, of sharp rugged features and with no vegetation. The water is clear and good, bottom sound and generally gravelly, water in January 2 or 3 feet deep. The valley is thickly strewn with villages and very fertile.

*Tarnak.*—The Tarnak rises near Mukur in the Ghazni district and flows south-west, falling into the Arghandab 25 miles south-west of Kandahar. In the Kandahar Province it runs in a valley 1 to 6 miles wide. Except during flood the river is fordable at any part of its course; it has a fall of 2,200 feet between Kalat-i-Ghilzai and Kandahar, a distance of 87 miles. There is considerable cultivation along the river but not many villages, as they are generally hidden in dells 4 or 5 miles off the main road, in order to escape the extortions they would otherwise be subject to.

*Arghandab.*—The Arghandab rises in the Hazarajat, probably about the latitude of Ghazni, but this tract is unsurveyed and has never even been explored by Europeans; throughout the Kandahar Province however its course is

\* Nim—half; Chol—desert.

† *Vide* article Arghastan—Gazetteer of Afghanistan, Volume II, for full details.

well known, *i.e.*, from a point (altitude 4,686 feet) some 22 miles north-west of Kalat-i-Ghilzai to its junction with the Helmand at Kala Bist, 33 miles south of Girishk, a distance of 180 miles in all. It has a fall of about 2,000 feet in this course.

In the Mizan district the ordinary depth of the river is 3 to 6 feet, width 30 yards, with a stream of 4 miles an hour running between rocky and usually inaccessible banks. It is fordable at the village of Schlum,\* where several roads meet. It is also fordable near the junction of the Arghasu stream, where it enters the Dahla District. At Karwai the valley opens out and becomes fertile about Tatarez. It enters the Kandahar District at Almush and Mansurabad; the bed widens out with low banks and 2 or more streams, with changing sand drifts. A broad belt of villages, orchards and fields extends almost uninterruptedly on both sides of the river to a depth of  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 miles, as far as the junction of the Arghandab and Tarnak and then along the right bank to the Helmand. There the river is 3,428 ft. above the sea. It was fordable at Almush in September and October 1880, there being two main streams, 3 feet deep and 40 or 50 yards wide. From here the great mass of the water commences to be drawn off for irrigation canals and the river becomes generally fordable. The main fords are:—

- (1) connecting the villages of Sardeh and Shuhin on one road from Kandahar to Khakrez;
- (2) between Babawali and Tabin on a second road to Khakrez;
- (3) opposite the Pir Paimal and Chihalzina gap on a third road to Khakrez and also on the old road to Girishk and connecting the villages of Deh Kuchai † and Kohak;
- (4) between Kohkaran and Shah Ahmad and Deh-i-Nao Rozi and Sinjiri on the Kandahar-Girishk road *via* Sinjiri;
- (5) between Spirwan and Siah Chin on the Southern Kandahar-Girishk Road.

From its junction with the Dori the river runs generally due west ‡ and is fordable throughout, except during floods, which seldom last more than a day or two. The water is pure and wholesome.

*Kushk-i-Nakhud*.—This name is given in the latter part of its course to the stream or *nala*, which rises in the Nish hills, near the village of Panj China, drains the Khakrez valley, and falls into the Arghandab at Kala Saidal. The *nala* is generally called by the names of the villages near which it runs, except a few miles above and below Gunda, where it is called Bunigaz. Water is generally found in the upper part of its bed.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS.

The Kandahar Province is ruled by a Governor residing at Kandahar, and is usually considered to be divided into 19 districts (*q. v.*):—

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| (1) Kandahar proper—Kariajat or Suburbs, includes the Arghandab Valley.  |                       |
| (2) Kandahar proper—Mohalajat or villages occupying the sites of the " <i>mohalas</i> " or quarters of old Kandahar. |                       |
| (3) Kandahar proper—Daman or Karezat.  | (11) Nish.            |
| (4) Tirin.   | (12) Ghorak.          |
| (5) Derawat.   | (13) Kalat-i-Ghilzai. |
| (6) Dahla.   | (14) Arghastan.       |
| (7) Deh-i-Buchi.   | (15) Tarnak.          |
| (8) Khakrez.   | (16) Mizan.           |
| (9) Kushk-i-Nakhud.  | (17) Maruf.           |
| (10) Maiwand.  | (18) Kadanai.         |
|  | (19) Shorawak.        |

The only town is that of Kandahar, Kalat-i-Ghilzai being merely a fort. It has an elevation of 3,400 feet and population of about 31,000. § (For further particulars, *vide* Kandahar District, page 16.)

\* Not to be confounded with Salam Khan in Dahla.

† Not on N. W. T. F. Sheet 21, 1 inch=4 miles.

‡ Very full particulars given in article Arghandab—Gazetteer of Afghanistan, Vol. II.

§ *Vide* very full details in article Kandahar City—Gazetteer of Afghanistan, Vol. II.

## CLIMATE.

The climate of the province naturally varies somewhat with the altitude, but that of Kandahar may be taken as a type of the climate in the valleys throughout the province, slight variations occurring with difference of altitude.

From its position within a few miles of the desert we might expect it to be very hot; but, with the exception of about 40 or 50 days in midsummer, the climate throughout the year is all that a European might wish for, and even during the hottest period the nights are always pleasant.

The heated winds of the day change round to the north-west and sweep gently down the valley, making morning fresh and bracing.

The hot weather commences about the middle of June, with the temperature in the houses at 90° rising to 100°, and 115° in the middle of July in tents, when (in ordinary years) a fall of rain occurs, which again cools the atmosphere for a week or two; after this it is again very hot till the end of August, when the climate becomes delightful. September, October and November are all that anyone might wish for. Out-door exercise might be taken without any fear throughout the day.

During December, January and February, there are short days, sharp frost at night, with an occasional sprinkling of snow, which, however, never rests near Kandahar, but can be seen capping the hills all round. February and March are the most trying months, particularly for natives of India. The hot sun shining out for an hour or two at noon tempts them to remove their *posteens* and warm clothing, then suddenly they find themselves overtaken by a cold, wet, piercing wind, from the effects of which many succumb to pneumonia and other lung diseases. April and May are welcome to dissipate the effects of the latter months, being more enjoyable as they come between two extremes.

The amount of rain in the year is small and falls in the winter and early spring. It very rarely rains in the summer or autumn. In 1879-80 ten months elapsed without any rain falling. By the Afghans the climate of Kandahar itself is compared to that of Balkh, which is notoriously unhealthy, but the unhealthiness of the city is due to the insanitary conditions under which the people live rather than to the climate. Some remarks on the climate of the city will be found under Kandahar District, page 17. \*

## SUPPLIES.

It will be seen from the reports on the various districts that parts of the province are very fertile, more especially round Kandahar, and can furnish large quantities of supplies.

During the occupation of Kandahar in 1879-80 and 1881 the force was almost entirely supplied locally, except with such articles as tea, sugar rum and potatoes. Wheat, barley and rice are largely grown, "dal" was cultivated locally as soon as the people found there was a demand for it; "ghi" could be largely supplied from Zamindawar, but was not obtainable in any quantity near Kandahar; vegetables are grown locally in quantities, except potatoes; forage is plentiful; cattle are not very plentiful, but sheep are procurable in large numbers from Zamindawar and the Hazarajat. When Kandahar was evacuated in 1881 some 9,000 troops and 10,000 followers formed the garrison. The amount of supplies which can be made available much depends upon whether the country is quiet or hostile; if quiet, large quantities of supplies flow in from the fertile "*doab*" of Zamindawar, but if hostile, only those supplies will be available which are within striking distance of the force. On the whole, there would appear little difficulty, with a settled administration, in supplying a force of 15,000 fighting men and 15,000 followers, with full transport for the force, with all the necessaries of life from local produce, but luxuries such as tea, sugar, rum, etc., would have to be imported. Salt is obtainable locally, being imported from Peshin.

Transport can be obtained to the extent of 2,000 camels, 2,000 donkeys, and 200 bullocks, but owners will not take service with troops and will

\* *Vide* Afghan Gazetteer, Vol. II, article Kandahar City.



only work as carriers independently. Copper and iron are imported from India, but plenty of smiths exist in Kandahar City.

#### ARMY.

The garrison of Kandahar in the spring of 1893 consisted of:—

- 1 Kabuli cavalry regiment,
- 2 " batteries of artillery, 1 field and 1 mountain,
- 2 " regiments of infantry,

under the command of a Brigadier-General.

There are no other regular troops in the province as far as is known, though Khasadars will probably be found in every district. When anything abnormal occurs, as during the Hazara rising in 1892, the Amir sends reinforcements from various points.

#### ROADS.

The following are the principal roads in the Kandahar Province:—

	Marches.	Miles.
(1) Kandahar to Kalat-i-Ghilzai (and thence to Ghazni, 221 and Kabul, 313 miles)	8	87
(2) Kandahar to Girishk (and thence to Herat <i>via</i> Farah, 405 miles)	7	77
(3) Kandahar to Haidarabad on the Helmand (thence to Herat <i>via</i> Daolatabad, total 345 miles)	5	68
(4) Kandahar to Kala Bist along the Arghandab	8	99
(5) Kandahar to Kalat-i-Ghilzai <i>via</i> the Kushk-i-rud Valley	9	109
(6) Kandahar to Kalat-i-Ghilzai <i>via</i> the Arghandab Valley	12*	102
(7) Kandahar to Khakrez and Nish	7	61
(8) Kandahar to Ghorak and Derawat (Garmab on Helmand)	6	64½
(9) Kandahar to Maruf (and thence <i>via</i> the Zhob and the Gomal to Dera Ismail Khan, about 330 miles)	6	73
(10) Kandahar to New Chaman and the rail head (thence to Quetta by road, 150 miles in all)	6	73

Of the above routes, No. 1 is the main route to Kabul and was traversed by heavy artillery with Sir Donald Stewart's force in 1880; Nos. 2 and 3 are the main routes to Herat, and are practicable for field or heavy guns, the heavy guns for Herat presented to the Amir in 1885 having reached Herat without difficulty; but the road was put in order on purpose for them. No. 4 was traversed by a British force in 1879, and is practicable for all arms. No. 5 was traversed by a column of Sir Donald Stewart's division marching to Kabul in 1880, but it had no wheeled artillery; the route is however stated to be fit for field artillery with little making. No. 6 is impracticable for field artillery, but was traversed by a small column in 1879. Nos. 7 and 8 are only known from native information, which is moreover meagre, but the routes can only be fit for pack animals. No. 9 has only been traversed by troops for the first four stages and becomes difficult for wheeled traffic after the third stage. No. 10 is the main route between Quetta and Kandahar and presents no difficulty to wheeled traffic.

\* Can be made into 8 easily.

## CHAPTER II.

## DISTRICTS OF THE PROVINCE OF FARAH.

## LASH-JUWAIN OR HOKAT.

The district of Lash-Juwain adjoins the district of Farah proper. It is about 65 miles from east to west and 50 from north to south. It is bounded by the district of Kalakah (Herat) and Farah on the north, by Persia on the west and south-west, and the district of Afghan Sistan on the south-east.

The ancient name of Lash-Juwain was Hok or Ok, and hence the plural Hokat, by which name also the district is known.

The position of Lash-Juwain, with reference to Herat, Persia and Kandahar, has always been of great strategical importance, as it enables an army advancing from Persia to Kandahar to avoid Herat altogether; for this reason the Chief used always to possess much political influence.

The ancient road between Kandahar and Herat passed through Sistan and Hokat to Farah and Sabzawar, and was the route always followed by invading armies, on account of the abundant supplies it furnished as well as from the necessity of securing the subjection of its people before the direct route by Girishk could be safely adopted. The incursion of Timur completed the destruction commenced by the irruption of Chenghis Khan, and the subsequent invasions of Babar and Nadir again destroyed the partial restorations that time had effected. Babar, in 1512, captured and dismantled the important fortress of Hok or Ok, from which the district takes one of its names. Nadir more than two centuries later, when marching against Kandahar, destroyed all the principal forts on his route from Farah through Sistan and Garmsel up to Bist, and from that period, about 1737, up to the present time, the country has remained in much the same state of ruin that it was left in by Nadir. The district possesses, according to Bellew (1872), all the requisites of prosperity, for its soil is fertile and water abundantly at command, but it pined for many years under the curse of anarchy. Of the capabilities of its soil and the command of water, the existing memorials of former populous cities are sufficient evidence, and under a strong government and enlightened rule there appears no reason why it should not once more become the fertile and prosperous country it is known to have been.\*

Ferrier visited the district in 1845, and when the Sistan mission were there in 1872, it seemed to have much deteriorated since his visit. It was in 1872 described as the most dreary and desolate spot ever seen. On every side evidences of ruin, decay, and neglect, of anarchy and oppression. The land most fertile and abounding in excellent pasture for cattle. Water in plenty and easily derivable, for purposes of irrigation, from the river, as proved by the numerous watercuts, mostly in decay, intersecting the country. The district was again traversed in 1884 by the Afghan Boundary Commission, and its condition seems still further to have deteriorated. The inhabited and cultivated area of the Lash-Juwain district appears to have been confined even in past times to the plain of Juwain, some 8 miles long by 6 wide, lying almost entirely on the east bank of the Farah-rud and north of the *hamuns*, or lake basins, into which flow the rivers Helmand, Khuspas, Farah and Harut.

When the Sistan basin was an inland sea, the plain of Juwain was a large shallow landlocked bay and the Farah-rud was an estuary. The plain is bounded by plateaus rising above the lake-basin on all sides, to about 60 or 70 feet. The plain is now described as a wide, bare, desolate-looking one. It is covered with low scrub, although a large portion of it is laid out in fields. Colonel Maitland saw no sign of recent cultivation (November 1884), the crops of previous year having apparently been a complete failure. For at least a mile all round Juwain the plain is studded with ruins, chiefly single walls, most of which are the remains of old windmills; these are still a feature of Juwain itself,

\* Bellew, 1872.

being placed on the upper stories of houses.\* There were also traces of numerous houses, indicating a large former population. The reason for this desolation appears to be that the Farah-rud formerly supplied abundant water for cultivation, but about the year 1880 the water was cut off above by the people of the Farah district. Bellew, in March 1872, describes the river as having a stream 60 yards wide, with water half-way up the saddle flaps, about 3 miles from Juwain. The Afghan Boundary Commission found to their surprise that it was quite dry, except for a few small pools. This change in its condition, allowing for difference of season, was due to the whole perennial stream being drawn off to irrigate the village lands in the Farah District. The late Chief, Sardar Ahmad Khan, was powerful, and would probably have raided the Farah villages for interfering with the water. Since his death, in 1883, Lash-Juwain has gone from bad to worse. About 18 years ago the river never ceased running all the year round for several years in succession. Now, cultivation is entirely dependent on the flood water which carries away the *bunds* and covers the whole plain of Juwain to a depth of one or two feet. The water rises in one day and remains from four to ten days according to local variations of level. In two weeks at most the plain is clear of water, and in three more it has become hard and fit to travel over. The crops are sown as quickly as possible, but it is quite a chance if they come to anything. There were some *karezes* once, but these are all choked at the present time. The flood season is in March or April; there is some rain between December and April, but not much. The interception of the Farah-rud water has been the ruin of Lash-Juwain. In 1884 about half the people had migrated to Persian Sistan and they were still going. The total population in 1884 was about 1,550 families, chiefly Ishakzai Durani, with some Parsiwans, a few Popalzai, and one or two Hindu families.

The main feature of the Lash-Juwain district are the two large *hamuns*, or lake-basins, occupying nearly the whole of the southern half of the district. The eastern lake is called the Hamun-i-Puzak, but also the Hamun-i-Takht-i-Shah, Hamun-i-Zahak and Hamun-i-Gun-i-Zard. It was in 1884 some 15 miles in length and 10 to 12 in breadth. Its area was about 150 square miles. The depth of the water in the centre is said to be 18 or 20 feet, there are no boats, but the people, living in the Naizar (reed beds), go out to catch fish and water-fowl on reed rafts called "*tuti*." † This lake receives what is left of the waters of the Helmand, ‡ Kash-rud, Rud-i-Khar and Rud-i-Khuspas.

The western lake known as the Hamun-i-Saburi, level about 1,500 feet, is said to be larger than the eastern; it receives the Harut-rud and the Farah-rud (apparently dry except in the flood season, March or April). There is also said to be south of this a third *hamun* called the Hamun-i-Deh Surkh or Surkh Gazi, but practically they seem to form one lake. The tract between the two *hamuns* is "Naizar" or reed bed, which is liable to inundation. This *naizar* also extends for some miles to the south of the *hamuns*. To secure communication across it between Lash-Juwain and Persian Sistan it would be necessary to have a causeway, as it is sometimes submerged for two or three years together.

From Juwain, routes lead as follows:—

To Farah, about 60 miles, five stages, along the Farah-rud.—Water, fuel and camel grazing abundant.

To Farah, by the Kushk-rud.

To Bakwa direct; over *ūasht* and crossing several *ruds*.—Caravans do the distance in four days.

To Kash.

To Kalakah and thence to Birjand.

To Nasirabad, between the *hamuns*; closed in floods, said to be five stages.

North to Anardara and south to Ibrahimabad and along the Helmand; the route followed by the Boundary Commission.

\* Bellew—Indus to Tigris

† Bellew.

‡ Maitland (Afghan Boundary Commission Records, Vol. I, page 81,) says the main channel does not run into this *hamun*, but into the Hamun-i-Saburi; it is, however, so shown on the map.

## FARAH.

The district of Farah is bounded on the north and east by that of Sabzawar belonging to the Herat Province, on the south by Lash-Juwain, and on the east by the districts of Bakwa and Shahiwan. It was formerly included in the province of Herat, but was created independent by the Amir Shere Ali Khan.

Little is known regarding the district, for many years it was greatly impoverished owing to the exactions of its rulers, but of late it appears to have recovered. It is traversed by the Farah-rud and the cultivated area appears to be more or less confined to the river valley in which there are numerous villages; the amount of cultivation and population seems large and supplies should be abundant.

The Farah-rud at Farah, when crossed by two duffadars of the Guides in October 1885, had a bed over 200 yards wide. The actual stream was 20 yards wide and 2½ feet deep. In flood time the river fills its bed and is then impassable for foot passengers, though it is said footmen can cross it in April to June, when the snow melts. Under the heading Lash-Juwain District it will be found that up to 1884 much water of the Farah-rud used to reach Juwain 60 miles below, but that now the Juwain plain is a desert and the water has been entirely cut off in the Farah district; this shows that the large body of water passing Farah is now used up in irrigation, and that the district, under settled government and a just ruler,\* has largely increased its cultivated area. Major Rind, who accompanied the Afghan Boundary Commission as Commissariat Officer, states:—"Farah, a great many assert, is very rich, in fact that it could itself feed a large army for a year, but this is based on the supposition that Zamindawar is included under the Farah Province (which it is). I have no doubt that this is an exaggeration, but at the same time it can, I think, be depended on for several months." The inhabitants are Nurzai, Alizai, etc. Farah is important as being one of the main points for collection of supplies between Kandahar and Herat, the others being Washir (or some other point in Zamindawar) and Sabzawar. Ayub Khan, with 9,000 men, halted at Farah for five days to allow the Zamindawaris to collect supplies and found them abundant. The Amir has lately (1893) ordered 40,000 maunds of grain to be kept stored in Farah. The granaries had been constructed in May 1893. In 1893, considered to be a famine year, wheat was selling at 29 seers and barley at 40 seers a rupee. In ordinary years wheat sells at 8 annas a maund and barley at 4½ annas a maund of 40 seers.

At Farah the main route from Kandahar, hitherto running east, turns due north.

## SISTAN OR CHAKANSUR.

The district of Afghan Sistan is bounded on the south by the Baluchistan deserts, on the west by Persian Sistan, on the north by the district of Lash-Juwain, and on the east by the desert Dasht-i-Margo.

It commences at Rudbar on the Helmand and takes both banks of the river up to Band-i-Kamal Khan, whence it is confined to the right (east) bank; besides this strip, the district includes Chakansur along the Kash-rud.

The country up to 1882 was practically independent, inhabited mainly by Sinjarani Baluchis and ruled by the Sinjarani Chief, whose territory and sway extended to Chageh in Baluchistan. He was deposed by Abdul Rahman Khan for refusing to acknowledge him as Amir, and the country is now held by an Afghan garrison. In the south of the district the people are mainly Shiranzai and Nahrui Baluch, but as usual there are small bodies of other tribes mixed up throughout the district.

The main feature of the district is the tract known as the Ashkan-i-Chnkansur, a reedy tract formed at the mouths of the Helmand and Kash-rud, where they enter the *hamuns* (*vide* Lash-Juwain), and fringing the Naizar, of which it forms the outlying part; "Ashk" is a fine reedy grass growing very thickly over the tract, some four miles wide, and extending some miles eastwards from the main route. It is flooded during the spring, but in any case there is

\* Sardar Muhammad Yusuf Khan, a son of Dost Muhammad.

sufficient rain to produce the grass. It is burnt off in the winter in order that the young shoots may afford grazing. Maitland says that there are 10,000 head of cattle and 15,000 head of sheep in the district. For the greater part of the year these are fed in the Naizar and Ashkan, the sheep also pasturing on the plateaux north of the Helmand basin. The difference between the Naizar and Ashkan is that the former is covered with tall reeds and the latter with low reedy grass mixed also with "dhub."

Major Rind's report\* regarding supplies gives details of what may be expected in the district. He states that supplies throughout the district are very scanty and not much more than required for the population, but on the Helmand the area of cultivation could be increased to almost any extent with men, money and irrigation works. In connection with supplies, Persian Sistan must be considered; it is said to be very rich, and far away richer than the richest district of Herat; Major Rind was informed that the revenue amounts to 22,000 *kharwars* or 176,000 maunds (Indian) of grain, which will give some idea of its capabilities. In 1893 Lieutenant-Colonel Yate heard at Farah that Chakansur was daily rising in importance and size, and owing to the Amir's prohibition to export grain to Persia, grain was a drug in the market, wheat selling at 15 annas a maund and barley at 11 annas, and that in good years the price is wheat 3½ annas and barley 1½ annas a maund. Lieutenant the Hon'ble H. D. Napier, who visited Persian Sistan in the winter of 1892-93, states that the revenue grain amounts to 24,000 *kharwars*, and he estimates the surplus grain over and above the requirements of the population, at 35,000 *kharwars* or 280,000 maunds (10,000 tons).

#### PUSHT-I-RUD.

The Pusht-i-rud (beyond the river) is so called because it consists mainly of the tract west of the Helmand from Kandahar, to which province the Pusht-i-rud belonged before the province of Farah became an administrative unit in the time of Shere Ali; Farah proper and the western districts of the Farah Province then were under Herat. The Pusht-i-rud of the present day comprises both banks of the Helmand, besides extending southwards to Rudbar. It contains four districts (1) Pusht-i-rud proper or the district of Girishk, (2) the Garm-sel or tract along the Helmand from Surkhduz to Rudbar, (3) Naozad, north of Girishk, and (4) Zamindawar, north-east of Girishk. The whole is ruled by a Hakim who resides at Girishk and is under the Governor of Farah. Lieutenant-Colonel Yate in May 1893 states that Pusht-i-rud is now an independent charge, subordinate neither to Farah nor Kandahar, but this seems somewhat doubtful.

The sub-districts† and population are as under—

			<i>Sub-districts.</i>
Pusht-i-rud or Girishk	. . . . . 18,250	families.	}
Of which	{ 10,000 settled. 8,250 nomads.		
			Surwan Kala.
			Kala Gaz.
			Chaghbrak.
			Girishk.
			Washir.
Garm-sel	. . . . . 20,000	families.	
Of which	{ 9,000 settled. 11,000 nomads.		
Naozad	. . . . . 15,950	families.	
Of which	{ 6,950 settled. 9,000 nomads.		
Zamindawar	. . . . . 29,660	families.	}
Of which	{ 17,360 settled. 12,300 nomads.		
			Baghran.
			Baghni.
			Khunai.
			Zamindawar.
			Musa Kala.

The population is almost exclusively Durani, but the tribes are a good deal mixed up. In the Musa Kala and Zamindawar sub-divisions the population is almost entirely Alizai; Nurzai and Ishakzai predominate in Naozad and in the

\* Afghan Boundary Commission, Vol. V, p. 17.

† For full details re families, villages, etc., vide Afghan Boundary Commission Records, Vol. IV, pp. 253-270.

Garmsel; Ishakzai in the Kala Gaz sub-division of Pusht-i-rud proper, Barakzai and Achakzai in the Girishk sub-division. The numbers estimated are probably much in excess of actuals. Snow falls heavily in Baghran in winter and some in Baghni and Khunai, but none in the southern part. The northern districts of the Pusht-i-rud are very fertile. Wheat, maize, barley, peas, tobacco, and cotton are cultivated in abundance. Vegetables and fruit abound. The Mirza\* stated that from Washir supplies for Ayub Khan's army in 1880 were abundant, that from Washir to the Helmand stretched the district of Zamindawar, probably one of the most thickly populated and fertile in Afghanistan.

The nomad population belong chiefly to the Ishakzai, Nurzai, Baluch and Malki tribes. They graze their cattle in Taimani country from May to August on account of the grass and cool climate. In April and September they are on the move, and in October and November they live in Zamindawar, Naozad and Musa Kala. From December to March they live in Garmsel, where the climate is not too cold.

Camels and oxen are plentiful in the Pusht-i-rud district for transport purposes. Large flocks of sheep are kept and some cattle. Fuel is scanty, but wood from orchards is used. Grass is scarce, but *bhusa* and lucerne plentiful.

The Helmand is joined by the Rud-i-Tirin at Derawat, by the Rud-i-Musa-Kala at Dahan-i-Doab and by the united waters of the Rud-i-Arghandab and Dori at Kala-Bist. It flows rapidly from January to May, and is nowhere fordable during those months. Throughout its upper course its bed is stony, having high hills on both sides; but lower down it is open and becomes very wide below the Dahan-i-Doab. On its banks at a few places there are marshes or lakes and jungle, and in some places bad quicksands. The fords across the Helmand are at Garmao, Shumalan and Khwaja Ali. At Shoraki also called Jasn (*i.e.*, the bridge) above Girishk, there are 45 boats kept to make a bridge, which is used from the beginning of June to the end of December. Boats are kept also at Dahan-i-Doab and Girishk, Kajakai, Kala-i-Gaz, Baba Haji, Khusrabad, Kilich, Kirtaka, Darweshan, Diwalak, Khan Nishin and Dishu are also fording places, but during the cold season the river is fordable nearly everywhere above Girishk.

It is estimated that the surplus produce of the Pusht-i-rud district will not be less than 50,000 maunds of wheat and 25,000 maunds of barley, and that there is plenty of carriage, camels and bullocks, available to place the grain wherever required. The number of sheep available is very large. The Amir has lately given orders for 60,000 maunds of grain to be always kept stored at Girishk.

#### PUSHT-I-RUD.

To the north of the Garmsel lies the sub-division of the Pusht-i-rud called Girishk or Pusht-i-rud proper, the chief place of which, Girishk on the Helmand, is the head-quarters of the Hakim of the Pusht-i-rud District. The fort of Girishk is in a very dilapidated condition, and is only used as the residence of the Hakim. It has no garrison.

The importance of this district is that in it lies the obligatory point of passage of any large force marching between Kandahar and Herat. This point is at or above Haiderabad or Shoraki,† and not at the town of Girishk itself.

From Girishk routes lead—

- (1) to Chakansur *via* the Kash-rud, said to be good, with water from wells and fuel and camel grazing fairly abundant, 169 miles;
- (2) to Herat *via* Washir and Farah, 328 miles;
- (3) to Herat *via* Washir and Daolatabad, 277 miles;
- (4) to Herat *via* Musa Kala, Ghor, Farsi and Marwa, 331 miles;
- (5) to Kandahar, 77 miles;
- (6) to Lash-Juwain *via* the Helmand, 343 miles.

\* Information given by Ayub Khan's writer, during his march to Kandahar, to Captain Gaselee, Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General, 1880.

† A few miles north of Girishk on the Helmand.

## GARMSSEL.

This district of the Pusht-i-rud extends from Hazarjurt to Rudbar, a distance of 160 miles, and is very hot for six months in the year. The cultivated area is confined to the river valley, which is bounded on the south and north by desert wastes; on the north that of the Dasht-i-Margo and on the south and east the Registan and Baluchistan deserts. The Garmsel valley bears everywhere marks of former prosperity and populousness; its soil is extremely fertile and its command of water unlimited; to recover its fertility it only requires peace and good government.

Between the Helmand and Kash-rud lies the Dasht-i-Margo, which, from a military point of view, is impassable, being an almost waterless tract, 80 or 90 miles in width. On the east is the Registan or sandy desert south of Kandahar and the Arghandab; the only routes throughout the tract are along the banks of the Helmand.

To the south lie the Baluchistan deserts, across which there are two routes practicable for a small force with some preparation. The more northerly route runs from Nushki to Khan Nishin on the Helmand *vid* Shah Ismail. There is a waterless tract from Shah Ismail to Khan Nishin (Landi Wali Mahomed Khan) 90 miles, with only one small water-hole, 25 miles from Shah Ismail. The southerly route runs from Nushki through Chageh and Gallachah to Khwaja Ali or the Helmand. The best route is a combination of the two, from Nushki *vid* Shah Ismail and Gallachah to Khwaja Ali; this was the route traversed by the Afghan Boundary Commission in 1884, consisting of:—

33 Europeans	} with	{ 524 horses, 369 mules and ponies, 1,601 camels.
1,549 Natives		

They marched in three *echelons*. Colonel Maitland considers that it might be possible to move an infantry division of two brigades of four battalions each, with three batteries and a native cavalry regiment, from Nushki to the Helmand, and so on to Sistan in *echelons* of strength not exceeding one battalion; no tents could be taken and followers should be reduced as much as possible. With proper arrangements sufficient water might be obtained at every stage, but full supplies would have to be laid out all along the line, the country affording nothing except fuel, a little grass, and a few sheep.

The one advantage of the Nushki route, as against many disadvantages, is its invulnerability and the readiness with which a railway can be laid down along this line should Sistan ever be occupied.\*

## NAOZAD.

Hitherto it has been commonly supposed that the whole of the country north of Girishk to the Taimani and Hazara boundary was Zamindawar, but this is erroneous; the western part of this tract is Naozad. It is very fertile and populous.

## ZAMINDAWAR.

To the north of the Girishk district lies Zamindawar on the west bank of the Helmand. It is one of the most populous and fertile districts of Afghanistan. It is watered by the Musa Kala river and other streams; the northern part of the district is hilly, the spurs from the main watershed gradually sinking into the plains. The inhabitants had up to lately the reputation of being of an exceedingly hostile, turbulent and fanatical disposition, but we have now reason to believe that they are neither more nor less ill disposed than the inhabitants of Southern Afghanistan in general, and that under certain circumstances their good behaviour can be fairly relied on.

## BAKWA.

Bakwa is a plain, lying east of Washir, a sub-district of the Pusht-i-rud and the Farah district; to the north lie the Gulistan and Shahiwan districts, and to the south it is open to the Kash desert. Both the northern and southern routes

\* *Vide* introductory note to Afghan Boundary Commission Routes, Helmand Series, by Colonel Maitland. This contains much valuable information.

† Maitland—Afghan Boundary Commission Routes, Helmand Series.

to Herat run through it for 30 to 40 miles. There is much cultivation, more especially in its western side, and a considerable amount of supplies would be forthcoming. It appears to have suffered from being a theatre of the wars which, during the past century, were carried on between Herat and Kandahar, and to have become almost depopulated in consequence, but with the settled government of Abdur Rahman's reign the district is recovering and cultivation increasing. The people are chiefly Ishakzai and Nurzai, Achakzai, Salarzai and Popalzai, the Nurzai predominating.

Colonel Yate who passed through it in May 1893 says that in the winter and spring it is inhabited by some 3,000 families of Nurzai nomads who move to the hills in the hot weather. During their residence there would be no difficulty in procuring supplies for a large force. In spring green crops would furnish forage, and firewood is procurable from the hills to the north-west. The Nurzais are considered rich, and own large flocks of camels as well as sheep; they could grow much more grain if required. It is said that there used to be 300 *karezes* in working order, but there are now not more than 60. Bakwa is locally looked on as the great battle ground of the future between the Russians and English.

#### GULISTAN.

The Gulistan district lies to the north of Bakwa and Washir. There is little or no definite information about it, but it is believed to contain a number of villages. Dilaram and Bar on the Girishk-Farah road are on the southern edge of the district. Colonel Yate was informed that Gulistan is a well watered and well cultivated district, full of gardens and grapes, inhabited by about 2,500 Nurzai families, and able to furnish ample supplies.

#### SHAHIWAN.

The Shahiwan district lies north of Farah on the upper waters of the Farah-rud. It contains many villages watered from the river, and a large amount of cultivation extending over the whole course of its valley from Puza Langar to Farah, over 30 miles. Considerable supplies would be available, more especially for the northern route *via* Daulatabad. The inhabitants are chiefly Nurzai.

### DISTRICTS OF THE PROVINCE OF KANDAHAR.

#### KANDAHAR PROPER.

This district, as containing the capital, is the most important of the province.

It is divided into three districts :—

- (1) Kariajat or suburbs.
- (2) Mohalajat, or villages occupying the site of the "mohalas," or quarters of the old city of Kandahar.
- (3) Karezat or Daman.

The population is mainly Durani, but there are large numbers of Ghilzai and Farsiwans, living chiefly in the city. There are also 5,000 Hindus in Kandahar—men, women and children,—who are traders and bankers, mainly from Shikarpur, Sind. The district is plentifully watered by the Arghastan, Tarnak and Arghandab rivers, from the latter of which five canals are brought into the Kandahar valley.

Very full details regarding the villages, population, cultivated land and revenue will be found in the Gazetteer, Volume II, under "Kandahar district." Details regarding amount and cost of supplies in a report by Major Hobday, dated Kandahar, January 1880.\* The population is stated to be :—

Kandahar City	. . .	31,000	of whom about $\frac{1}{2}$ are Farsiwans and 5,000 Hindus.
Kariajat . . . . .	. . .	34,200	
Mohalajat . . . . .	. . .	1,000	
Karezat . . . . .	. . .	1,500	

\* Re-published, with memo. by Maj.-Genl. Badcock, C. G.-in-C., by I. B., 1922.



The city of Kandahar is situated in a plain between the Tarnak and Arghandab rivers, at an elevation of 3,400 feet. It is an irregular oblong in shape, the length being from north to south, with a circuit of 3 miles, 1,006 yards. It is surrounded by a ditch 24 feet wide and 10 feet deep, and by a wall which is 20½ feet thick at the bottom and 14½ feet thick at the top, with a height of 27 feet. The wall is of mud and without revetment of stone or brick. The length of the west face is 1,967 yards, east 1,810, south 1,345, north 1,164. There are six gates, two in the east, one in the south, two in the west, and one on the north face. The gateways are defended by six double bastions and the angles by four large circular towers. The number of houses in 1880 was given as 4,320.

The tribal divisions in 1880 were:—

	Families.
Durani . . . . .	522
Ghilzai . . . . .	611
Farsiwan . . . . .	1,064
Kakar . . . . .	275
Miscellaneous . . . . .	828
Foreigners . . . . .	566
	3,886

The climate of Kandahar is not considered healthy by the Afghans, but this is probably due to the want of sanitation in the city and to the large graveyards on the one side and marshes on the other. The following gives an idea of the climate:—

*Winter.*—December, January and February.—Cloudy weather and storms, snow, sleet and rain. Hard frosts in January and February.

Temperature—

	P. M.	Shade.
Maximum . . . . .	1	59
Medium . . . . .	...	49½
Minimum . . . . .	...	42

*Spring.*—March, April, May.—Cloudy and fair weather, occasional rain and thunderstorms during first-half.

Temperature—

	P. M.	Shade.
Maximum . . . . .	1	85
Medium . . . . .	...	70½
Minimum . . . . .	...	53

*Summer.*—June, July, August and part of September.—The hot season commences about 20th June and lasts to 20th September. It consists of two periods of 40 days, each separated by an intervening fortnight of cloudy and cool weather. A pestilential hot wind often blows, known as the "garmbad;" dust storms are frequent and severe.

Temperature—

	P. M.	Shade.
Maximum . . . . .	1	96
Medium . . . . .	...	87½
Minimum . . . . .	...	82

*Autumn.*—Part of September, October and November.—Sun powerful, occasional dust-storms, rarely rain.

Temperature—

	P. M.	Shade.
Maximum . . . . .	1	82
Medium . . . . .	...	70¼
Minimum . . . . .	...	58

The above were taken in a courtyard in the city and are probably some degrees above the temperatures in the open country.

Kandahar is a large trade centre and supplies can be collected from the province and from the Pusht-i-rud district of Farah (provided the country is friendly) sufficient to feed a division of 15,000 men with its complement of transport and followers. Kandahar itself is of the highest strategical value, as

through it pass practically all routes by which an army advancing from Herat towards India must march with the exception of the Herat-Daulatyar route to Kabul.

The main routes are—

	Miles.
To Lash-Juwain, <i>vid</i> Kala Bist and the Helmand . . . . .	413
Ditto, <i>vid</i> Girishk and Farah . . . . .	307
To Herat, <i>vid</i> Washir, Farah and Sabrawar—Farah at (247) Sabrawar (329) . . . . .	405½
To Herat, <i>vid</i> Washir and Daulatabad (northern route) . . . . .	354
Ditto, <i>vid</i> Girishk, Ghor, Farsi, and Marwa . . . . .	408½
To Kabul, <i>vid</i> Kalat-i-Ghilzai (187) and Ghazni (221½) . . . . .	328*
To Dera Ismail Khan, <i>vid</i> Maruf and the Gomal . . . . .	382
To Quetta, <i>vid</i> Chaman (73) . . . . .	150

It cannot be strategically turned on the south, except by Lash-Juwain and the Helmand, and thence by the difficult desert routes from Khwaja Ali or Khan Nishin to Nushki, which are impracticable, except for small bodies of troops, and then only with preparation for water and supplies.

To the north between Kandahar and Kabul, routes for small bodies of troops, no doubt exist across the difficult mountainous tracts of the Hazarajat, but the country is unsurveyed. During the late Hazara rebellion the Amir has had large bodies of troops and levies operating in this tract, but it cannot be seriously considered that an army would move from Herat through this mountain tract on to the Kabul-Kandahar line. Kandahar is only 73 miles from the head of the railway at Chaman Fort, and with the exception of the Kadanai, Arghastan and Tarnak rivers, which would present no obstacle to bridging, there are no physical difficulties to the rapid construction of a line, the material for which is stacked at New Chaman.

#### 4. TIRIN.

An outlying district about 80 miles north of Kandahar on the borders of the Hazarajat. Little is known of it, beyond that it is fertile and exports a considerable quantity of grain to Kandahar. It is approachable by good roads for pack animals *vid* Khakrez and Nish, by the Podina Pass and Kotal-i-Paj, also from Maiwand, *vid* Ghorak. It is drained and fertilised by the Tirin river which joins the Helmand a few miles south of Maidin in the Derawat district.

#### 5. DERAWAT.

We have learnt little or nothing of this fertile valley, which only lies some 60 or 70 miles almost due north of Kandahar, though we held that part of the country on two occasions for three years at a time, 1839-42, 1878-81. Still we have ascertained that the valley is a fertile one; that it was formerly in the possession of the Hazaras, but they were ousted by the Duranis; that the Nurzais, one of the great divisions of this race, now hold it; that it forms the northern boundary of the Pusht-i-rud district of the Farah Province; that the roads to it from Kandahar lie through the Garmab valley; and that the perennial stream, which waters it, is either the main or one of the minor branches of the Helmand river.

#### 6. DAHLA.

The Dahla District, which is one of the 19 districts of the Kandahar Province, lies entirely on the right bank of the Arghandab, with the exception of the Bori valley and a few villages opposite Almush, and extends in a south-westerly direction from Mizan to within 14 miles of Kandahar. The character of the country is similar to that of the Mizan, but its valleys are generally wider and more cultivated, and the hills become gradually lower and less rugged towards the south. Kajur, its most northern point, is 25 miles from the river bank. It is rich both in grain and fruit, the latter consisting principally of figs, apricots, almonds and grapes.

\* By the Logar Valley, which is best for supplies but bad for wheels. For wheels the best road from Chaman is through Maidan; total from Kandahar 313 miles.

The district is divided into 15 sub-divisions. The population is Durani, consisting of Alikozai, Popalzai, Ghilzai, and a few Barakzai and Achakzai, also Hazaras in the Balil sub-division.

The Dahla District is capable of supporting a force of 4,000 men for two or three months if broken up into detachments, and might be useful to quarter troops in, if necessary; but the road from Kandahar to Kalat-i-Ghilzai *via* the Arghandab, which runs through Dahla, presents so many difficulties to the passage of baggage animals and guns, that it may be considered practically useless as a military route. The revenue of the Dahla District is a little over 8,000 maunds.

A British column marched through it in February 1879. At first disturbances were expected, but on the arrival of the troops the *maliks* came in and paid their respects.

Water, grain and fodder plentiful. [The name is also spelt Dala and Dalai.]

#### 7. DEH-I-BUCHI.

One of the 19 districts of the Kandahar Province adjoining Kandahar. There is no information on record about it. It is a very small district lying beyond the Arghandab from Kandahar and between it and Khakrez.

#### 8. KHAKREZ.

This district comprises the upper part of the valley formed by the Kushk-i-Nakhud stream and its tributaries and the valley of the Lam. It is plentifully irrigated by means of *karez*s, which are said not to fail in summer or freeze in winter. Wheat is the staple produce of the country; barley is scarce, as is also *jowar*, *dal*, cotton and madder. General Palliser's brigade, consisting of 1 regiment Native Infantry, 1 Native Cavalry and 1 battery of European Artillery, spent a month in the valley in spring, 1879, and found no difficulty in obtaining supplies; and Major St. John (Political Officer) was of opinion that in September a force would be even better off in this respect. The occupation of the passes leading to Nish, Derawat and Ghorak, which are often closed by marauders, would also conduce to the transmission of supplies from these valleys to Kandahar. Firewood is not plentiful. There are a few insignificant forts both in Lam and Khakrez, and a few of the villages have walled enclosures and gardens. The population consists of chiefly Popalzai and Alikozai with a few Achakzai. The mineral wealth in the hills is considerable, consisting of mines of lead, antimony, and sulphur. Camel grazing is nearly everywhere abundant, which together with the good climate make it an eligible summer quarter for troops. The elevation of Ganjab at the north end of the valley is 5,500 feet and of Sangra, near the lower end, 4,100 feet.

It is connected with the Arghandab valley by several passes. There are roads running through Podina and the passes known as Darazab, Siah Sang Bolan, Pshi, Lalak, Mulla Murda, and Maiwand. There are also roads to Nish.

#### 9. KUSHK-I-NAKHUD.

A considerable district, from 40 to 50 miles west of Kandahar.

The Khakrez stream runs through the district and carries off the surplus drainage; it is, however, generally dry. The country is watered by a series of *karez*s, commencing at the foot of the high mass of hills forming the western extremity of the Shah Maksud range.

These *karez*s irrigate a long belt of cultivation about a mile in width, extending in a south-westerly direction as far as the junction of the Kushk-i-Nakhud stream and Arghandab river.

The upper portion of this belt will be found described under Maiwand, by which name the district is known to the north-east.

To the south of the Kushk-i-Nakhud there are no villages, but a wide stretch of bare ground, which, with a better rainfall, would admit of cultivation.

Outside the cultivation limits are wide expanses of *dasht* or desert, in seasonable years affording an unlimited supply of grass, but in June 1880 absolutely bare. The *dasht* is traversed by broad watercourse lines, but the

rainfall is so limited that the ravine banks are low, and form no obstacle to the passage of troops.

The crops raised in the valley are wheat and barley for the *rabi* or spring crop, and corn and cotton for the *kharif* or autumn crop. A considerable amount is exported to Kandahar.

#### 10. MAIWAND.

An outlying district of Kandahar, watered by a long line of *karezes* drawn from the foot of the south-western extremity of the Shah-Maksud range, and occupying a very important position at the junction of the road leading from Kandahar to the Helmand by the Maiwand Pass and Sangbur, with a road up the Garmab valley leading to Ghorak, Lam, Nish, Tirin, and Derawat, and by the Malmund Pass to the Helmand and Zamindawar. The distance from Kandahar to Maiwand, the chief village of the district, *via* Sinjiri, Karez-i-Salim and the Maiwand Pass, is  $37\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and the road is much used by *kafilas*. The district consists of six villages or groups of hamlets, most of which are well supplied with water, and have walled gardens or enclosures.

These villages form an almost continuous line with those of the district of Kushk-i-Nakhud to the south, and their inhabitants are for the most part Nurzai, Popalzai, and Achakzai cultivators. The strip of irrigated land is generally about a mile in width, and the district exports some wheat to Kandahar, the *rabi* crop being chiefly wheat and barley, and the *kharif*, cotton and Indian corn. Beyond the strip reached by the water of the *karezes* there are wide expanses of *dasht* or *steppe*, which in good years are said to produce an unlimited supply of grass, though quite bare when seen by Lance in June 1880. The *dasht* is traversed by numerous broad ravines, but the banks of these are generally low and form no obstacle to the passage of troops.

#### 11. NISH, OR NESH.

A district of the Kandahar Province. Very little is known of it from the observation of officers. It is, however, well known that it is a fertile and populous district, and one of the chief sources of the grain-supply of Kandahar. It is about 50 to 60 miles north-west of Kandahar; the best road to it runs through Podina, a tract of broken country at the north-east end of Khakrez. The road is said to be open and easy for all arms throughout.

It can also be approached from the Kushk-i-Nakhud and Maiwand valleys *via* Garmab and the Kotal-i-Paj.

#### 12. GHORAK, OR GHURAK.

One of the 19 districts of the province of Kandahar. It lies north-west of the Khakrez valley, from which it is separated by the Shah Maksud range. The Lam valley in the north-east is, geographically, a part of Ghorak, although comprised in the Khakrez district. On the north and west Ghorak is bounded by an unsurveyed range. On the north the Wahad Pass leading into Derawat is said to be easy. On the south-west a defile, the Bagh-i-Mahrab Tangi, leads to Malmund and Haidarabad on the Helmand. This defile is said to be easy for pack animals.

The western portion of the Ghorak valley is well cultivated. The north and eastern portion is a plain without water or cultivation.

It has ten villages inhabited by Popalzai and Alikozai (Sarkani).

#### 13. KALAT-I-GHILZAI DISTRICT.

The district of Kalat-i-Ghilzai covers about 50 miles of the valley of the Tarnak river, and about 20 of that of the adjoining valley of the Arghandab. The valley of the Lora to the south-east is inhabited by Hotak Ghilzai, subject to the Governor of Kalat; but as it pays no revenue, it can hardly be included in the district. This comprises the following sub-divisions, locally termed *Tapeh*:—*Omaki*, on the right bank of the Tarnak, adjoining the fort of Kalat; *Nawa-i-Ghundan*, on the left bank of the Tarnak below Kalat; *Ulan-Rabat* and

*Shahjui*, on the right bank of the Tarnak above Kalat; *Khakah* and *Tasi*, on the left bank of the Tarnak above Kalat; *Nawa-i-Arghandab*, in the Arghandab valley.

The people of Kalat-i-Ghilzai district, as far as its revenue-paying portion is concerned, are almost exclusively Ghilzai of the Tokhi tribe. The Hotak, or, as it is often erroneously called, the Otak tribe, which occupies the left bank of the Tarnak between Nawa-i-Ghundan and Khakah, as well as the country to the east and south up to Mukur and the Kakar territory, pays neither land nor other tax to the State. To its Chief, who is nominated by the Amir and receives a salary payable at Kandahar, the tribe pays one-tenth of the produce of the land.

The cold during the winter months is great; during spring and summer the climate is pleasant.

The fort of Kalat-i-Ghilzai was successfully held in 1841 by a British detachment of 950 men under Captain Craigie against a determined assault by Ghilzais. During 1879-80 it was also held from January 1879 to August 1880 by a detachment of British troops. The country round is well able to furnish supplies to a small garrison of the fort permanently. The Hotak District, 10 to 20 miles to the east, and the Mizan District (Durani) of the Arghandab valley to the west, can furnish a large amount of supplies. A considerable amount of stores had been collected here by the Officer Commanding for General Roberts' force, which halted for a day, on 24th August 1880, during their march from Kabul to Kandahar.

Kalat-i-Ghilzai is the only place of importance on the Kandahar-Kabul route, except Ghazni, it is on the right bank of the Tarnak river, 87 miles from Kandahar, 134 miles from Ghazni, and 229 from Kabul.

#### 14. ARGHASTAN.

This district lies to the east of the Daman district and Kandahar, and is watered by the Kushk-i-rud and Arghastan rivers; to the north is the Nawa-i-Ghundan sub-division of Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and to the east the Maruf District; to the south lies Kadanai.

The Kushk-i-rud valley is thickly strewed with villages of medium size, with trees, generally fruit trees, about them. The valley is divided from that of the Tarnak by hills 5,000 or 6,000 feet high, with rugged features and no vegetation. A force of one mountain battery, one regiment of Native Cavalry, one regiment British, and two regiments of Native Infantry under Brigadier General Barter was sent by this route during the movement of Sir Donald Stewart's force from Kandahar to Ghazni in April 1880. Supplies were easily obtained.

The Arghastan river is joined from the north by the Kushk-i-rud within the district. The valley is more cultivated than that of Kushk-i-rud. The inhabitants of these valleys are chiefly Barakzai, but there are some Alikozai and Popalzai.

Wheat, barley and Indian corn are the chief crops. Lucerne and carrots are also grown for local use. Firewood is plentiful. The inhabitants own numerous herds of sheep and goats with a few horned cattle. There is plenty of *gram* and *bhusa* in the villages, but the people part with it reluctantly as it is required for winter use. Barley is scarce. Bullocks and donkeys form the carrying power of the district.

The main routes are—

- (1) Route from Kandahar to Ghazni.
- (2) A route connecting Quetta and Ghazni.
- (3) A route from Kandahar to Maruf and thence to the Gomal, regarding which little is known.

#### 15. TARNAK.

The Tarnak district consists of the valley of the river of the same name extending from Kheli-i-Akhund to Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and is separated from the valleys of the Arghandab and Kushk-i-rud on either side by parallel ranges of hills.

The Tarnak is dammed up at intervals in its course and the water led off by canals for purposes of irrigation; consequently in the hot weather the river is almost entirely exhausted. There is considerable cultivation along the river, but few villages, these being generally placed in little dells, four or five miles off the road to escape the extortions to which they would otherwise be exposed if on the high road between Kandahar and Kabul. The inhabitants are Durani and a few Tokhi Ghilzai. Abundant supplies can be collected, more especially between Tirandaz and Jaldak, and there is plenty of camel thorn in summer and autumn.

#### 16. MIZAN.

Mizan is a small district lying between Kalat-i-Ghilzai on the north, Tarnak on the east, and south-east, and Dahla on the south and south-west.

It consists of a series of narrow, more or less cultivated, valleys, between high barren hills, watered by small natural streams running down at right angles to and falling into the Arghandab, and comprises the following sub-divisions or groups of villages:—

<i>Takir</i> . . .	On the extreme north-east of the district.
<i>Makrah</i> . . .	} Parallel valleys immediately adjoining and south-west of Takir.
<i>Takhum</i> . . .	
<i>Alam Gul Khar</i> . . .	} On the left bank of the Arghandab.
<i>Stajui</i> . . .	
<i>Selim</i> . . .	
<i>Yakir</i> . . .	
<i>Arghasu</i> . . .	
<i>Shekan</i> . . .	On the right bank of the Arghandab.

The inhabitants are roughly three-fourths Ghilzai and one-fourth Alikozai.

The staple crop is *jowar*; wheat, barley and rice are also grown in smaller quantities. There is a curious absence of trees, but there are a few. Almond orchards abound and a few vineyards. Almost every village has flocks of sheep, but being kept for their wool, the owners are unwilling to part with them. No camels are procurable, but there is plenty of bullock transport.

The Arghandab river runs through the district, and has ordinarily a breadth of 30 yards and a depth of 3 to 6 feet, with a rapid stream of four miles an hour. During the melting of the snows and after heavy rain it rises rapidly and becomes impassable, but in the end of the hot weather can be forded almost anywhere.

A British force consisting of two guns of a mountain battery, one squadron and one battalion Native Infantry marched through the district from Kalat-i-Ghilzai to Takir and on to Kandahar in February 1879. Abundant supplies were procured and bullock transport. The force was detained at Takir (4th and 5th February) by a fall of snow.

#### 17. MARUF.

The Maruf District occupies the upper sources of the Arghastan and its affluents. It lies east of the Arghastan District and north of the Toba Plateau, which is within British territory. The fort of the same name was partially destroyed by Outram in the first Afghan War. The reports of officers in the second Afghan War, 1878-80, add but little to our knowledge, and the district was not then visited. The upper valley of the Arghastan runs north-east and south-west through the district, and is a long, narrow valley, except about Maruf (6,000 feet), where there is a large circular plateau surrounded by hills with the town in the centre; it is highly cultivated and is fairly well wooded.

The route mentioned under Arghastan continues on towards the Gomal, leaving Maruf by the Gharibai Kotal. The gateway and principal towers of the fort of Maruf were blown up by the Bombay column in 1839.

#### 18. KADANAI.

The plain contiguous to and north-east of Peshin, from which it is separated by the Khwaja Amran range.

It takes its name from the Kadanai river, which flows through it from east to west.

From October till April the plain is a great resort of Achakzai of almost every section, who there find pasture for their flocks till the season arrives for migrating to Toba, etc. The name Kadanai, as applied to the whole plain, is not recognised by its inhabitants, who have local names for various parts of it. Thus the portion lying south of the Kojak-Kandahar road is divided into Kunchai, Baldak and Rabat; while to the north are Rawani, Sherub and Kadanai or Kadni, the latter being the tract about the Kadanai river after it descends from the hills. The general elevation of the plain is about 4,000 feet. There are several Nurzai villages in it and some cultivation, but practically no supplies except some grass and camel forage.

#### 19. SHORAWAK.

The district of Shorawak lies to the south of Peshin on the western slopes of the southern end of the Khwaja Amran and the Sarlat ranges. It consists almost entirely of flat alluvial plain between the latter range and the desert or Registan, by which it is also cut off from the rest of the Kandahar Province, except along the foot of the Khwaja Amran to the Kadanai plain.

The plain has a length of about 34 miles from north-north-east to south-south-west, with a breadth of eight or nine miles. The total length of Shorawak is about 48 miles. It is bounded on the west by the Registan, or great desert, which here abuts on the plain in a long line of sand-bluffs. Narrow valleys or channels of alluvial soil run up into the sand. On the north the boundary is marked by the Sargu hills, and from them a line is supposed to run straight over the main range of Shasta to the Lora river, where the latter makes a sharp turn round the extreme end of Sarlat. Thence the crest of the Sarlat range is the line of demarcation between Shorawak and Sharod. The southern boundary, leaving the mountains at a point about south-east of Saïad Bus, strikes nearly due west to Chihal Dukteran Ziarat on the edge of the desert. It is defined by well known land-marks—rocks called Koh Khaibar and Siah Sang near the main range, a sandhill 7 miles from Saïad Bus, on the road to Rahman Khan Kala, and so on to Chihal Dukteran. South of this line is the district of Nuskhî, which is a part of Baluchistan. The elevation of Shorawak is about 3,000 feet, sloping very gradually from north-west to south-east.

*Natural features.*—The Peshin Lora, emerging from its rocky defiles at the north-east angle of Shorawak, runs completely through the plain to the south-west corner. It has a very large and deep bed, but the perennial stream is drawn off for purposes of irrigation before it enters the plain, and the channel is usually dry.

The general aspect of the country is singularly bare. In almost any other portion of Afghanistan, even the most rugged, every village and hamlet has its group of mulberry and apricot trees. This is not the case here. Save some half-dozen enormous tamarisks, there is not a tree in all Shorawak. The district, however, is redeemed from the monotony which its flatness and barrenness would otherwise impose, by the high range of mountains on the east, and by the glowing red of the long line of sand-bluffs on the west. The former are almost as treeless as the plain; they rise up steeply to a nearly level crest line, broken only by one small peak called Saru. Several passes lead through the range up to Sharod, which has a much greater elevation than Shorawak.

During the winter months the climate of Shorawak is delightful. Snow rarely falls, and never lies, but Shorawak is stated to be very hot in the summer.

*Products.*—Wheat is largely grown, barley much less so; melons of all sorts are cultivated, and if the spring rains are sufficient, *jowar* is sown; tobacco, cotton, vegetables, flowers, madder, lucerne are not grown; fruit trees are unknown. The spring harvest happens in the middle or end of May, and if *jowar* has been planted, an autumn crop is reaped, but this crop depends on the rainfall. (As a rule, there are no autumn crops.) Large flocks of sheep, camels, and donkeys are kept.

The water-supply is from numerous canals drawn from the Peshin Lora. The Barechis enumerate 35 such canals; these do not run more than half-way down the plain, so the cultivation is confined to the northern end.

There are also wells in almost every village; these are used in summer when the canal water falls very low and is very salt. In the winter of 1880-81 a detachment of all arms (British troops) was stationed in the district at first near Mandozai, but on account of the badness of the water they moved to Jat Poti.

*Inhabitants and Population.*—The inhabitants of Shorawak are Barech Afghans; they are a fine stalwart race, with a reputation for courage, but very peaceable and quiet on the whole. They are cultivators, but in winter many resort to India to seek employment. Although Shorawak is noted as a breeding place of camels, and the Barechis possess many of these animals, they are not engaged to any extent in the carrying trade with Hindustan. They do, however, carry occasionally to Kej-Mekran, more frequently to the Garmsel and Sistan, and sometimes, but rarely, between Kandahar and Kalat (Baluchistan).

The population of the district was computed in 1879 at 21,000 souls. The few Brahuis are almost entirely confined to the desert.

The following statement, framed in March 1879, gives an idea of the supplies available:—

*Summary of Supplies, etc., available for an Army in Shorawak.*

Articles.	REMARKS.
Water . . . .	In winter and spring plentiful in northern half of Shorawak; precarious in southern half, and procured from tanks. In summer scarce and procured from wells. No water-supply in lower half of Shorawak to be depended on, unless there has been heavy rain in the hills, and the pools in the Lora channel are full.
Grain . . . .	10,000 maunds can be purchased in the spring time. After the harvest in May, 15,000 maunds could probably be procured; 19 water-mills exist in Shorawak; estimated that 300 maunds per diem of <i>atta</i> could be turned out.
Barley . . . .	Not more than 1,000 maunds of barley could be relied on in Shorawak, even just after the harvest.
Forage . . . .	<i>Bhusa</i> abundant after the harvest: if the spring rains have been heavy, grasses are abundant. <i>Bhusa</i> for four native cavalry regiments for one fortnight could probably be procured at any time during the year in Shorawak, but, except after heavy rains, troops would have to depend on stored forage; grass-cutters could not supply them; in the spring the green wheat would support troops.
Camels . . . .	2,593 of all sorts; of these, 500 may be estimated as being strong male camels fit to carry loads; the owners would locate them in the sandhills, if they believed that they were likely to be seized for military purposes; care therefore would have to be taken in collecting them if required.
Sheep and goats . . . .	8,604: of these large numbers are always in the hills and in the Registan.
Bullocks . . . .	Very scarce.
Horses . . . .	Ditto.
Donkeys . . . .	Estimated that 400 donkeys could be collected.
Cows . . . .	It may be estimated that 400 cows and calves are scattered about Shorawak.



*Summary of Supplies, etc., available for an Army in Shorawak.*

Articles.	REMARKS.
Firewood . . . .	Is brought in from the sandhills, where it is abundant; in Shorawak itself it is scarce.
<i>Ghi</i> . . . .	Is only procurable on demand in small quantities; time and the assistance of the banniabs would be required to collect it.
Vegetables . . . .	None, except melons in the season.
Salt, <i>dal</i> , pepper, oil, and other supplies.	These sorts of supplies, with the exception of salt, very scarce, and would have to be brought with the troops proceeding through Shorawak. In fact nothing can be depended on as obtainable in Shorawak, except the products of a purely agricultural and primitive district. Salt, however, is made by evaporation, and is procured from mines near Chahgeh in the Sistan direction.

Very large quantities of a coarse grass, known as "mul," which grows in the Registan, is obtainable and was largely used in the last war as forage; another kind of grass known as "vej" or "whej" is also obtainable, but horses and mules will not eat it.\*

\* *Vide* Gazetteer of Afghanistan, article "Shorawak", for full report of grass operations in 1880-81.

## CHAPTER III.

## STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.\*

Afghanistan may be said to contain two distinct theatres of war, in which operations must be carried on independently of one another, and the events in either one of which will only indirectly affect the course of a campaign in the other.

The minute examination of a large part of the country by the members of the Afghan Boundary Commission has enabled us to define those theatres and to indicate with certainty the portions of the country in which military operations may be considered practicable.

These two theatres are the Kabul-Afghan-Turkistan, or northern and eastern theatre, and the Kandahar-Herat, or southern and western; the former is dealt with in the strategical considerations affecting those provinces, the latter has been partially dealt with under Herat, which may be considered the eventual base of any army attempting the invasion of India *via* Kandahar. The two first objectives of invading armies in the two theatres of war would be the towns of Kandahar and Kabul, both owing to their political and commercial importance and as centres of supply, and to their remarkable strategical position as the two obligatory points through which any force marching towards India must necessarily pass. Although 313 miles apart and connected by roads suitable for wheels and a belt of fertile country, the tract to the front, *i.e.*, north-west of this line, is mountainous and impracticable for operations on a large scale, and it may consequently be stated with confidence that the strategic front cannot be pierced anywhere along its length in force. This line will be referred to as the Kabul-Kandahar strategic front, and we have now to consider its left flank, which rests on Kandahar.

The position of Kandahar with reference to an enemy advancing from the Caspian must first be considered. Any advance from the Caspian is limited to the more or less fertile belt occupied by Khorassan up to Meshed and by the railway to Sarakhs or Merv, and thence to Herat. From Meshed a force must move into the Herat Province for the sake of the supplies available in the fertile districts round Herat itself. Any advance southwards from Khorassan or Meshed is practically barred by the central belt of desert, from 200 to 300 miles wide, which runs across Persia from the Mazandaran Province in a south-east direction to Sistan, and thence east through northern Baluchistan, and the southern portions of the Farah and Kandahar Provinces of Afghanistan. South of Meshed and between the line Turbat-i-Haidari—Birjand and the Afghan frontier extends a belt of more or less desert country, impracticable for the movement of troops. Herat is consequently an obligatory point, through which any large force, operating from the Caspian on Kandahar, must pass. To the north of Kandahar lies the quadrilateral of impracticable country embraced between the four points, Herat, Kandahar, Ghazni and Maimana. This consists of mountainous country running up to peaks of 16,000 to 17,000 feet, through which the only route practicable for an army is the Herat-Daolatyar-Kabul road (467 miles). It is not so much the difficulty of the country as the utter absence of roads which renders it impassable, and though there are several ways of travelling by paths between Girishk and Herat direct, none of them seem shorter, and consequently more advantageous, than the apparently circuitous route through Farah; whilst, on the other hand, they are infinitely more difficult. The upper basin of the Helmand, generally known as the Hazarajat, or country of the Hazaras, is little known, not having been traversed by the members of the Afghan Boundary Commission; but there seems little doubt from enquiries made from different sources that there are no roads practicable for a large force leading on to the Kabul-Kandahar front.

In the tract of country under consideration it is therefore obvious that the roads between Herat and Kandahar are compressed all the way into a comparatively narrow space, between impracticable hilly country on the one side and

\* Colonel Maitland's Memorandum—"Afghanistan strategically considered" has been freely referred to.

desert on the other. Also that there is a sharp angle at Farah. It is true that in addition to the main routes leading on to the Helmand at Girishk, there exists a circuitous one from Farah through Lash-Juwain and by the Helmand valley, but the distance is great, and this line could only be attempted by a very small force destined to penetrate into Baluchistan by the desert routes from Khwaja Ali and to create political difficulties by raising the tribes; as a practicable route for turning the Kandahar position, in force sufficient to have a military effect on the situation, it need not be considered. Between Kandahar and the Helmand the comparative narrowness of the practicable country for manœuvring, in a strategical sense, is well known; but it is not perhaps so generally understood that there is no breadth of country to manœuvre in the whole way from Herat to Kandahar. But there would be no difficulty in arranging for the movement of a strong force on two roads (*vide* pages 4 and 17) within supporting distance. One of these routes at least is practicable for the heaviest field artillery. The 18-pr. iron smooth-bore guns for the Herat defences were apparently taken from Kandahar to Herat without difficulty, and there is no doubt that wheeled transport could be used over the entire distance.

A considerable quantity of supplies are procurable between Herat and Girishk, for the country traversed is by no means a desert; indeed, along the foot of, and within, the outer hills there are districts as fertile as any in Afghanistan. Ayub Khan moved his force of 9 to 12 thousand men from Herat to Kandahar, feeding them on the resources of the country. It is true that his supplies were collected in advance, and that there was ample time to make the necessary arrangements; but, on the other hand, the proportion of mounted men was large, and the Afghans declared that greater numbers could have been fed if necessary.

To meet an advance then, a position at Kandahar may be said to cover all lines of advance from Herat, which must be taken as an obligatory point through which any invading force from the west must pass. It is covered in front, by the Helmand at a distance of 70 or 80 miles, over which the points of passage of any large force are limited to the front, Girishk-Haidarabad (14 miles). The passage of any force further north will land it in a difficult hilly country practically roadless. No doubt from Girishk small bodies of troops could penetrate towards Kalat-i-Ghilzai, but no large force could make a flank march up any of the valleys running north-east with a hostile army in position at or near Kandahar. Kandahar occupies a similar strategical position with regard to routes in rear, as all the lines from India converge upon it. As far as is known there is no greatly used route from India on to the Kabul-Kandahar front between Ghazni and Kandahar. To the south the nearest possible route from the Helmand, by which even a small body of troops can cross the desert, is 150 miles distant.

The rail head is now within 73 miles of Kandahar; and Quetta with its defensive position and military resources forms a strong strategic supporting point, 150 miles in rear.

The only other strategical factor in this southern theatre of operations is the occupation of Persian Sistan and Lash-Juwain by a force to act on the flank of an invader advancing by the Herat-Farah-Kandahar line.

It will be seen that this line of advance is particularly open to attack from Sistan along the comparatively fertile valley of the Farah-rud, and that this attack would be delivered where there is almost a right angle in the line of communications. The occupation of Sistan in addition to Kandahar has been urged as the strategical reply to the eventual seizure of the Herat Province by Russia; it has also been urged\* that with 30,000 men in position in Sistan, we should be in a vastly better strategic position in this theatre of war than if we occupied Kandahar. It is admitted that this cannot be done without a railway, and a railway presents no great engineering difficulty. A line has recently been surveyed from Karachi, *via* Somniani-Lus Bela-Wad-Nal-Kharan to Nushki. From Kharan a branch could be easily run to Sistan; but for the occupation of Sistan to be of any utility as a reply to that of Herat by Russia, it would be

\* Colonel Maitland—"Afghanistan strategically considered."

absolutely necessary to have our railway made into Sistan *before* Herat was occupied by Russia. To make such a railway would take years, and after the occupation of Herat events would probably advance too rapidly to admit of its being undertaken, even assuming that financial objections are not considered. On the other hand, the great strategical advantages claimed for an occupation of Sistan are open to doubt, though its undoubted resources would be most valuable to an enemy. When the Afghan Boundary Commission passed through Afghan-Sistan in October 1884, the *hamuns* owing to a dry season had shrunk to probably their minimum and were as shown in our maps; the movement of troops and making of a raised road over the Naizar between the *hamuns* appeared a matter of little difficulty. In April 1885 there were, however, heavy floods, and an officer who visited Persian Sistan in December 1885, found the local conditions very different; part of his report\* is valuable, and should be borne in mind when the question of the location of troops in Sistan is considered:—

"So much of the basin of the *hamun* as in dry years is not submerged is said to have filled in ten days in consequence of the heavy floods in April 1885. From the watermarks at Baring, the level of the lake had fallen little over three feet from May to December 1885. The water will continue to diminish till March 1886; then the spring floods will not only check desiccation, but will probably raise the level, although possibly not to the height attained in May 1885. Consequently it is not unlikely that it will take several years for the *hamun* to shrink to the area shown as being permanently under water on our maps. During this state of affairs all ingress to and egress out of Persian Sistan for transport animals is confined to the road on the left bank of the Helmand; for below a point ten miles down stream from Kala-i-Fath, the Helmand is not fordable, and the *hamun* to the north and west of Nasirabad (Nasratabad) can be crossed practically by raft only. Persian Sistan is thus at present (3rd January 1886) in reality a peninsula. It is worth remembering that if troops are stationed at Nasirabad, they may in any spring find themselves almost suddenly surrounded by the waters, with the power of movement left open only in one direction, unless indeed a bridge is made over the Helmand and causeways are constructed through the *hamun* towards Lash-Juwain and Bandan. I would add that from April to July the Helmand is not fordable at all anywhere near Sistan."

The above report tends to show that a force might find their power of movement and offence cut off at the critical time. In addition to this objection, it may be stated that the climate of Sistan appears to be very unhealthy,† and it is very doubtful if a force in occupation would long retain its efficiency. It is further noteworthy that the resources of Sistan depend on dry years when the basin of the *hamun* is dry and can be irrigated. In years of flood cultivation is much curtailed.

Sistan was visited by Lieutenant the Hon'ble H. D. Napier in the winter of 1892-93, who says: "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 Helmand is to any development of the country, it appears to me that the best and boldest line for a railway would be the one projected by Colonel Holdich *via* Kharan and passing along the north of the God-i-Zirreh."

Should the occupation of Sistan be accepted as indispensable to the defence of India, it will be necessary to complete a railway to it, and to give the force the power of free movement by the construction of a causeway above flood level or by continuing the railway on to Lash-Juwain. Under existing financial conditions the spending of the necessary millions on this more than doubtful insurance does not appear to be within the sphere of practical politics.

1st September 1893.

E. R. E.

\* Report by Mr. Merk, Political Officer, "From Chaharburjak, on the Helmand, through the south of Sistan and along the eastern border of Persia to the Herat valley." Afghan Boundary Commission Records, Intelligence Branch, Volume V, p. 25.

† Report by Lieutenant the Hon'ble H. D. Napier, 26th April 1893.

## Appendix A.

*Extract from Introductory Note to A, B, C routes, Helmand Series, by Colonel Matland.*

With regard to the feeding of troops moving from Kandahar to Herat, the capabilities of Kandahar itself, and the country as far as the Helmand, are well known to us.

But although a British force has, in recent times, been twice to Girishk, and on each occasion stayed there for several weeks, we have not as yet definitely ascertained the resources of the Pusht-i-rud division of the Farah province, of which Girishk is the administrative centre. A recent exploration, however,\* has considerably increased our stock of information concerning this little-known region, and as it is of considerable importance, a few remarks upon it will not be out of place.

The area of the Pusht-i-rud is very large, probably a third or more of the whole province. It includes both banks of the Helmand, and extends as far west on the main road as Dilaram, 7 stages from Girishk. It includes the Garmseel, or country of the lower Helmand, as far down as Rudbar†. It also takes in a considerable portion of the Kash desert, perhaps nearly as far as Kash itself, which is an insignificant place, too conspicuously marked on our maps. But the important part of the district is north of Girishk, where are the fertile and well populated sub-districts of Naozad and Zamindawar. Altogether there are four sub-districts in the Pusht-i-rud, the settled populations of which are said to be (1) Naozad, 6,950 families, (2) Zamindawar 17,260 families, (3) Pusht-i-rud proper, or Girishk, 10,000 families, and (4) Garmseel, 9,000 families; making a total of somewhat over 43,000 settled agriculturalists, besides a very large number of people who are mainly dependent on their flocks. The population is distinctively Durani, with the admixture of Tajiks common in Afghanistan. Every Durani tribe is represented, and they are generally a good deal mixed up, as in the country round Kandahar: but in the Musa-Kala and Zamindawar sub-divisions of Zamindawar sub-district, the population is almost entirely Alizai: while Nurzais and Ishakzais predominate in Naozad and in the Garmseel: Ishakzais in the Kala Gaz sub-division of Pusht-i-rud proper: Barakzais and Achakzais in the Girishk sub-division of the same district.

It has hitherto been supposed that the inhabitants of "Zamindawar," that is, of the districts north of Girishk, were of an exceedingly hostile, turbulent and fanatical disposition. But we have now reason to believe that they are neither more nor less ill disposed than the inhabitants of Southern Afghanistan in general, and that under certain circumstances their good behaviour may be fairly relied on.

Unfortunately we have no exact data for estimating the amount of supplies available for feeding troops, but the district may be compared with that of Sabzawar, which it somewhat resembles and of which we have moderately full information. Omitting the Garmseel, which has little connection with the present question, the three sub-districts of Pusht-i-rud, Naozad and Zamindawar are stated to have a fixed population of 34,000 families, besides nomads. The population of the Sabzawar District is believed to be 13,300 families, and its surplus produce is estimated at 75,000 maunds of grain, about two-thirds wheat and one-third barley. Although the population of the Pusht-i-rud districts may have been overstated, it is probably not less than double that of Sabzawar, while the cultivable area is almost certainly much larger. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the readily available surplus produce of the Pusht-i-rud districts above mentioned will not be less than that obtainable from the Sabzawar District, or about 50,000 maunds of wheat and 25,000 maunds of barley.

There is plenty of carriage in the country, camels as well as bullocks, to bring the grain to wherever it may be required.

The number of sheep belonging to the Pusht-i-rud, Naozad and Zamindawar is very large. In summer the flock owners move with their sheep into the Taimani country, which is literally full of them from May to September. It may be noted that the Taimanis give to these Duranis from the Pusht-i-rud a much better character than they do to those who come in from the Sabzawar side of their country.

At Washir a large amount of supplies can, it is said, be collected, but they would come from the districts above mentioned, Washir itself being a sub-division of the Pusht-i-rud proper.

Supplies can be collected on the Kash-rud from the Gulistan District, which lies to the north, between the nearest visible range of hills and those south of the Malmud-rud. It is believed to belong to the Siabband division of Farah, and contains a number of villages, but we have no definite information about it.

\* Journey of Daldar Sahibdad Khan and Assistant Surveyor Yusuf Sharif from Herat through the Taimana country to Girishk: *vide* the Daldar's Report in Vol. IV.

† This is the political or administrative division. Geographically, the Garmseel is said to extend to Kala-i-Fath.

Beyond the Kash-rud is the plain of Bakwa over 30 miles in length, and open to the Kash desert on the south. There is much cultivation here, especially towards the further (western) end, and it is said that a considerable amount of supplies would be forthcoming with sufficient notice.

At Khormalik and Khairabad supplies are procurable from the Shahiwan District to the north, beyond the hills. Here are many villages watered from the Farah-rud, and a large amount of cultivation, up and down the river, extending over the whole course of its valley from Puza Langar, 10 miles below Daulatabad, to Farah, a distance of more than 30 miles in a straight line.

The supplies of the Shahiwan District and of that called Gulistan above mentioned are more easily available for the alternative road III B than for the main route.

At Farah it is said that a large amount of supplies can be collected, not only from the fertile tracts along the Farah-rud, below as well as above the town, but also from Sistan, to which camel *kafilas* could go and return in a fortnight or three weeks. It is also understood that a large amount of revenue grain is generally to be found stored in Farah.

Supplies would have to be laid out from the Farah-rud districts for several marches towards Sabzawar. In fact, it may be said that Farah would have to stock the halting places from Khormalik (19th stage) to Teja (25th stage).

At Sabzawar supplies are again procurable in considerable quantities. As before stated, the surplus grain produce of the whole Sabzawar District has been computed at 75,000 maunds, the total gross produce being 376,720 maunds, and the revenue payable in kind 23,852 maunds.\* Of this, the four most fertile sub-divisions, which are those nearest to the town, produce 228,720 maunds, and pay a grain revenue of 13,976 maunds. The available surplus, exclusive of revenue, may be taken at 45,000 maunds, about two-thirds wheat and one-third barley. The same four sub-divisions are supposed to own about 86,000 sheep.

The next five stages would have to be stocked from the neighbourhood of Sabzawar, as the country is unproductive until the Hari-rud is approached. The valley of Herat is of course well populated and cultivated. It has been calculated that from the districts of Herat and Ghorian 135,000 maunds of wheat, 90,000 maunds of rice, and 42,000 maunds of barley would be available for the use of troops, after an average harvest and without counting the revenue grain, some of which would be sure to find its way into the market. (See also Vol. II, "Records," Appendix B, Province of Herat.)

The wheat harvest of the country from Kandahar to Farah is in June; that of Herat the first week in July. Barley harvest is always a week or ten days earlier than wheat harvest.

Horse forage, except in the shape of *dhusa*, is scanty throughout the country. The amount of *dhusa* procurable may be calculated at a weight equal to that of the wheat and barley put together. But where supplies have to be brought from some distance, the bulkiness of *dhusa* is a bar to its transport in large quantities. Lucerne is generally to be had in the more fertile places. There is practically no natural grass this side of Herat. Altogether the difficulty of obtaining horse forage for a force is much greater than that of procuring flour. Camel forage, on the other hand, is generally abundant and good. It should be remembered, however, that there is very little in winter, and that hundreds, if not thousands, of our camels in the first part of the late war (1878-79) died from absolute starvation, as well as from exposure to cold to which they were unaccustomed.

That too favourable an estimate of the supplies on the routes between Girishk and Herat has not been made is to a certain extent proved by the twice repeated march of Ayub Khan from Herat to Kandahar in successive years. Thanks to a staff officer who came down with Sir F. Roberts' force,† we are in possession of a number of useful details regarding the first advance.

About the middle of March Muhammad Eusuf Khan (brother of Khushdil Khan Luinabi), afterwards killed at Deh-i-Khoja, was sent on to Farah with 4 guns and 1 Herati regiment, commanded by Colonel Nadir Shah, Kabulii.

He employed himself in collecting supplies and in exciting the people of Zamindawar against Wali Sher Ali and the British.

Ayub himself left Herat with his army in the beginning of June. He sent on the families of his Kandahari and Kabulii troops ahead of the army to Farah, where they subsequently remained.

#### Strength of Army leaving Herat.

- 24 field guns, all drawn by horses } about 500 artillerymen.
- 6 mountain guns, carried on mules }
- 5 Kabulii infantry regiments of 500 men each, armed with Enfields presented by the British Government to the late Amir Sher Ali Khan.
- 1 Kandahari regiment of 500 men, mostly Duranis, armed with rifles made at Kandahar.
- 3 Herati regiments of 366 men each, armed with rifles made at Herat.
- 3 regiments of regular Kabulii cavalry, each 300 strong.
- 1,500 Irregular Herati horsemen.

\* See Vol. II, "Records," Appendix B, Province of Herat.

† Captain A. Gaslee, Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General.

500 irregular horse were also entertained at Farah.

On the desertion of the Wali Sher Ali's troops this force was further increased by 1,000 infantry.

On arrival at Farah, Ayub halted five days to allow the Zamindawaris to collect, and to obtain information regarding the movements of the British troops. Ghazis and tribesmen then began to come in from all sides. They were mainly footmen; about 30 per cent had firearms, the remainder swords only. No count was kept of them, but the Mirza thinks there were about 20,000 at Mairwand. Subsequently these numbers were largely increased, and probably at Baba Wali there were 30,000. They were mostly Zamindawaris, some from Terin and Derawat.

Sirtip Nur Muhammad, with his son, joined Ayub at Washir. This man was a devoted adherent of the late Amir Sher Ali and of his family. The general nature of the rising in the immediate vicinity of Kandahar was probably largely due to his exertions and influence.

#### *Arrangement for Supplies.*

About a week before leaving Herat one Ghulam Jan, Kapchi, was sent on in advance of the army to collect supplies, and to store sufficient for one day's consumption at each stage as far as Farah. He had a few sowars with him; sufficient supplies were found at each stage. The villagers were not paid for them, and in many instances they had to bring them considerable distances on their own animals.

The daily consumption was,—

About 250 Indian maunds barley.			
" 400 " " dhusa.			
" 120 " " atfa.			

Wood, or southernwood, was procurable for cooking at each stage, and sheep were found in large numbers. There was abundance of good water at each halting-place.

The Mirza says that most of the inhabitants had deserted their villages. This appears to be the custom of the country when an army moves through it, and does not necessarily show that the people are ill disposed. In Ayub's case it appears probable, from the ease with which supplies were procurable, that the people were mostly well disposed to him.

It appears from the above that Ayub Khan left Herat with 4,100 infantry, 2,400 cavalry, and 30 guns: altogether, about 7,000 men, 2,650 horses, and 500 mules and ponies belonging to the troops. His personal following and that of his generals and superior officers, with the followers of the troops, would probably bring up the numbers to about 8,000 men, 3,000 horses and 1,000 muls and yabus. If the daily consumption is correct, it would seem probable that the Herati horse and the followers had to take care of themselves: however, the actual strength can hardly have been far short of the larger totals, and all must have been fed in some way or other. Considering the villagers were not paid for the supplies, and the short notice given (at least as far as Farah), it may reasonably be concluded that a much stronger force might accomplish the march with the assistance of the Afghan officials and the good-will of the people.

If sufficient barley and dhusa are procurable, there need be little doubt that enough flour will be forthcoming.

It is certainly possible that a force such as that which marched under Sir F. Roberts from Kabul to Kandahar in 1840 would be able to march from Kandahar to Herat, under the above circumstances. Provided, however, that no tents were taken, and that followers were reduced to a number not exceeding half the fighting strength.

The best time of year to march, if there be any choice allowed, is in June, immediately after the harvest, when supplies are most easily obtained. The rivers have then run down, and can be crossed with tolerable facility. They are lower in August, but the heat is then greater. In winter there is no camel grazing, and the cold may be inconveniently severe for British-Indian troops. In spring the rivers and streams are all in flood, and the march might be greatly delayed in consequence. Ayub Khan marched on both occasions in June and July, and as he could choose his own time for commencing operations, those months were no doubt selected as the most suitable.

A force having good marching powers might reach Herat from Kandahar in seven weeks. Ayub Khan, advancing leisurely, reached the Helmand in about fifty days from Herat.

Carriage should be Afghan camels. In Southern Afghanistan large numbers of mules and ponies should be avoided, on account of the difficulty of feeding them. Afghan camels in summer and autumn will feed themselves, and do well without grain. The camel train of the Boundary Commission provided at Quetta by Abdulla Khan, Nasari, was excellent. It consisted of about 1,200 animals, almost every one of which returned safe to India after two years' work. Camels could also be supplied by the Kandahar authorities.

As to Indian camels, it is now fully acknowledged that they should never be taken into Afghanistan if it can possibly be avoided.



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE  
THE MILITARY GEOGRAPHY OF AFGHANISTAN  
PART V.—KANDAHAR AND FARAH PROVINCE.

Scale 1 Inch = 24 Miles.

