

range which forms the pass known as Kal-i-Fariāb, at an elevation of close on 3,000 feet, it still took two hours before the last of the poor donkeys had been helped to struggle up. On this portion of the ascent it would have been easy for even a small party of robbers to carry out a successful coup. So there was reason to appreciate the precaution which had induced Sohrāb Khān to send up overnight an additional posse of *tufangchīs* under a trusted relative to assure a safe passage.

The descent, though extremely stony, seemed easy compared with the gorge we had left behind. It led down a steep rocky spur jutting out like a ravelin from the almost perpendicular wall of limestone which here crowns the coastal range for a considerable distance. On a small patch of fairly level ground breaking the steep scarp of the spur was found a large and obviously old cistern lined with rough stones and cement. The place was said to be known from a murder committed in former times as Aliward-kushteh; and here our transport collected. Then the tiring scramble continued down the rubble-covered top of the same spur, flanked by the cliffs of a deep ravine, until at the bottom of a narrow glen a fine spring of fresh water was reached, and near it the small date-palm grove of Gaud-i-Akhand. Below this point the rock-bound glen contracts into a wholly impassable rift. So by a steep ascent of some 500 feet another precipitous spur had to be surmounted, and from a ravine at its foot a second spur crossed, before we gained the stony glacis whence the village of Akhand and the marshy shores of the great bay of Naiband could be sighted.

On arriving at Akhand we parted with some relief from our Warāwī protectors, who on the way had chosen to display a more or less truculent attitude. Nothing would induce them to let their donkeys proceed with us by the coast as far as 'Asalū, where, with assistance from the gendarmerie station, we might have hoped to secure fresh transport. The result was that in spite of the help afforded by the well-meaning Arab Shaikh of Akhand a whole day had to be passed there before the minimum of transport could, with much difficulty, be collected to allow of a move up the coast. It had by now become abundantly clear that the only chance of carrying out useful archaeological investigations inland lay in first reaching a base at Bushire from which contact with the central or provincial authorities could be secured. Ever since leaving Bandar Abbās it had been impossible to arrange for any postal communications.

On regaining 'Asalū by February 5th, along the track already followed on the journey to Tāhirī nearly a month earlier, the difficulties about transport on this famine-stricken coast proved just as great as or even greater than before. So I agreed to our escort commander's suggestion that we should shorten the journey by embarking in an open country boat found outside 'Asalū for Daiyir, a little