

felt here than by the actual coast. From here onwards the old route led along the edge of a steeply tilted ridge which falls off to the south in nearly vertical rock walls. Below them some terraced cultivation could be seen on the slopes of smaller ridges. Finally a gentle ascent eastwards brought us within view of a pass known as Kul-i-kharg. Below this, in a small rocky basin, we were obliged, by reason of the water to be found there in a rock-cut cistern, to halt for the night. In the course of the tiring ascent from Pūzeh we had covered only about 7 miles, but farther on no water could be looked for until nearing the Galehdār valley.

That the small rock-bound basin measuring some 300 by 100 yards has formed a regular halting-place from early times was proved by a curious discovery. The only outlet from the basin is formed by a narrow little ravine at its south-west corner, and here a massive semicircular barrage about 40 feet long, and built with large stone blocks to a height of some 20 feet, cuts across the line of drainage. This solid dam would obviously serve to prevent erosion of the small level space here available as a convenient halting-place for trade caravans and possibly even for some modest cultivation in years of fair rainfall. But equally likely would be the risk that flood-water gathering from the rocky heights around would first swamp the level ground of the basin and then carry away the dam altogether.

It is only this consideration which appears to afford a suitable explanation for the neatly cut channel, 2 feet wide, to be found passing through the solid rock a little to the west of the barrage. Both the dam and the rock cutting are undoubtedly old work, but a somewhat puzzling feature is the fair preservation of both. The barrage is perfectly intact and the rock floor of the cutting for the most part exposed, although the rains of centuries might be assumed to have deposited much debris in this flood channel. Was the latter, then, cleared from time to time to prevent the dam being broken? If the level ground within the basin was at times used for cultivation, the suggestion just indicated would provide the explanation.

A stiff climb of some 400 feet up the limestone cliffs encircling the basin on the north brought us on the morning of January 22nd to the edge of a wide plateau known as Lāvar-i-gul. From here a distant view was gained of the sea and coast-line far below, the last, I hoped, for a long time. Terraced fields, with plentiful scrub, showed that the plateau was cultivated in favourable seasons. Though the narcissus and other spring flowers from which this open elevated ground was said to take its name had not yet appeared, there was enough in the cool bracing air at this height to refresh and delight. On continuing northward across the plateau we passed the ruins of numerous stone-built dwellings known