

from the slopes of the spur flanking the valley on the west. They rose in wild confusion up to 200 feet or more above what had been the once cultivated plain of Palez. Progress for two miles was here very difficult, and I was heartily glad when by the evening of August 12 we reached the few scattered homesteads of Pasor, occupied by Tajik herdsmen and ensconced among luxuriant poplars and willows.

Next day a march along steep cliffs overhanging the river or else over high plateaux brought us to where the Tanimaz joins what had been once the bed of the Murghab, now practically dry. Above it, in the picturesque village of Saunab, the Tash-kurghan or 'Stone Tower' of the Kirghiz, we found ourselves at the highest settlement of those Iranian-speaking hillmen or Ghalchas who inhabit the secluded alpine tract of Roshan (Fig. 131). They were tall, well-built men, many quite European in looks. Their fair hair, blue or steel-grey eyes and flowing beards distinguished them at a glance from their nomadic Kirghiz neighbours. These hillmen of Roshan, along with those of the valleys of Wakhan and Shughnan to the south, represent the racial type of *Homo Alpinus* in remarkable purity, as found also in parts of Europe. So there was ample work for me during a day's halt in collecting anthropometrical records and in noting much that alpine seclusion had allowed here to survive in customs, domestic architecture, simple decorative wood-carving and the like. It was delightful, too, to see once more well-tilled patches of wheat fields and groves of fruit trees, the first met since leaving the Kashgar countryside.

Here we secured a band of load-carrying men indispensable for our further progress. The only route open to us for reaching the southern Pamirs led up the defiles through