

*viâ* Masar-Chodschan, to Avat. It is always on the innermost circuit, that is to say, the concave side, of each loop that the forest flourishes most luxuriantly, a circumstance due to the current being pressed, and almost forced, into the vertical bank, by which means the tree-roots are always kept moist.



Fig. 69. ENTRANCE GATE TO MASAR-CHODSCHAM.

The saints' tomb of Masar-Chodschan, which stands a short distance back from the right bank, contains the remains of Hasrett-i-Achtam Resi Allahu Anhu, a Moslem missionary, who is said to have visited this region in the time of the Prophet. It stands amongst a cluster of hills, composed of yellow clay and sand, and is decorated with poles and streamers (*tughs*) and antelopes' skulls, the whole inclosed in a palisade. At the southern end of the inclosure is a *chaneka*, *i. e.* a »prayer-house», or »oratory», a structure some 10 m. long, consisting of poles, 3 m. high, fixed into the ground and surmounted by a roof. The palisade which incloses the shrine is built up of branches, brushwood, and leaves, and is intended to prevent the cattle and sheep from profaning the sanctity of the place. The precincts are entered by a sort of rustic portal, destitute however of gate or door. The *ajvan*, or »balcony», of the prayer-house looks towards the south. The saint's memory is celebrated towards the end of November by the inhabitants of Avat, who proceed thither in considerable numbers and remain there three days, taking their provisions with them on pack-horses. The shrine is in charge of a sheikh, who generally resides at Avat, but dwells during the days of the festival in a hut in the vicinity of the shrine.