

port remained to be faced. As, however, the people of Gābandī were justly credited with a bad reputation from their former raiding propensities, we had good reason to be satisfied with the fact that no untoward experience attended our passage through their valley. But the report received here about tribal unrest in the valleys beyond to the north-west conveyed the first warning of possible obstacles ahead. This was bound to give all the more cause for concern as the information I was able to collect here seemed to point to the existence of numerous old sites in the tracts of Galehdār, 'Alāmarv-dasht, &c., which I hoped to visit on my way from Tāhirī to Lār.

The mounds reported in the vicinity failed to present archaeological interest. One shown about 2 miles to the south-east from Gābandī village was small and had been dug into at several places for 'treasure'. These burrowings, however, disclosed only rubble-built walls of uncertain origin without any pottery remains. Another mound, known as Tal-targu, is situated to the south-west about a mile from the village. Rising to a height of about 20 feet, it stretches from north-east to south-west for a distance of about 320 yards and measures less than half that across. It proved to consist of the decomposed rubble of the same chalky stone as locally used for building houses. Sherds of coarse red or black ware could be found on the surface; also glazed pottery of light blue colour, which might possibly be pre-Islamic. But as a careful search did not bring to light a single painted fragment, the mound did not invite excavation.

I could learn of no other old remains on the two marches which took us over partially fertile, but, owing to the preceding drought, badly neglected ground, down to the hamlet of Khiāru near the mouth of the valley. Before reaching it we had to cross the winding channel of a perennial stream in which the drainage of the valley, higher up all underground, gathers and makes its way to the sea. That its water is brackish is in keeping with the general aridity of the climate and due also to the salt deposits found throughout the limestone range overlooking Gābandī from the north.

On January 10th, passing across the level plain, mostly scrub-covered waste, which adjoins the marshy edge of the wide bay of Naiband on the east, we reached the sea once more at the small port of 'Asalū. Its fort, held by a small detachment of gendarmerie, was the first post designed to assert control of the coast that we had met since leaving Lingeh.

Next day a long and interesting march took us along the coast to Tāhirī, and prepared us for the important old site ahead. Though fairly fresh water can be found in wells at several points close to the beach, no actual cultivation was to be seen after leaving the date-palm groves of Nakhli-i-Taqī, a couple of miles beyond 'Asalū, until the hamlet of Parak was reached some 5 miles before