

done much hard marching. But on February 4th we were able to set out for Qasrqand. There is no need to give any detailed description of the four marches which brought us there. Whatever small corrections the details of topography in the Survey of India Sheets Nos. 31. B, C needed, have been fully recorded by the plane-table survey which Surveyor Muḥammad Ayūb Khān carried on under my supervision all through our journey from Chāhbār onwards. Its results are shown by Map Sheets I and II. A brief general account of the ground traversed will suffice. The route followed led up the wide valley of the Kājū river, which descends from the mountains above the valley of Qasrqand. Some 7 miles beyond Turkāni the last ground intermittently cultivated was left behind, and from there until nearing Qasrqand no permanent or even temporary habitation was met.

From our camp at Kolāhu, where the Kājū river-bed was left, a long march northward took us first up to the head of the Trādān valley and then across stony plateaux into the equally barren valley of the Rīgi Kaur, another tributary of the Kājū Kaur. By ascending this valley on February 6th from our camp at Balāsuk we reached the halting-place of Tallāra-rēg below the hill range of Bāghāband, rising to some 3,800 feet. Its drainage accounts for a series of springs, the first met since leaving the coast, and for some tree growth and less scanty grazing. On the following morning, after an easy ascent of 4 miles, the watershed was reached, at a height of about 2,000 feet. On moving down the open valley towards Qasrqand, we passed small groves of date-palms fed by springs, and after a march of about 9 miles emerged on the riverine flat of the Kājū Kaur, where the oasis of Qasrqand spreads among palm groves. On the way to where our camp was pitched near the central village we passed an extensive stretch of ground, known as *Damba-gāh*, where pottery debris and low stone-built embankments mark an area of former cultivation. It is locally believed to have been abandoned at a time not very distant, in consequence of a destructive flood in the torrent bed of Parsūk, which joins the Kājū Kaur south of the present oasis.

A two days' halt at Qasrqand, necessitated partly by regard for the celebration of the end of Ramaḍān, enabled me to acquaint myself with what scanty remains of former occupation could be traced within the oasis or its immediate vicinity, and with the conditions of cultivation prevailing at present. Cultivation here depends wholly on the water supply from the Kājū river, obtained either direct on the occurrence of rain floods, or more regularly by means of *kārēzes* or *qanāts*, underground canals tapping the subterraneous drainage derived from the river at points higher up the valley. The considerable proportion of fields left untilled for the last two years showed how much the oasis, with its population of about 1,800 souls, depends on the insecure rainfall of this region. Of the eleven *qanāts* counted, several were out of repair. The ruined fort, known as