

over a succession of steep spurs to the pass of Gudār-i-Sang-i-ishk, where the watershed on the Lālehzār range was crossed at an elevation of 10,150 feet, and then down a valley fairly watered and much frequented during the summer months by nomadic graziers, to the large village of Rābur (7,800 feet).

With its fine orchards producing abundance of fruit and an extensive area of cultivation irrigated by streams from the mountains, Rābur is by far the most attractive place and the only one of any importance passed by us on this journey through Kermān. That the oasis has existed since early times can be safely assumed. But the Tal-i-Khushkeh, the only mound I could learn of, situated near the south-western edge of the agglomerate of hamlets collectively known as Rābur, showed no evidence on the surface of the site having been occupied before the historic period. It measures about 150 yards from north-west to south-east, with a maximum width of some 60 yards, and rises to 15 feet where highest. Its size has evidently been much reduced by digging for manuring earth. What potsherds were picked up below the banks thus exposed and on surrounding fields were of coarse plain ware, with the exception of a couple of glazed fragments and a flat-ribbed piece, which may be pre-Muhammadan.

From a day's welcome halt at pleasant Rābur, where fresh donkey transport had been readily obtained, we turned to the south-east in order to gain the plateau of Isfandāqeh. Our march on November 16th led first down the stream of Rābur and then over a scrub-covered alluvial plateau. From there a distant view was gained of the numerous hamlets nestling at the foot of the mountains and girding the main oasis of Rābur on the north and north-west. They obviously owe their existence to the increased moisture received by the high range behind and the drainage descending from it. Some little cultivation was found again at Maidān (6,250 feet), in the valley of one of these tributaries of the Rābur river. The semi-nomadic occupants of the hamlet, belonging to the Sulaimānī tribe, were preparing to move down to their winter grazing in Jīruft. Small intermittent patches of cultivation, met on the next day's march for some 8 miles down by the same stream, were already deserted. Then the track led away from the stream, across utterly barren low ridges and waterless ravines, to the small open plain of Padamābād (5,550 feet) with some fields and an old orchard. The few dwellings at the site were abandoned and in ruins.²

A long and tiring march on November 18th took us on its first half through

² In the quarter-inch Survey of India Sheet No. 24. G, the Rābur river is conjecturally sketched as turning to the east some 12 miles below the position (not marked) of Maidān, and thence joining the Halīl Rūd at some point far away to the

north-east of Isfandāqeh. In reality the Rābur river continues its course to the south and joins the Rūd-i-Khārān to form the Halīl Rūd at some point well above where we crossed the latter on our way to Isfandāqeh.