

to enable us to set out by February 11th. A long march carried us past the ruins of Sīrāf and then, as the track along the shore was said to be covered by the tide at the time, along the open valley of Dōband, of which I had visited a portion already while encamped at Sīrāf. No further remains of occupation were met here. We followed the barren coast, overhung by conglomerate terraces beyond Akhtar, and after nightfall we reached the large village of Tumbak, which we found mostly deserted as a result of the famine.

Another fairly long march on February 12th brought us to Daiyir, a small port which seems to enjoy some trade as it serves as the outlet for the southern portion of the comparatively fertile and well-populated district of Dashtī. The route as far as the village of Kangān led along the foot of the steep maritime range, which is there broken by a wide valley descending from the north-west. The river draining it carries a good deal of water and, being tidal at its mouth, might in case of rain, which a cloudy sky had promised for some days past, have held us up. So I did not stop at Kangān to look for any remains of the small Portuguese factory which is stated to have existed there for some time, but thought it safer to push on past the well-cultivated fields of Banak to the river. Though some 150 yards wide at the ford, the water was deep, reaching up to the camels' bellies. The crossing was safely effected by dusk, and Daiyir, 3 miles farther on, was reached in the dark.

There was good reason to feel grateful for the timely passage of the river, for in the course of the night rain—for two seasons longed for in vain—descended in torrents, flooding part of the ground near the fort of Daiyir where our tents had been pitched in the dark. The gloom of a day spent amidst such conditions, with many of our belongings drenched, was lightened for me by the arrival of a runner sent from the Consulate-General, Bushire, bringing the first mails received for fully two months. No safe means for the dispatch of these postal accumulations had offered before our approach to Bushire had become known there.

Among the much delayed communications was the copy of a telegram addressed, at the very beginning of January, from the Tehrān Government to the Governor of the Gulf Coast at Bushire, conveying the order that all operations on my part should be postponed until the next (Persian) year. This order was obviously prompted by the tribal unrest in the area which at the very time of its issue I was about to approach from the coast. The absence of postal or telegraphic communications and consequently of knowledge as to my whereabouts had caused delay in the delivery of this order—not altogether to the detriment of my aims.

The news of the postponement imposed by this order would have been even more disappointing had my own experiences of the preceding month not con-