

Another site of the same type, known as *Burchik*, was visited about 4 miles to the south-west of Kumbil. On the way to it also, small shallow channels reached by tidal water were crossed. There an area measuring about 400 yards in length, but nowhere more than some 100 yards in breadth, was found to bear wall foundations of rough stones, many apparently tufa. Here, too, plentiful fragments of burnt bricks, together with a variety of potsherds, could be picked up from the salt-impregnated soil. Small, much corroded copper coins, were found in abundance. The largest among them has been recognized by Mr. J. Allan as probably Samanid of the tenth century A.D. Among the pottery there were numerous pieces of porcelain and good stoneware, manifestly Chinese (see Bur. 11, 12, 14, 25; Pl. XXVI), also of glazed or stamped local ware (Bur. 23) closely resembling that found at Qalāt-Sarāwān. A short distance to the east the stone foundations of what obviously had been a mosque, could be made out. Close to the west runs a *khūr*, or creek, formed by a terminal channel of the Mīnāb river, which was said to be navigable for small boats up to a point known as Tappa-i-Jahūd. A few other *kharābas*, or small 'debris areas' of the same type were said to be traceable farther to the east, on ground approached by tidal water.

The observations gathered at the sites I was able to visit and have just described left me in no doubt about the remains still traceable having belonged to places connected with the shipping which frequented 'Old Hormuz' when its port served the trade of Kermān and other eastern parts of Īrān with India and China.¹⁰ The massive stone foundations of houses, together with the abundance of burnt bricks from their walls, suffice to show that those who occupied them could not have been cultivators or fishing folk content to live in mat-huts or hovels of sun-dried bricks, such as are to be found all over the Mīnāb oasis or along the neighbouring coast. But the present condition of the ground on which those remains are found seems to raise a very puzzling question on the physical side.

It appears clear that no permanent settlement could have existed in places so closely surrounded by flats liable to be flooded, unless the ground occupied by those structures stood at the time considerably higher above sea-level than it does at present. On the other hand, there seems to be some foundation for the general local belief that ships in former times could approach Mīnāb town much closer than they can nowadays. The gradual silting-up of the river-bed near which the sites described are to be found, would explain the latter change; but this cannot account for the lowness of the ground now occupied by them. Could

¹⁰ Iṣṭakhrī distinctly notes that Hormuz, then on the mainland, lay at the head of a creek called Al Jir, 'by which, after one league, ships come up thereto from the sea'; cf. Wilson, *Persian Gulf*, p. 101.