KURDS TURKS AND ARABS

Politics, Travel and Research in North-Eastern Iraq 1919-1925



C. J. EDMONDS


KURDISTAN
100 50 0 MILES 100 200
International frontiers
Boundary of Kurdistan
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
GEORGIA
AZARBAYJAN
ARMENIA
TURKEY
SYRIA
IRAQ
IRAN
PERSIA
JORDAN
LEBANON
ISRAEL
SAUDIA
EGYPT
CYPRUS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
HAKÂRI
LURISTAN
Tiflis
Batum
Kastamonu
Samsun
Trebizond
Kars
Erivan
Baku
ANKARA
Erzurum
Erzinjan
Sivas
M. Ararat
Maku
Ardebil
Talish
Tabriz
Lake Urmiya
Urmiya
Rasht
Zanjan
Qazvin
Saqqiz
Bijar
Sanandaj
Senna
Hamadan
Nihavand
Sultanabad
Burujird
Khurramabad
Kermanshah
Khanaqin
Mandali
Kifri
Halabja
Altun Kopru
Sulaimani
Kirkuk
Arbil
Mosul
Tall Afar
Sinjar
Jezira
Zakho
Bitlis
Van
Khoi
Shimas
Kharput
Malatya
Diyarbakr
Siverek
Marash
Mardin
Nisibin
Adana
Alexandretta
Antioch
Aleppo
R. Euphrates
Dair
Palmyra
Tripoli
Nicosia
BEIRUT
DAMASCUS
Haifa
Jaffa
JERUSALEM
Gaza
Dead Sea
Hit
Ramadi
Takrit
Ana
R. Tigris
R. Little Zab
R. Great Zab
BAGHDAD
Badra
Jassan
Kut
Kerbela
Najaf
Amara
Dizful
Shushtar
R. Karun
Ahwaz
Huwaiza
R. Karkha
Pusht-i Kuh
R. Kashgan
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KURDS, TURKS, AND ARABS



SHAIKH BAKH AND PIRA MAGRUN

(Photo: S/Ldr. J. Robb)

KURDS
TURKS AND ARABS

POLITICS, TRAVEL AND RESEARCH IN
NORTH-EASTERN IRAQ
1919–1925

BY

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Interior Iraq, 1935–1945

LONDON
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
NEW YORK TORONTO
1957

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C.4

GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI KUALA LUMPUR
CAPE TOWN IBADAN NAIROBI ACCRA

© *Oxford University Press, 1957*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY W. & J. MACKAY & CO. LTD., CHATHAM

To

MY COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS
OF THE
CIVIL ADMINISTRATION
AND THE
FIGHTING SERVICES
BRITISH AND IRAQI
WHO SERVED IN THE
MOSUL WILAYAT
1918–1925

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PREFACE

THE framework of this book is the diplomatic history of the Mosul dispute between Great Britain and Turkey, enriched (in the architectural sense of the word) with an account of my own experiences as a Political Officer in the contested territory. Within this framework I have tried to paint a picture of the landscape and the society of Southern Kurdistan.

It is curious to find oneself constantly referring to our good friends the Turks as 'the enemy'; but this is the story of the last seven of the eleven years of the unnatural estrangement that interrupted the traditional relations of amity and mutual respect, never stronger than now, between our two countries.

Re-reading my typescript I am taken aback by the rather egotistical tone of parts of the narrative of my own doings. It is too late to alter that now; in any case the text as it stands, based as it is largely on diaries and other papers written at the time, will certainly convey far better than any watered-down paraphrase I could make at this late date an idea of the self-confidence and high spirits with which I think most of the young officers of the war-created 'Mespot Political' tackled their duties and perhaps to some extent made up for lack of training and experience.

I am conscious that the descriptions of the routes I have followed and of the various classes that make up the society of Southern Kurdistan are in parts very detailed; but, if my own experience is any guide, it is precisely such detail that will give the book its greatest interest to future travellers and to students of the Middle East. I believe that in the course of a long career in Persia and Iraq, just at a time when the revolution ushered in by the invention of the small internal combustion engine and speeded up by two world wars was threatening to submerge the age-long traditions and ancient ways that had survived all the upheavals of earlier centuries, I have collected a good deal of information that is new to the European world of scholarship, and I will not conceal my hope that some of the material here offered will be found of value for research of a kind more

methodical than it is in my own nature to undertake. At the same time, perhaps, I owe an apology to these experts for the introduction of certain elementary matter, such as the summary of the early history of Islam at the beginning of Chapter VI, which may appear superfluous to them but which, I feel, will make the whole book (including the more technical matter that follows in the same and later chapters) more interesting and acceptable to the general reader. I trust that I shall not be adjudged to have fallen between two stools.

In any book on the Middle East the spelling of personal and geographical names always presents a problem. The problem is particularly acute in the case of a book dealing with a region where Arabic, Persian, Kurdish and Turkish (written in Arabic script) are all recognized as official languages of the administration and are currently spoken, and where the new Turkish, written in Roman script, is a near and influential neighbour. In these circumstances I have had to be something of a law unto myself; but there is a law and I have tried to be consistent within it. The rules I have laid down for myself have had to be rather elaborate, but there are only one or two points I need make here. Where personal names are common to two or more of the languages one of them is almost sure to be Persian and I have generally chosen the spelling according to the commonly accepted rules for the transliteration of Persian. Initial *'ain* and long vowels are not usually marked in the text but are shown in the index. Where there is a conventional spelling that can be said to have passed into the English language (such as Mecca, Mosul, Caliph or Koran) I have generally preferred to use it; but I have had too many friends whose name was Muhammad, distinctly so pronounced, to be able to bring myself, despite my respect for the Fowlers, to write Mahomet or even Mohammed.

Actual quotations in Arabic and Persian are transliterated according to a well recognized system, and those in Turkish are written in the modern Roman spelling of the Mustafa-Kemal reform. Quotations in the Kurdish language are given in the special Roman alphabet which I worked out in 1930–3 in collaboration with my learned Kurdish friend, Taufiq Wahbi Beg, Member of the Iraqi Senate, and which, in its final form, is given in the second of two articles which I contributed to the J.R.A.S.: 'Suggestions for the use of Latin Character in the

Writing of Kurdish' (January 1931), and 'Some Developments in the use of Latin Character for the Writing of Kurdish' (July 1933). Here it will be sufficient to explain that: all the consonants have approximately their English value except that *x* represents the guttural aspirate commonly transliterated *kh*, *c* and *j* have their modern Turkish values viz. English *j* and French *j* respectively, and the digraphs *lh* and *rh* represent a velar *l* and a rolled *r* which exist in addition to ordinary *l* and *r*; of the vowels *a*, *o*, *ö*, *ê* are always long, *i* is the neutral vowel, *y* is pure short *i* as well as the consonant, *u* is always short; long *i* and *u* are represented respectively by *iy* or *yi* and *uw* or *wu*.

A list of official documents and standard works to which I have had constant recourse is given in Appendix A, together with a list of abbreviations of the titles of any learned journals quoted; to all these I acknowledge my great debt. Details of books and articles by earlier travellers in my area, to some of which I have frequently referred, will be found on pages 22 to 28. Other specific acknowledgements are made in the text or in footnotes.

Many kind friends have helped to remove some of the defects from these pages; they are of course in no way answerable for those that remain. The typescript of the whole book has been read through by Sir Reader Bullard and Professor Sidney Smith, Chapters VI, XIII, XIV and XVIII by Professor A. Guillaume, and Chapters IV, V, VI, VII, XI and XV by H. E. Saiyid Taufiq Wahbi; their comments, corrections and advice have been invaluable and I am most grateful to them. I also have to thank the Librarian of the Foreign Office for permission to consult the records relating to the Turco-Persian boundary, Air Chief Marshal Sir James Robb for help with various details concerning officers and the equipment of the Royal Air Force in the years 1919–25, Lieut.-Colonel G. E. Wheeler for checking the quotations in modern Turkish spelling, and numerous other colleagues, British and Iraqi, only some of whom are named in the body of the book, for hospitality on my journeys and other acts of kindness.

I must make it clear that although for many years I held posts in Her Majesty's Foreign Service and under the Government of Iraq any views expressed in this book, and the responsibility for them, are mine alone.

I INTRODUCTORY: THE KURDS

KURDISTAN in its broadest sense means the country inhabited by the Kurds as a homogeneous community. It is divided between Turkey, Iraq and Persia with small overlaps into the Soviet Union and Syria; thus its boundaries do not coincide with any international frontiers or internal administrative divisions. On the north the border follows roughly the line through Erivan, Erzurum, Erzinjan, (Erzincan), and thence in an arc through Mar'ash (Maraş) towards Aleppo; on the south-west it runs along the foothills as far as the Tigris, then just east of the river downstream, then a little north of the line of the Jabal Hamrin to a point on the Iraqi-Persian frontier near Mandali; on the east, in Persia, the limit of the Kurds runs in a south-easterly direction from Erivan so as to include the districts of Maku, part of Khoi, Riza'iya (Urmiya), Mahabad (Sauj Bulaq), Saqqiz and Senna to Kirmanshah. The great high road from Kirmanshah to Karind and thence the straight line to Mandali is approximately the dividing line between the Kurds proper and the kindred Lakks and Lurs, who are sometimes classed as Kurds.[1]

The inhabitants of Kurdistan as so defined are, of course, not exclusively Kurdish. Before 1914, for instance, there was a large population of Armenians in the part lying north of the 38th parallel of latitude, and the Nestorian Christians well known in England as the Assyrians were numerous in the Hakâri province of Turkey and the adjacent Persian district of Urmiya; most, if not all, of these have disappeared from Turkish territory, but several thousands of the Assyrians are now compactly settled in the Amadiya region of Iraq. There are also ancient colonies of Turkomans in a string of towns along the highway from Baghdad to Mosul; Qara Tapa, Kifri, Tuz Khurmatu, Tauq, Kirkuk, Altun Köprü, Arbil and, beyond Mosul, Tall Afar. But taken by and large the great majority of the popula-

[1]The so-called Kurdish *hammals* or porters who are to be seen every day in Baghdad carrying enormous weights just as they did, according to the *Arabian Nights*, twelve hundred years ago are not Kurds in the narrower sense but Lurs from the western part of Luristan called Pusht-i Kuh.

tion is Kurdish. On the other hand there are islands of Kurds established outside these limits; to the west, for instance, at Damascus, in the Aleppo district, and as far away as Ankara; to the east in the provinces of Qazvin, Khurasan and Kirman. Of these islands the most interesting is the Jabal Sinjar, west of the Tigris in the latitude of Mosul city, where most of the inhabitants are Yezidis, the people misleadingly described as devil-worshippers, and where the Muslim minority too is unorthodox.

The Kurdish population of Iraq I would put at 900,000; this figure is based on the official census of 1947, which gives the totals by nahiyas, and on my own estimates of the racial composition of each of these, the smallest, administrative units.[1] For Turkey and Persia data even to this extent are lacking. The League of Nations Commission which came in 1925 to inquire into the dispute between Great Britain and Turkey regarding the Mosul wilayat estimated the numbers at: Turkey 1,500,000; Persia 700,000; Iraq 500,000; Syria and elsewhere 300,000; making a total of 3 million. They put the figure for Iraq too low, but part of the discrepancy is to be accounted for by the natural increase that has taken place in all parts of the country during the last twenty-five years. The spontaneous risings that followed the Anglo-Russian invasion in the autumn of 1941 and the consequent weakening of the authority of the provincial administrations showed that the Kurds of Persia were as strong as ever they had been; 1,100,000 would be a reasonable guess. To make a calculation for Turkey is more difficult. The Government calls them 'Mountain Turks' and denies that they form a separate ethnic group at all; the wearing of the distinctive costume is forbidden, at any rate near centres of administration; little is known of the casualties inflicted during a series of rebellions or of any subsequent transfers of population. Nevertheless, from my own inquiries on the Iraqi and Persian frontiers and from the evidence of the few travellers' tales that have come through, and bearing in mind the importance of the revolts that did take place, I would still guess the number to be about equal to the total for Iraq and Persia together, namely, 2 million.[2]

[1] For details see Appendix B.

[2] The Annuaire Statistique for 1951 published by the Central Office of Statistics at Ankara, quoted by W. C. Brice in *G.J.* Vol. CXX, pt. 3, Sept. 1954, p. 347, gives the number of those whose mother tongue was Kurdish according to the

This, allowing for the Syrian and Soviet Kurds and other isolated groups, would give us a grand total of between 4 and 4½ million.

The Kurds tell two stories about their own origin. The first is based on the legendary history of Iran, which relates that the throne was for a time occupied by a usurper named Zahhak. This Zahhak had growing from his shoulders two snakes, each of which required a human brain for its daily meal. An ingenious minister conceived the idea of mixing each human brain with a calf's brain and in this way saved the life of one of the two youths or maidens due to be sacrificed every day. The survivors were smuggled away to the mountains, where they became the ancestors of the Kurds.

The second story has to do with King Solomon. In old oriental folk-lore Solomon ruled over the supernatural world, those queer beings called Jinni, Ifrit, Div, Pari (fairy), and so on. One day, the Kurds relate, King Solomon called together 500 trusty Divs and ordered them to fly to Europe and bring back for his harem 500 of the fairest damsels they could find; on their return, however, they found that the Merry Monarch, their master, was dead, so they kept the damsels for themselves and by them became the ancestors of the Kurds. The Lurs have the same story about their origin, and when I was travelling in Luristan a most villainous cut-throat once claimed on the strength of it to be a kinsman of mine, through his ancestress.[1]

When we turn to more serious history we find that there has been considerable controversy among scholars regarding the origin of the Kurds. This much, however, is certain. The records of the great civilized Empires of the plain, Sumer near the Persian Gulf, Babylon of the Middle Euphrates near Hilla, and Assyria whose capital was Nineveh on the Tigris opposite Mosul, are full of accounts of the depredations of the tribes inhabiting the mountains of Western Kurdistan bounding them

census of 1945 as 1,476,562. I have heard from an exceptionally well informed source that with the new democratic processes in Turkey the Kurdish vote has assumed a quite unexpected importance, and that in Turkey itself three or even four millions is now sometimes suggested as a reasonable estimate of the Kurdish population of that country.

[1]The story of his own ancestry told by Saladin to the Scottish Knight in the third chapter of *The Talisman* seems to be a combination of these two fables.

on the north-east and east, and of expeditions against them. In the second millenium B.C. the royal families which ruled in the kingdoms of Mesopotamia (properly so called) bore names which are considered to be early forms of Sanskrit words, indicating the presence of Indo-Aryan elements, at any rate in the upper strata of the population. They were followed into the region of the Western Persian plateau and the Zagros by another branch of the Indo-European family, the Iranians, that is to say the Medes and the Persians. Some scholars believe that the Medes (Mada) were preceded by the Persians (Parsa), who may have arrived as early as the twelfth century B.C. and remained for three centuries or more before they moved south towards Fars; they gave their name to, or derived it from Parsuash, which is first mentioned in the annals of Shalmeneser III of Assyria for the years 833, 829 and 828, and which probably corresponded with the modern district of Bana.[1] Unfortunately the Medes, unlike the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians and the Persians, left no inscriptions (or if they did none have yet been found); reconstruction of their history for considerable periods must therefore be largely conjectural. A sentence occurring in the annals of Shalmeneser III for 836 has been cited as the first mention of the Medes in history.[2] However that may be it is not until the eighth century that names of distinctly Iranian type, borne by Median princes, are found in Assyrian texts. Thereafter the Medes, coming from some uncertain region north of the central Persian plateau, pushed westwards and southwards until by 650 they dominated the Zagros. Both the Medes and the Persians seem to have constituted an aristocracy controlling a mixed population; there would have been no extermination of the earlier inhabitants, but they would have imposed their language and their religion. In the years 617–612 Cyaxares the Mede, son of Phraortes (Khshathrita), was the recognized head of a confederation which included more than the Medes themselves; allied with the Babylonians in 612 he destroyed Nineveh and overthrew the Assyrian

[1]Sidney Smith, 'Parsuash and Sulduz' in *Professor Poure Davoud Memorial* (Bombay 1951), vol. ii, pp. 60–67, and p. 70 for his location of 'the land Messi', mentioned below, in the Saqqiz region.

[2]Olmsted, *History of Assyria* (New York, 1928), p. 117. Professor Smith gives me the translation as follows: 'I departed from Parsua; I went down to the land Messi, the land of the Amadai, the land Araziash, the land Ḫarḫar.' Ḫarḫar was the land of the upper Sirwan.

Empire. The vicissitudes of the Median power between the time of Cyaxares and 550 are obscure and its frontiers are not known. Herodotus (i. 72 and 74) states specifically that the western boundary was the river Halys, the modern Kizil Irmak, having been fixed after a war with the Lydians which was brought to an end through the intervention or mediation of the rulers of Babylon (which then held Harran) and Cilicia; mention of an eclipse of the sun shows the date to have been 585. There is no mention of Ecbatana, the modern Hamadan, in the early references to the Medes, but it was the capital of their kings towards the end of their rule; the boundary on this side was well to the east of Ecbatana, and the Persians to the south acknowledged Median suzerainty.

In or about 550 Cyrus the Persian overthrew Astyages the successor (and according to Herodotus the son) of Cyaxares, and the Achaemenian replaced the Median power; in 547 Cyrus reduced Croesus, king of Lydia and became master of central and eastern Asia Minor; next he attacked the Babylonians, first in Syria and then, in 539, at Babylon itself. The Achaemenian Empire, which had its capital at Persepolis near Shiraz in Southern Persia, lasted until 331, when Darius III was defeated by Alexander the Great at the battle of Arbela, which was actually fought near what is now the Christian village of Karamlais, nearer Mosul than Arbil.[1] Kurdistan formed part, in turn, of the Empires that followed: the Seleucids (331–129 B.C.), the Parthians (247 B.C.–A.D. 226), the Persian Sasanians (A.D. 226–636), the Arab Caliphs (A.D. 636–1258), the Mongols and Turkomans (A.D. 1258–1509), until finally in the sixteenth century the frontier between the Ottoman and Safawi Empires was more or less stabilized so as to leave about three-quarters in Turkey and one quarter in Persia.

It would not be relevant to my present purpose to try to follow the Kurdish thread through the tangled web of Western-Asian history. By the seventh century A.D., that is about the time of the Arab conquests, the name Kurd was being applied as a racial term to the Western Iranians established astride the Zagros and to the neighbouring iranicized populations; it is perhaps an echo of similar names used with more restricted

[1]Sir A. Stein, 'Notes on Alexander's Crossing of the Tigris and the Battle of Arbela', *G.J.*, vol. C, October 1942.

application by the classical writers such as the Gorduaia mountains and the brigand Kurtioi of Atropatian Media, or Azarbayjan, mentioned by Strabo (*flor.* 64 B.C.–A.D. 20), and the Kardouchoi who attacked Xenophon and the Ten Thousand in such characteristic fashion as they retreated through the Zakho region (400 B.C.).

At one time ignorant travellers were accustomed to say that the Kurdish speech was nothing more than a corrupt Persian patois, but this is very far from the truth. The two languages are related but differ greatly in many important points of vocabulary, syntax and phonology. Kurdish belongs to the north-western group of Iranian languages in contrast to modern Persian which falls into the south-western group. Kurdistan is a land of high mountains with difficult communications; for centuries it has not had any political unity which might have given it a common literature; it is therefore not surprising that local dialects should vary almost from valley to valley. But the fundamental distinguishing characteristics of Kurdish appear in them all, and the opinion of one of our greatest authorities[1] is that, the dispersal of the Kurdish tribes being as extensive as it is, this consistency can only be explained by the assumption that the dialects are derived from an ancient and powerful basic language, the Median.

Speaking in general terms, then, I think that on geographical and linguistic grounds one may reasonably say that the Kurds of today represent the Medes of the Third Great Oriental Monarchy (just as the modern Persians to the east and south-east represent the old Persians of the Fifth Monarchy), but that the Iranian component has been reinforced by subsequent east-to-west migrations; the central core, as one would expect, has also shifted westwards so that Hamadan now lies just outside the eastern boundary of Kurdistan.

For 500 years the Kurds played a prominent part in the Muslim territories, and history records the names of more than one Kurdish dynasty of some importance. The most famous of all Kurds is probably Saladin (Salah-ud-Din *ob.* 1193 A.D.), the chivalrous opponent of Richard Coeur-de-Lion and of the

[1]Professor V. Minorsky in *The Tribes of Western Iran* (Royal Anthropological Institute, 1949). I take this opportunity of acknowledging my particular debt to Minorsky's article 'Kurds' in *E.I.* also.

Crusaders, who, according to Kurdish tradition, came from the Arbil region;[1] his was predominantly an Arab empire, but the conquest of Mosul must have brought in a considerable Kurdish element. Less is heard of them in Mongol and Turkoman times, but they once more became prominent during the wars between the Ottomans and the Safawis.

In spite of the centralizing policies of the Turkish and Persian Governments a number of quasi-autonomous Kurdish principalities survived until about a hundred years ago, such as Bohtan, Hakâri, Bahdinan, Soran and Baban in Turkey, and Mukri and Ardelan in Persia. All those in Turkey were suppressed or brought under direct Ottoman control between 1837 and 1852; Mukri and Ardelan lost their autonomy about the same time. In Persia the name Kurdistan is applied officially not to the Kurdish districts in general but only to a province corresponding to the old Ardelan.

In modern times, up to 1918, the Ottoman Empire was divided and subdivided for purposes of administration into wilayats under Walis, sanjaqs or liwas under Mutasarrifs, qazas under Qaimmaqams, and nahiyas under Mudirs. The Iraq of today comprises almost exactly the former wilayats of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul, the region once known in British official parlance as Turkish Arabia and to the British public as Mesopotamia. After 1921 in Iraq the wilayat as an administrative unit disappeared, and the country was divided into liwas directly subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior; but it will be convenient to continue to use the term with its geographical connotation. Both the liwas (fourteen in place of nine or ten) and the qazas are more numerous than under the Turks.[2]

The northernmost of the three wilayats, Mosul, is situated in the angle formed by the meeting of two mountain systems, the Armenian extension of Taurus on the north and Zagros on the north-east. Each of these systems is composed of numbers of more or less parallel ridges, those of the 'Taurus' having their axis east to west, those of the Zagros south-east to north-west.

[1] The original home of the family was Duwin in Armenia (*Minorsky: Studies in Caucasian History*, London 1953, pp. 116 et seq.). The Duwên 23 miles north of Arbil may perhaps represent a stage on its southward migration towards Takrit on the Tigris, where Saladin himself was born.

[2] In Turkey, on the other hand, the name wilayat was graded down to describe what used to be a sanjaq, and the title of Wali with it. In Egypt a Mudir is a senior official corresponding approximately to a Mutasarrif in Iraq.

The region is watered by the River Tigris and three major left-bank tributaries, the Tigris itself and the Great Zab from the 'Taurus', the Little Zab and the Sirwan from the Zagros.

The wilayat is bounded on the north-west, the north, and the north-east by three international frontiers; those of Syria, a conventional line across the Jezira, the Mesopotamian Plain properly so called, between the Tigris and the Euphrates; of Turkey well within the southerly folds of the Taurus; and of Persia where the boundary generally corresponds with the crest of the main chain of Zagros itself. The internal administrative boundary with the former wilayat of Baghdad is formed: on the south-east by the River Sirwan;[1] on the south-west, between the Sirwan and the Tigris, by the Jabal Hamrin, a low ridge rising about 500 feet above the plain and the last outlying fold of the Zagros system in this direction; and thence by a straight line westwards across the Jazira back to the Syrian frontier.

The Kurds of Iraq, as a homogeneous rural population, are concentrated mostly in the Mosul wilayat, which under the Turks had been divided into three liwas. After 1918 the number of liwas was increased to four:[2] Mosul beyond the Great Zab and its affluent, the Ru Kuchuk, to the Turkish and Syrian frontiers; Arbil between the Mosul boundary and the Little Zab; Kirkuk and Sulaimani south of the Little Zab. The two adjacent qazas of Khanaqin and Mandali, formerly included in the Baghdad wilayat and now subordinate to the post-1918 liwa of Diyala, also have large Kurdish populations.

Of the Kurdish principalities which I have just mentioned as having survived into the middle of the nineteenth century the territories of three are now in Iraq. Bahdinan comprised the mountainous northern qazas of the present liwa of Mosul: Zakho, Dohuk, Aqra, Amadiya and Zêbar.[3] Soran corresponded roughly with Arbil. Baban included the whole of Sulaimani and

[1]This leaves a narrow enclave, the qaza of Khanaqin, between the river and the Persian frontier, here a conventional line cutting across the axis of the geological folding.

[2]The original liwas were Mosul, Kirkuk and Sulaimani. In 1918 three qazas situated north of the Little Zab were separated from Kirkuk and formed into the independent liwa of Arbil. I use the terms liwa and qaza where possible; under the British military occupation the province of a Political Officer was called a 'Division', and that of an Assistant Political Officer (which corresponded sometimes to one and sometimes to two Turkish qazas) a 'District'.

[3]Dohuk in the conventional English spelling; Dihok is nearer the Kurdish. In 1944 Zêbar was divided between Mosul and Arbil.

part of Kirkuk. The qaza of Khanaqin is part of the old Pashaliq of Zuhab, which was a bone of contention between Turkey and Persia for several centuries until it was finally divided by the delimitation of 1913–14. Soran was always in close touch with Mukri (capital Sauj Bulaq, now Mahabad) and Baban with Ardelan (capital Senna).

The distribution of the dialects follows these political divisions fairly closely. For practical purposes one may say that they fall into two principal groups: Northern, comprising those of the country north and west of a line running from the southern shore of Lake Urmiya to the bend of the Great Zab where it changes direction from south-east to south-west, and thence down the course of that river to the Tigris confluence; and Southern, comprising those spoken between that line and the southern limits of Kurdistan as already defined. Southern Kurdish is further subdivided into two principal groups. Mukri (Mukri-Soran) and Sulaimani (Sulaimani-Ardelan). But there is no clear dividing line; the dialects merge into one another just as Southern Sulaimani merges into the speech of Kirmanshah and the Lakki of Northern Luristan.

Cutting across this geographical pattern there is yet another group of languages called Zaza in Turkey and Gorani in Iraq and Persia (or Macho-Macho by the Kurds themselves). Zaza is spoken in the extreme north-west, between Diyarbakr and Erzinjan. Gorani is spoken in Iraq by the Kakais near Tauq, some of the Zangana near Kifri and the Bajilan[1] near Khanaqin. In Persia the Hewraman tribes astride the main ridge of the Zagros west of Senna together with certain of their neighbours to the south as far as the Khanaqin-Kirmanshah high road form a Gorani-speaking wedge between Sulaimani and Ardelan. The European authorities generally maintain that Gorani is not Kurdish and that the people who speak it are not Kurds; but the people themselves feel themselves as Kurds in every way. It is a curious fact that whereas Bohtan and Mukri produced a voluminous literature in Northern and Southern Kurdish respectively, the poets at the court of the hereditary Walis of Ardelan, as well as the early poets of the Baban court at Sulaimani, invariably used Gorani for their compositions as a

[1]There is a group of Bajilan villages a few miles north-east of Mosul where Gorani is still spoken.

vehicle more civilized and polished than the rough dialect of their conversation.

The Northern Kurds generally call their language Kirmanji and the Southern Kurds call it Kurdi. Some European scholars use the name Kirmanji to describe both groups of dialects; this has certain advantages when it is desired to distinguish them from Gorani without any implication that Gorani-speakers are not Kurds.

Early Kurdish literature was not unnaturally restricted to poetry and folk-lore. The first known example of modern journalism seems to have been the publication in the northern dialect of Bohtan, by members of the princely family of Badr Khan, of a newspaper called *Kurdistan*; numbers appeared at long intervals between 1892 and 1902 in towns as far apart as Cairo, London, and, of all unlikely places, Folkestone. A fresh fillip was given to Kurdish literary activity by the Young-Turk revolution of 1908, and again after the war of 1914–18, when periodicals, anthologies, and the like were published at Constantinople in both the northern and the southern dialects.

Although Mukri, the Doric of Southern Kurdish, has retained a certain prestige, it is the lively and elastic idiom of Sulaimani that has now established itself as the standard vehicle of literary expression, not only in Iraq, but on the Persian side of the frontier also. This pre-eminence is probably due in part to the patronage extended to letters in the early part of the nineteenth century by the Baban princes, and in part to the later foundation at Sulaimani by the Turks of a military school, cadets from which went on to the academy and staff college at Constantinople, and so reached a standard of education denied to other Kurds; in 1918, moreover, it was at Sulaimani that Kurdish was first made the official language of the administration and it was, in consequence, Sulaimani that supplied a large proportion of the officials for the other Kurdish districts later on.

Since 1918, and particularly since 1925, there has come from presses at Sulaimani, Arbil and Ruwandiz as well as Baghdad a steady if not very prolific output of weekly and monthly journals, collections of poetry old and new, histories, and books on religion and politics. There are several contemporary poets of real merit, writing a very pure Kurdish without admixture

of Arabic and Persian words, whose work it is a real pleasure to read. During and immediately after the war of 1939–45, chiefly owing to the paper shortage, the small, independent publicist tended to disappear; but, in compensation, allied war propaganda was entrusted to real scholars, who succeeded to a remarkable degree in securing an orderly development of the language and in adapting it to the needs of the modern world.[1]

In Kurdistan a distinction is drawn between villagers who claim tribal origin and those who do not. In Mosul and Arbil non-tribal villagers are called Kirmanj; in Kirkuk and Sulaimani they are called Miskên; in some parts of Sulaimani they are also called Goran. Such Miskên[2] are sometimes almost serfs of the owner of the village and are supposed to submit meekly to the oppression of their tribal neighbours. Tribal villagers are referred to as 'Kurd' in contra-distinction to Miskên. I remember once spending the night at a village called Kelisa on the Little Zab; I was told that the villagers were extraordinary, indeed quite exceptional people, Kirmanj really but for all that very brave and ready to defend themselves against aggression.

All this seems to suggest that this region may have been inhabited in the not very distant past by a comparatively advanced Gorani-speaking people, that it was over-run by waves of rough Kurdi-speaking nomads who settled among them and imposed their authority and their speech (just as the early Indo-Aryans and the Iranians imposed themselves on other primitive peoples many centuries before), and that the tradition of domination and submission is not entirely forgotten among the conquering and the conquered stocks.[3]

For practical purposes one may nevertheless say that outside the towns Kurdish society is essentially tribal. Each tribe is divided into clans and sections. Sometimes the whole of a tribe

[1]See my two articles 'A Bibliography of Southern Kurdish 1920–1936' and 'A Bibliography of Southern Kurdish 1937–1944', in *J.R.C.A.S.*, Vol. XXIV, 1937, p. 487 and Vol. XXXII, 1945, p. 185.

[2]Except when the context demands otherwise Miskên is the most convenient name for this social class, since the words Kirmanj and Goran both have additional and conflicting meanings. Kirmanji, as we have just seen, is used to distinguish the dialects of the main groups from the Gorani. Goran is also the name of a group of tribes in Persia, and among the Bilbas tribes the word is used to denote 'robber'; in none of the three senses does it connote that the person so described necessarily speaks Gorani.

[3]Minorsky ('The Guran' in *B.S.O.A.S.*, Vol. XI, p. 1, 1943 p. 84) suggests that the Goran themselves, in the second half of the thirteenth century, replaced or overlay earlier Kurdish inhabitants in Shahrizur.

claims descent in the male line from a single ancestor. Sometimes it is the clan or section, or perhaps only the ruling family, that claims such descent, and the tribe is more a political or territorial unit. The tribal system is seen at its simplest among the true nomads, those who live throughout the year in black goat-hair tents, migrating with their flocks according to the seasons between the plains of Iraq and the highlands of Persia and Turkey; it is a wonderful experience to see them on the march driving along thousands of sheep and goats, their tents, cooking pots, sacks of grain and household impedimenta piled up on the backs of ponies, cattle and women; there are old men who will have made the journey 150 times or more, twice a year from birth to the grave, jolly young women sometimes carrying a rifle, babies with their faces poking out of saddle-bags shared with new-born kids and lambs, all moving along over the passes and through the defiles in one endless stream. But the majority of the Kurdish tribes are settled in villages and practice agriculture.

In many places the tribal system is breaking down as the result of close Government control; even so it will be worth while to describe the typical tribal organization as it once was or as it might be in theory. In every tribe there is a ruling family, the members of which bear the title of Agha (or Beg), placed after the name. There may be one paramount Agha, or there may be two or more claiming the allegiance of different clans or sections. In each village within the sphere of influence of the tribe there may be some junior member of the family installed as the Agha, or squire, of that village. The Agha is a kind of feudal baron who does no work with his hands; he lives on perquisites, which vary in different parts of the country.

The general idea is that every cultivator must pay the tithe of his crops and every flock-owner an animal tax called *koda* assessed on a count of heads. Where the central government is strong it takes these taxes direct; where there is no central government the Agha, as the local government, takes them. In Turkish times, when a central government existed but control was weak, the authorities would accept from the Agha a lump sum far less than the actual value of the tithe and the *koda*; the Agha would collect the full amount from the people and pocket the difference; very often the claim of an Agha to own land,

when analysed, turns out be based only on the fact that he was in former times the tax-farmer for the area. But the Agha has other perquisites. In the village of his residence he has to maintain a guest-house for the entertainment of travellers and this, of course, involves expense. In return he feels entitled to levy fines for misdemeanours and to call upon every man in the village to perform certain services without payment. Where the Agha belongs to a 'Kurd' family which has squatted on villages inhabited by 'Miskên' these exactions tend to become very vexatious.

Some Aghas have had the good sense to buy land in proper legal form. One who has done this can claim rent as the owner over and above the tithe. But if he has not done this, then, as the authority of the administration grows and the villagers refuse to submit to these impositions, he tends to become a serious social problem: he likes valuable horses, a rifle and revolver with plenty of ammunition, bright clothes and good food, but he no longer has the wherewithal to procure them or the means to dispense the hospitality which tradition and honour demand.

In the villages Kurdish women probably have as bad a time as any of their neighbours in the Middle East, being saddled with much of the drudgery; amongst the most unpleasant of their tasks must be that of carrying on their backs leaky skins of icy water early in the morning from the village spring to the house—this is something a man is never seen doing. But among the ruling families it is quite common for strong-minded women to come forward and play an important part in tribal politics. The most famous of all such women is probably the Lady Adila of Halabja; of her and of others of similar kidney at Sulaimani I shall have a good deal to say in the chapters that follow. Near Ruwandiz there was another lady, well-known to Political Officers, named Fatima Khan who, after the death of her husband, administered a group of eight villages; she transacted every kind of business with the Government herself and was regularly chosen by the villagers to vote on their behalf at the parliamentary elections, although the law said quite clearly that only males were entitled to take part either as primary or secondary electors. There is no doubt that great potential ability lies latent in the make-up of the average Kurdish

woman. From the outset of our administration there was a constant and pressing popular demand for the opening of schools for girls, and in the villages (even in a town as large as Koi) it was quite usual for enlightened parents to send their daughters, up to the age of twelve or thirteen, to attend and sit in class with the boys. The right of women to equal status with men has long been a favourite topic for articles in the periodical Kurdish press. Owing to the political troubles and other unfavourable circumstances the provision of public instruction for girls was delayed in the Kurdish districts of Iraq, but there is now issuing from the schools in the towns a new generation of educated and progressive young women who, if the character of their mothers and grandmothers is any guide, will soon make up for lost time and will not fail to play a worthy and influential part in the life of their country.

II INTRODUCTORY: THE GEOGRAPHY OF SOUTHERN KURDISTAN

In the course of the narrative that follows I shall be taking the reader on short excursions to Arbil and Mosul, but I never held a permanent administrative appointment in those liwas; the following preliminary description of the geography of Southern Kurdistan will be confined to the liwas of Kirkuk and Sulaimani, where my direct responsibilities lay and where most of the events chronicled in this book took place.[1]

Although the Tigris, and its tributaries for some distance above their confluences, could be used for down-stream traffic by raft, and the Germans had begun to build the railway along the line of the Tigris, the principal artery of communication and trade between the cities of Baghdad and Mosul was, at the time of which I am writing, still the ancient high road with its string of Turkoman towns already mentioned. To the south-west of the road, as far as the Jabal Hamrin, the land is flat or

[1] A description of the Ranya district north of the Little Zab is deferred to Chapter XVI. Changes in the Middle East have been so rapid since 1919 that I have often found difficulty in deciding whether to use the present or the past tense. In general I have not attempted to keep pace with changes which may have taken place since 1945, when I finally left Iraq. I must ask the reader's indulgence for any inconsistency he may detect in my use of the tenses.

gently undulating. But on the other side the ground begins at once to swell up in a puckered maze of rather formless foothills intersected by innumerable watercourses, rising and falling like a choppy sea with great waves lifting themselves here and there to a considerable height until they finally break against the precipitous grey cliffs of the Qara Dagh range. The geological folding of the whole region is consistently in a direction from south-east to north-west and is distinguishable even in this broken country of sandstone, shale, gypsum and conglomerate, notably in such uplifts as the Aj Dagh (a ridge of eocene limestone about twenty-five miles long and reaching 4,500 feet at its highest point) in Sangaw, and Khalkhalan in Shuwan near the Zab.[1]

In summer and autumn the predominating colour of the country is almost uniformly sepia or terra-cotta, and its aspect could hardly be more desolate. But in spring the surface is covered with lush grass and countless varieties of wildflowers, and its broken nature provides delightful and sheltered nooks for the black goat-hair tents, not only of the nomads but also of the now settled villagers, who are still accustomed to move out from their flea-infested villages at this season.

The Qara Dagh (4,500–6,150 feet, eocene limestone) marks the geographical boundary between two entirely different types of country; it constitutes a barrier which must have been of great strategic importance in all ages. The distance from the Sirwan to the Zab along this line is about eighty miles. In addition to the tracks at each end down by the rivers it is crossed by three famous passes: Paikuli (3,700 feet) about five miles from the Sirwan; Sagirma (5,000 feet) about twenty-four miles from Paikuli and on the main caravan route from Baghdad to Sulaimani and Tabriz; and, twenty-seven miles farther on, the Darband-i Bazyan[2] (3,000 feet). At a point about ten miles from the Zab the straight line of the now much diminished barrier is interrupted and replaced by two lesser hogbacks set in echelon, Qirina (highest point 2,800 feet), and Khakharhê (highest point 3,950 feet) which falls to the river just east of Taqtaq, the ferry on the track from Kirkuk to Koi.

[1]From this point onwards the name 'Zab' without the qualifying adjective is to be understood as denoting the Little Zab.

[2]In Kurdish the word darband (*derbend*) generally denotes a gap in a range or ridge as distinct from a pass (*geruw*) over a col, or a long defile or gully (*geliy*).

Beyond the Qara Dagh four more principal parallel chains may be distinguished, each an anticline with axis south-east to north-west. In Kurdistan the names of mountain ranges vary from sector to sector (often after a prominent peak, a pass, a holy man's tomb, or a village at the foot) and sometimes according to the side on which the speaker lives or happens to be standing.[1] For the purposes of a general description, therefore, one or two of the more familiar sectors must be selected to serve for the whole, and I shall accordingly call the next three chains for the moment: Beranan-Binzird (4,500–5,300 feet), Azmir-Qarasird (4,900–5,600 feet), and Kurhakazhaw-Gojar-Kurkur-Asos (many peaks between 6,000 and 8,000 feet); the fourth is the *chaîne magistrale* of Zagros itself. The most conspicuous mountain of all, Pira Magrun (9,700 feet),[2] is a detached uplift of the older cretaceous limestone and stands apart from but close to Azmir-Qarasird (also of cretaceous limestone), north-west of Sulaimani town. To the south-east the limestone of Azmir plunges under the level of the valley; Kurhakazhaw also disappears, but only after both have thrown out spurs to meet each other and other spurs from the *chaîne magistrale*, here called Hewraman (highest peak 9,800 feet), so as to form an effective watershed between the basins of the Sirwan and the Zab. As a result of the disappearance of these two ridges the valley in which the town of Sulaimani is situated, that between Beranan and Azmir, broadens out towards the south-east into the wide expanse of Shahrizur, bounded on the south-west by Beranan as before but commanded on the north-east by the majestic wall of Hewraman which, at a point east of Khurmal where the crest is still 1,400 feet lower than the highest peak, rises 6,500 feet above the level of the plain in a distance of four miles.

The drainage of the country beyond the Qara Dagh flows either to the Sirwan or to the Zab, both affluents of the Tigris, with one exception: a stream called the Tainal, which waters the middle part of the first valley, cuts a narrow gorge, the

[1]The name Qara Dagh, Black Mountain in Turkish, is correct for the first range along 70 miles of its length, but it is also known by sectional names: 'of Paikuli', 'of Sagirma', 'of Hanjira' (a village), and, beyond the Darband-i Bazyan, 'Qênasê'.

[2]In the old Turkish almanacks this mountain is named Pir Umar Gudrun, but the ordinary Kurds always use the name given in the text, deriving it from Pir-i Ma Gudrun (Our Spiritual Director, Gudrun). I have adopted the useful term '*chaîne magistrale*' for the main Zagros chain from the proceedings of the Boundary Commission of 1913–14.

Darband-i Basira, through its southern wall and flows southwards into the plains past Tauq where it is known as the Tauq Chai; it is then joined by two streams that rise in the foothill region, the Khasa (on which stands the city of Kirkuk) from the west and the Aw-a Spi (which flows through Tuz Khurmatu) from the east, and the combined waters, now called the Adhaim, break through the Jabal Hamrin to reach the Tigris about seventy miles up-stream of Baghdad.

Both the Sirwan and the Zab are rivers of some economic importance. The principal branch of the Sirwan rises far to the east near Asadabad, the lofty pass on the Kirmanshah–Hamadan road, and tacks through the mountains in a tortuous course until it forces its way through the *chaîne magistrale* between the Hewraman and the next sector to the south-east, Shaho (highest peak 10,757 feet).[1] South of Halabja, for about twenty miles, its median line is the international boundary. Soon after entering Iraq it is joined by the Tanjaro, the Crown River, from the Sulaimani valley and Shahrizur, and, breaking through Beranan and its south-easterly extension of Khoshik, swings southwestwards to form the administrative boundary between Sulaimani and Kirkuk on the right bank and Khanaqin on the left. Timber is floated down-stream from Kurdistan, and below the Jabal Hamrin the river, now named Diyala, feeds a rich and elaborate system of irrigation canals. The confluence with the Tigris is eighteen miles down-stream of Baghdad.

The Zab also rises in Persia, on the eastern slopes of Zagros south-west of Lake Urmiya. It runs for some eighty miles parallel with the mountains, first as the Lawên and then as the Cham-i Kalwê;[2] it then suddenly turns north-west and carves a way successively, first in a zig-zag through the frontier range into Iraq near Qala Diza, then at Darband-i Ramkan through the ridge of Kurkur-Asos and its continuation the Kêwarhesh, then, having turned south, through the Qarasird and its continuation, Kosrat, near Dukan; entering the foothill country it flows on, first westwards and then south-westwards, past the island township of Altun Köprü and eventually into the Tigris about twenty miles up-stream of the Fatha gorge (where that river breaks through the Jabal Hamrin) and about 200 miles

[1] The Kurds sometimes use this name to denote the whole range.
[2] The name is properly 'Kalu'; 'Kalwê' is the form of the oblique case.

tions, Pira Magrun with Mount Nisir where in the Babylonian Epic the ship of Gilgemish rested after the flood, Darband-i Bazyan with the pass of Babite forced by Ashurnasirpal on his several expeditions against Zamua, the Qara Dagh region as the habitat of the Lullu who were subdued by Naram Sin of Akkad, and (a remarkable survival if it is correct) the Kullar mountain with Kolara, a sector of Kurkur-Asos in the hair-pin bend of the Zab near Darband-i Ramkan. The village of Khurmal eight miles north-east of Halabja and the great mound of Yasin Tapa on the Tanjaro eighteen miles south-east of Sulaimani have been rivals for identification with the Sasanian town of Nim-Rah, 'Half-way House' between Ctesiphon (eighteen miles south of Baghdad) and the important fire-temple of Shiz in Azarbaijan, and with Shahrizur, the capital of the mediaeval Kurdish principality of that name.[1] In the plains and valleys numerous artificial mounds await the excavator's spade to deliver up their secrets and, as this narrative proceeds, I shall have occasion to describe several rock carvings and other memorials of great interest.

The middle years of the nineteenth century are the Golden Age of exploration in the Middle East, and most of the giants of those days were Englishmen. There is a certain type of traveller, all too familiar at the present time, who no sooner finds himself a short distance from his own beaten track than he claims to be the first European ever to have been to such and such a place. A little research would have shown him how shallow and ridiculous such claims are. It is quite astonishing to find to what remote and unexpected places our enterprising forbears used to penetrate in the far more difficult conditions of a hundred or more years ago. Some of them were men of great erudition steeped in the classics, and seem to have had present in their minds as they journeyed all the problems of geography posed by the Greek and Latin authors of antiquity. Their narratives are a never-ending source of delight, and I confess that for my part I have been far more thrilled by the thought that I was following in the tracks of a Rich, a Layard or a Rawlinson than by any idea that I might be standing where no traveller from

[1]For the ancient identifications see in particular E. A. Speiser, 'Southern Kurdistan in the Annals of Ashurnasirpal' in the *Annals of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, vol. viii for 1926–7, who quotes the principal authorities.

floods after heavy rain or during the thaw. In the absence of control plains like Shahrizur and Bitwên tend to become waterlogged and dangerously malarious. Of the spring I have already spoken; it is a lovely season everywhere. The autumn is just the opposite for, if the summer is of shorter duration than in lower Iraq, it seems to die very slowly and, except near water and in the higher altitudes, the countryside remains parched and dusty until the first rains, which can hardly be expected, even in small quantities, before mid-October, and may be delayed until late November or even December. The climate at Sulaimani itself, which occupies a middle position in both location and altitude, is (perhaps exceptionally) temperate; I have no complete statistics, but, according to a note I have preserved of observations made there in 1920, the rainfall for the year was 23.8 inches, the temperature fell to freezing point on only a few days in February, and the maximum never once reached 100°F.

The economy of the region is primarily agricultural and pastoral. The principal winter crops are wheat and barley, of which in good years there is a small exportable surplus. In summer wherever there is water the villagers persist in growing rice for their own needs in spite of official discouragement and the grave prejudice to health from malaria which is directly traceable to it. The most valuable money crop is tobacco, of which the Sulaimani district alone then produced between 2,500 and 3,000 tons a year. Minor summer crops are maize, millet and lentils. The nomadic tribes in particular are rich in sheep and goats. Other local products are wool, walnuts, raisins, oak-galls and gum tragacanth. There is a small transit trade with Persia, the principal import being carpets, samovars, china and dyes as well as the same local products just mentioned. Baghdad is almost exclusively the market for all these commodities. The development of the oil industry, with its centre at Kirkuk city itself, began several years after the time of which I am now writing.

The whole district is rich in associations with the ancient monarchies to which I have alluded in the preceding chapter, and with the primitive peoples whom they dominated or absorbed. Among many other places archaeologists have identified the city of Kirkuk with Arrapha of the second millenium B.C., the Sulaimani region with the Zamua of the Assyrian inscrip-

up-stream of Baghdad. In its lower reaches, west of Kirkuk, the Zab also once fed an ancient irrigation system, which has recently been partially revived. It has always been an artery of communication, not only for floating timber but also for rafts of inflated skins, called *kalak*, which can still carry grain and other north-country produce more cheaply than any other form of transport.

The town of Sulaimani is situated seventy-seven miles east of Kirkuk at an altitude of 2,750 feet. In 1919 it was approached by a single road fit for wheels, that running from Kirkuk through the foothills to Chamchemal and thence through the Qara Dagh by the Darband-i Bazyan and over the Beranan by the Tasluja pass into the Tanjaro valley. In dry weather cars with high clearance like the original 'Tin-Lizzie' Ford could pick their way on down the valley and across Shahrizur another forty-five miles to Halabja. Other important mule tracks were those from Khanaqin and Kifri up the valley of the Sirwan to Halabja, and that from Kifri through Ibrahim Khanchi in the broken country, and then over the Qara Dagh and Beranan by the Sagirma and Gilazarda passes to Sulaimani. Small caravans traded with Persia by way of Halabja, Pênjwin or Mawat. Farther north a more frequented caravan route connected Koi with Ranya, Qala Diza, and Sardasht in Persia.[1]

The two liwas between them display, as would be expected, a great variety of climatic conditions. In the south the torrid summer heat is little less intense than that of Baghdad, and even in the upland valleys the temperature may be unpleasantly high at altitudes below 5,000 feet. For three months of the year much of the highlands is snow-bound, and in places the snow on the shady side of the mountains never melts. The rainy season, both in the hills and in the plain, lasts from about November to April, but beyond the Qara Dagh thunder showers are not infrequent even in the middle of summer. On the whole the country is well watered from springs and mountain streams. Communications are liable to be interrupted by torrents and

[1]Since 1919 the main road from Kirkuk through to Halabja has been metalled and tarred, and an all-weather road has been constructed to run from Sulaimani north-westwards to the Zab at Dukan and thence, with three ferry crossings to Qala Diza. These and other gradual developments, combined with the extension of rail-head first to Kifri, then to Kirkuk, and recently to Arbil have naturally influenced the choice of favoured routes from time to time, but the general direction of all commercial movement remains the same—to and from Baghdad.

the west had ever stood before. Up to 1914, whereas British and other foreign visitors to those parts of Kurdistan which now lie in Turkey, Persia or the extreme north of Iraq, were quite numerous, those who penetrated to the by no means inaccessible districts between the line of the Qara Dagh and Haiba Sultan on the south-west and the Persian frontier on the north-east, and recorded their journeys, were comparatively few, perhaps because there were no politically ambitious or persecuted Christian minorities in that part of the Ottoman Empire and therefore no missionaries[1] and no consuls. I shall frequently wish to refer to the narratives of the pioneers who did so, and I think that I cannot do better than conclude this chapter by giving a list of the seventeen British travellers whose publications I have traced, with a short note on the circumstances of each journey and the itinerary followed.[2]

Lieutenant William Heude of the Madras Military Establishment (*A Voyage up the Persian Gulf and a Journey Overland from India to England in 1817*, London, 1819) travelled with a Tatar messenger from Baghdad by the Deli Abbas and Qara Tapa road to Kifri, and thence by way of Ibrahim Khanchi and the Sagirma Pass to Sulaimani (9th March 1817), the Surdash valley, Dukan, Koi, Arbil and Mosul. He seems not to have stayed more than one night at any one place, and the Baban Pasha of Sulaimani happened to be away when he passed through. Each march is briefly described and the names of the stages given, generally with a few remarks, appreciative or critical, regarding his reception.

Sir Robert Ker Porter, painter and traveller (*Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Ancient Babylonia, etc.*, London, 1822), left Baghdad on the 2nd December 1818, and followed the usual road to Kifri and on through Tauq, Kirkuk and the Bazyan Pass to Sulaimani (12–13th December); thence by the Qayawan Pass over Azmir-Qarasird to the Qashan Bridge, Mawat, the Tayit ford across the Zab, Sardasht, Sauj Bulaq and Tabriz.

[1] The confessional as distinct from the welfare activities of missionaries in Kurdistan have been directed to the indigenous Christians, Armenian and Assyrian, rather than to the Muslim Kurdish majority. Of the various denominations working in this field only the Archbishop of Canterbury's Anglican mission has sought not to make proselytes but rather to educate the people and purify their spiritual life within the ancient branch of the Church owing allegiance to the Patriarch of the East.

[2] In this connexion I recall with gratitude the help I received some years ago from Sir Arnold Wilson while he was compiling his *Bibliography of Persia*. A very full bibliography subsequently became available in Minorsky's article on 'Sulaimani' in the *E.I.*

Claudius James Rich, the Hon. East India Company's Resident at Baghdad (*Narrative of a Residence in Kurdistan*, London, 1836, edited by his widow), having accepted an invitation from Mahmud Pasha Baban, left Baghdad in April 1820, accompanied by his wife and an imposing retinue composed of the Residency Indian Guard and numerous servants. Travelling by way of Deli Abbas, Tuz Khurmatu, Tauq, Lailan and Chamchemal they reached Sulaimani on the 10th May, and left again on the 17th July in search of a cooler climate in the mountains to the north-east. This tour took them across Serochik to Pênjwin and thence to Mariwan, Senna and Bana in Persia before they returned by way of Alan and Shar Bazhêr to Sulaimani (15th September). They finally took leave of their host on the 21st October and, after marching from Darband-i Bazyan across Shuwan to Altun Köprü, followed the main road through Arbil and Eski Kalak to Mosul (31st October). They spent the four winter months in the Mosul district and finally left on the 3rd March 1821 by raft down the Tigris for Baghdad. Rich was well read in the classics, an indefatigable explorer and a keen observer. His *Narrative* is a mine of information on the geography, history and antiquities of all the country through which he passed.

A. N. Groves, the Plymouth Brother missionary (*Journal of Mr. Anthony N. Groves, Missionary, during a Journey from London to Baghdad*, London 1831, quoted in the *Memoir of the late Anthony Norris Groves* compiled by his widow; 2nd ed. London 1857), travelled through Russia and the Caucasus to Tabriz, and thence by way of Bana, Sulaimani (November 1829), and (probably by Sagirma) to Kifri. Only three or four pages are devoted to the journey through Kurdistan.

Captain R. Mignan of the Bombay Army (*A Winter Journey . . . into Koordistaun*, London 1839), returning with his wife from leave, travelled overland through the Caucasus and reached Tabriz at the end of March, 1830. His itinerary through Kurdistan took him to Miyanduab, Bana, Sulaimani (left 14th April), the Sagirma Pass (he says Darband-i Bazyan but it was clearly Sagirma), Ibrahim Khanchi and Kifri. The descriptions of the country and the people are of a general nature and very few names of persons or places are mentioned. He alludes to a journey along much the same route made without his wife two years earlier, no doubt on his way home.

James Baillie Fraser (*Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia, etc.*, London 1840), returning from a diplomatic mission to Persia where he had already toured extensively, left Tabriz on the 11th October 1834, and travelled through Salmas, Urmiya, Ushnu, Sauj Bulaq,

Sardasht, then by Ker Porter's route in reverse to Sulaimani (31st October), Qara Dagh village, and the ordinary caravan route by Sagirma to Baghdad. Fraser is now almost completely forgotten, and the *Dictionary of National Biography* is scathing about the value of his explorations. But he was an experienced traveller with an eye for topography, and a writer by profession; his descriptions of men and places still have considerable interest for students of Kurdistan.

Lieut.-Colonel J. Sheil, second in command of a British military mission to Persia and later H.M. Minister at Tehran ('Notes on a Journey from Tabriz through Kurdistan . . . to Suleimaniyeh in July and August 1836', *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. VIII, 1836), travelled through what is still Turkish Kurdistan to Zakho, and thence to Aqra, Zêbar, Bahirka, Arbil, Kirkuk and Sulaimani. The first part of the route is described in some detail, but the narrative becomes more and more summary as it proceeds, until it ends with the tantalizingly short paragraph: 'From Suleimaniyeh I travelled in a N.N.E. direction about 200 miles by a well-known road to Sardasht, Lahijan, So'uk Bulak, by Maragha to Tabriz'.

Major H. C. Rawlinson of the Bombay Army ('Notes on a March from Zohab . . . to Khuzistan . . . in the year 1836', *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. IX, 1839; and 'Note on Paikuli', *J.R.A.S.* 1868), when commanding a Goran regiment of the Persian Army, visited the districts of Shamiran and Haurain-Shaikhan from Khanaqin in 1836. Eight years later, as the Hon. East India Company's Resident and Consul-General at Baghdad, he made the journey described by Felix Jones (see below); after parting from Jones at Sulaimani he marched to Qara Dagh and then turned south-east down the valley of that name to examine the ruin at Paikuli[1] before following the right bank of the Sirwan as far as Qala Shirwana, where he crossed and made for Khanaqin. His famous paper in the *J.R.G.S.* gives a detailed and learned description of the geography and people of the whole Zuhab region.

W. F. Ainsworth (*A Personal Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition*, London 1888) was surgeon and geologist with Colonel Chesney's expedition. After the rest of the party had gone home he left Baghdad on the 1st February 1837, and, following the usual main road through Kifri and Kirkuk, marched to Sulaimani (14th–17th February) and thence to Mosul by the same route as Heude. He devotes much attention to historical geography.

Commander Felix Jones of the Royal Indian Navy (*Narrative of a Journey to the Frontier of Turkey and Persia through a Part of Kurdistan*,

[1]See pp. 164–7 below.

Bombay, 1857) left Baghdad on the 19th August 1844 with Major Rawlinson and marched by the main caravan route to Kirmanshah and Bisutun. On the return journey they left the main road at Harunabad and took a track farther to the north-east across the Goran country to Zuhab, and thence through Shamiran to Halabja and Sulaimani (25th–29th September). Here he was obliged by illness to part from Rawlinson and return to Baghdad by the shortest, the Sagirma, track. The paper gives the most careful descriptions of the routes followed and discusses the geography and the tribes in great detail, with frequent references to the classical authors. This tour was made for the specific purpose of collecting information for the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission then sitting at Erzurum (see Chapter X below).

Captain F. R. Maunsell, R.A. ('Kurdistan', *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. III, 1894) describes in the text of his article a journey from Erzurum (26th August 1892) across Turkish Kurdistan to Jezirat-ibn-Umar, thence by raft to Baghdad, and then via Qasr-i Shirin to Ibrahim Khanchi and Sulaimani. The map annexed to the article shows, in addition to extensive travels in Turkish and Persian Kurdistan, journeys to Dukan, Darband-i Ramkan, Qala Diza, the Shawur Valley, Ruwandiz, Harir, Zêbar, Amadiya, Dohuk, Mosul, Arbil and Koi Sanjaq; these journeys were made in 1888 and are described in an official publication, *Reconnaissances in Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, North-West Persia and Luristan*, 2 vols., Simla, 1890.

Captain Mark Sykes (*Dar-ul-Islam*, London 1904) made the journey described in this book in the year 1902 (he had previously 'done' the high-road from Mosul to Kirkuk and Baghdad with one excursion eastwards from Arbil as far as Koi). From Jezirat-ibn-Umar he entered what is now Iraq at Zakho and marched to Amadiya, Aqra, Mosul, Sharqat, Makhmur, Altun Köprü, Kirkuk, Sulaimani (stayed nine days, no dates given), Dukan, Koi, Ranya, Shawur, the Bêjan Pass, Ruwandiz, Mêrgasur, Barzan, Zêbar, Amadiya, and thence to Van and Ararat. Sykes was interested in Ottoman administration and collected much tribal information which, elementary and incomplete as it may now seem, was for many parts of Kurdistan an important source of our knowledge when Turkey entered the war in 1915. His highly developed sense of the ridiculous adds spice to the narrative of what was then a useful piece of exploration.

Captain Bertram Dickson, R.A. ('Journeys in Kurdistan', *G.J.*, Vol. XXXV, 1910) was H.M. Vice-Consul at Van. The article appears to be based on journeys made in 1909; it gives no routes but

is an admirably succinct description of Kurdistan as a whole, including the Sulaimani district.

E. B. Soane (*Through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise*, London 1912) travelled in 1909, disguised as a Persian. After floating down the Tigris by raft from Diyarbakr to Mosul he marched to Arbil, Kirkuk and Sulaimani, spending only a day or two at each place. He seldom mentions a date, but he evidently stayed for several weeks at Halabja, whence he made one excursion to Biyara in the Hewraman. On the return journey he stopped at Sulaimani rather longer than on the way out, perhaps a fortnight, and then went by way of Kirkuk to Altun Köprü, and thence by raft down the Zab and the Tigris to Baghdad. Soane collected a mass of historical material regarding the country through which he travelled. His previous experience of the neighbouring districts of Persian Kurdistan, his knowledge of the languages, and the fact of his passing as a Muslim, combined to give the contemporary information he recorded a special authority.

Captain T. C. W. Fowle of the 40th Pathans, Indian Army (*Travels in the Middle East*, London 1916) made a round trip, perhaps in 1910, from Kifri to Kirkuk and Sulaimani by the main roads and back 'over the Qara Dagh'; no other place names and no personal names or dates at all are mentioned. Of Sulaimani he tells us only that the town 'shrank from observation in a large hollow in the ground' and that 'its people, too, were altogether given over to their barbarous Kurdish language so that I could rarely find one to understand me addressing them in Arabic'. A light-hearted, pleasantly-written book, but of no documentary value.

G. E. Hubbard of H.M. Levant Consular Service (*From the Gulf to Ararat*, Edinburgh, 1916) was Secretary to the British Delegation on the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission of 1914. The greater part of this frontier, about 750 miles from Mandali to Ararat, runs through Kurdistan and the author, in addition to an amusing history of the efforts made to solve the secular dispute between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, and of the lighter side of the work of delimitation, gives an excellent description of the country and people.

Colonel G. H. D. Ryder, Chief of the Survey Party on the same Commission and later Surveyor-General of India ('The Demarcation of the Turco-Persian Boundary in 1913–14', *G.J.*, Vol. LXVI, 1925), recorded a short description of the work of the Commission.[1]

[1] A. T. Wilson, who was Deputy British Commissioner and later Commissioner, refers briefly to the work of the Commission in Chapter X of his *South-West Persia*, London, 1941.

I can offer no explanation of the strange gap of forty-four years between Rawlinson and Jones in 1844 and Maunsell in 1888.

The earliest European traveller to our district whose name I have traced (if indeed he was a European) is Fr. Fidelis of the Carmelite Mission in Mesopotamia, who returned to Baghdad in June 1749 'from Karachulan where he had given a mission'. 'He found there a number of Armenian families who had run away from Hamadan; he was able to convert one, but it was not the same with Nestorian families who for the most part made their profession of faith; he made some progress also at Kirkuk.' (H. G. Chick, *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia*, London 1939, p. 1261.)

I have not attempted to make a complete list of European travellers other than British, but give the names of five to whose records I shall have occasion to refer;[1] it so happens that the first three fall into the blank period of the British list.

Colonel E. J. Chirikov (*Putevoyzhurnal*, 1849–52) was the Russian delegate on the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission of those years and travelled, of course, the whole length of the frontier region.

A. Clément ('Excursion dans le Kourdistan Méridional de Kerkout à Ravandouz', *Le Globe: Mémoires de la Société de Géographie de Genève*, 1886), for many years a resident in Baghdad where he made the acquaintance of the several important Kurdish personages who came to visit the last of the Baban princes in his exile. His journey, made under these favourable auspices, took him from Kifri to Kirkuk and thence by Bazyan to Sulaimani (July 1856). Hence he made two excursions: the first across Serochik to Pênjwin, thence along the frontier north-westwards through Shiwakal to Alan and back through Qashan, and the Qayawan Pass over Azmir, to Sulaimani; the second through Surdash to Dukan, Koi, Balisan, Ruwandiz, the frontier near Rayat, Sidekan, the Ruwandiz gorge, Arbil and thence by the high road to Khanaqin.

C. de Korab Brzezowski ('Itinéraire de Souleimanieh à Amadieh, 1869', *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris*, viime série, Vol. XIII, 1892) was a forest officer in the service of Midhat Pasha, Wali of Baghdad. He travelled in 1869 by way of Kifri and Sagirma to Sulaimani whence he climbed Pira Magrun and made excursions to

[1] If any American recorded a visit to the region in question before 1915 I have not traced him.

Shar Bazhêr, Pênjwin and Marga before marching by a route o which he gives no details to Ruwandiz and thence to Amadiya.

E. Herzfeld, the German archaeologist ('Die Aufnahme des sasanidischen Denkmals von Paikuli' in the *Proceedings of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences*, 1914), travelled: in June 1911 from Qasr-i Shirin to Haurain, and, after crossing the Sirwan at Ban-i Khêlan, on to Paikuli, Qara Dagh, Sulaimani, Chamchemal and Kirkuk; and in July 1913 from Kifri to Ibrahim Khanchi, Paikuli, Ban-i Khêlan and Qasr-i Shirin.

V. Minorsky was Russian delegate on the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission of 1914 and thus a colleague of A. T. Wilson and Ryder. Numerous articles in the *E.I.* and the journals of learned societies attest his encyclopaedic first-hand knowledge of Southern Kurdistan, on which he is an authority in a class by himself.

III FRASER'S FORCE

On the night of the 10th August 1914 the German cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau*, having eluded the British naval forces in the Mediterranean, passed through the Dardanelles to Constantinople. On the 29th October the cruisers sallied out into the Black Sea and bombarded several Russian ports; Russia thereupon declared war on Turkey and, on the 5th November, Great Britain with France followed suit. Since September it had been obvious that Turkey was about to enter the war on the German side and His Majesty's Government had reluctantly agreed to the dispatch of an expeditionary force from India to Bahrain in the Persian Gulf (it sailed from Bombay on the 16th October) to await developments. On the 6th November, accordingly, a brigade of the 6th (Poona) Division under Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain landed at Fao at the mouth of the Shatt-al-Arab river, and after some fighting occupied Basra, the second city of Turkish Arabia. Lieut.-Colonel (later Major-General) Sir Percy Cox, who had served from 1904 to 1913 as Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and since the beginning of the year as Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, accompanied the expedition as Chief Political Officer (C.P.O.).

The war with Turkey lasted just four years, but it would be

beyond the scope of this book to trace even in outline the reasons for the progressive extension of the objectives assigned to Indian Expeditionary Force 'D' or the vicissitudes of the Mesopotamia campaign. An armistice was signed on board H.M.S. *Agamemnon* at Mudros on the 30th October 1918 and hostilities ceased from noon on the following day. The British troops pursuing the defeated enemy up the Tigris were then at Qaiyara, forty miles south of the city of Mosul. They were also in occupation of the line of towns on the high road between Khanaqin and Altun Köprü; of these Kifri had been held since the 28th April, Kirkuk and the towns between had been occupied on the 7th May, evacuated on the 24th, and reoccupied only five days before the armistice. In spite of the protests of the Turkish commander Mosul itself was occupied on the 3rd November, after the armistice but in full conformity with the terms of article 16, and Turkish troops were required to be clear of the whole wilayat of Mosul within ten days.

British policy at that time was to avoid commitments in the hills by setting up one or several semi-autonomous Kurdish provinces to be loosely attached to whatever regular administration might ultimately be established in the plains. Since the occupation of Kifri our political officers had been in continuous correspondence with prominent Kurds of the Kirkuk and Sulaimani liwas, in particular with a certain Shaikh Mahmud Barzinji, the head of the leading Saiyid family of Southern Kurdistan. As soon as the way was clear, therefore, Major E. W. Noel, was sent to Sulaimani to implement this policy and to set up a temporary system of administration which, it was hoped, would be accepted by the people. The Shaikh was informed that any Kurdish communities or tribes between the Sirwan and Great Zab rivers wishing to accept his leadership would be allowed to do so. But it soon became evident that he had overestimated his popularity, and his province was eventually restricted to the liwa of Sulaimani plus certain adjacent districts of the liwa of Kirkuk. He was given the title of Hukmdar, Ruler, with a Political Officer (P.O.) to advise him; Assistant Political Officers (A.P.O.) were posted to the qazas of Chamchemal, Halabja and Ranya; other officers were seconded to raise and train a military force to be called the 'Sulaimani Levy'; the police were also to be organized on modern lines.

Shaikh Mahmud lost no time in showing that he was going to be a problem. He resented the restriction of his authority to the district just described. Even in Turkish times, as an unofficial citizen, he had terrorized the town through his gangs of roughs and, now that he was officially the Ruler, he was quite incapable of understanding the restraints put upon him even by Noel's mild advisory régime. In April 1919 it was decided to modify the original policy and to introduce an administration more like that of the rest of the occupied territories. Noel was given another assignment after his own heart, again a roving commission but in Northern Kurdistan beyond the boundaries of the Mosul wilayat[1], and was replaced by Major E. B. Soane from Khanaqin, a man of very different temperament.

Soane had had first hand experience of Sulaimani society when he was there in disguise in 1907 and so took up his duties with no illusions regarding the character of the man with whom he would have to deal. Shaikh Mahmud, on his side, sensed at once that he was to be shorn of most of his prerogatives and lost no time in organizing a revolt, in which all the members of the numerous Barzinji family with their adherents, important elements of the Hamawand and Jaf tribes, as well as riflemen from the Hewraman across the Persian frontier, took part. The secret had been well kept; the tribal *lashkars* surprised Sulaimani at dawn on the 23rd May, the half-trained Levies (who were officially under the command of the Hukmdar's brother, Colonel Shaikh Qadir, and not that of their British instructors) melted away, and in a few hours Mahmud had obtained control of the town, seized the Treasury, imprisoned all the British personnel who happened to be present, and hoisted his flag, a red crescent on a green ground, in place of the Union Jack over the Political Office. Fortunately for himself (for Mahmud would probably not have hesitated to kill the man he regarded as his arch-enemy) Soane had left on the previous day for Kirkuk on his way to meet his wife at Basra. The A.P.O. at Halabja, Flight-Lieutenant G. M. Lees, was able to withdraw

[1]Sir A. Ryan in his book *The Last of the Dragomans* (London, 1951, pp. 141–2), mentions how very embarrassing the High Commission at Constantinople found this mission. The Sultan's government had indeed sent instructions to the local authorities to facilitate it, but it coincided with the extension of *de-facto* nationalist authority over the eastern wilayats of Anatolia.

to Khanaqin before the rebels took over that place on the 26th.

There was a small garrison of Imperial troops at Kirkuk and, pending the concentration of a larger force, the Officer Commanding was ordered to send a detachment along the road as far as Chamchemal. Underestimating the fighting qualities of the Kurds and disregarding his orders he decided to push on to Sulaimani with some cavalry, Iraq Levies, armoured cars, and Ford vans mounting Lewis guns. At the Tasluja pass, twelve miles from the town, he was attacked from all sides and compelled to retire. The Kurds followed up the retreating force for twenty-five miles, inflicting severe casualties; four armoured cars and nineteen vans were lost. This unfortunate incident naturally added fuel to the fire. Many waverers joined Mahmud; and even across the border tribes of Persian allegiance rose against their Government, demanding incorporation in a Kurdish state under the Shaikh.

It was now clear that a full-scale operation would be required to restore the situation, and the task was entrusted to Major-General Sir Theodore Fraser, G.O.C. 18th Division, then at Mosul. The force concentrated at Kirkuk included the following units: 1/5th East Surrey Regiment, 85th Burma Rifles, 1/87th Punjabis, 1/116th Mahrattas, 1 Company 49th Bengal Infantry, 239th Company 18th Indian Machine-Gun Battalion, 25th Indian Mountain Battery, Sections from 'B' and 'D' Batteries 336th Brigade R.F.A., 'A' Flight 63 Squadron R.A.F., together with Signals, Sappers and Miners, and other ancillary formations. Soane was to accompany the column in the capacity of Political Officer.

In the year 1910 I passed an examination for entrance as a Student Interpreter into the Levant Consular Service, one of the five branches into which the now unified Foreign Service was then divided. Successful candidates were required to proceed to Cambridge to study among other subjects the three principal languages of the Middle East, Arabic, Turkish and Persian. After two delightful years at Pembroke at the feet of E. G. Browne and R. A. Nicholson I left England in September, 1912, for Constantinople, just in time to see the first phase of the Balkan War. But even before my arrival it had been decreed that I was to go on to Bushire, where the Political Resident in

the Persian Gulf, Sir Percy Cox, had been clamouring for more staff.

I eventually reached Bushire in December and was still there, as Acting Vice-Consul, when war was declared on Germany in August 1914. My application for permission to go home and join up was rejected by the Foreign Office; but in the following April, after some pulling of strings, I obtained my heart's desire. I was summoned to Basra by Sir Percy Cox and was given the rank of Temporary Captain on the General List. After spells of duty as Assistant to the C.P.O. himself and as A.P.O. with troops on the Tigris and the Euphrates, in December 1916 I was posted to Shushtar, the ancient town on the Karun River near the principal oil-field of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the protection of which was, under a directive of the War Committee at home, one of the principal tasks assigned to the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force. Here I had as colleagues and neighbours the two remarkable characters whom I have already mentioned: on the north E. B. Soane, A.P.O. Dizful, and on the south E. W. Noel, Vice-Consul and A.P.O. Ahwaz. Each of them will appear prominently in the narrative that follows and must have a paragraph of introduction to himself.

I first met Noel on board the Austrian Lloyd S.S. *Semiramis* between Port Said and Bombay on my way to Bushire. He was a subaltern in the 44th Merwara Infantry, Indian Army, and I remember that even then, when he had just been selected for the plum of the Indian services, the Foreign and Political Department, he was already talking of resigning and making a fortune with a fish-canning factory to be set up on the White Sea within the Arctic Circle. Two years later he also came to Bushire, as Second Assistant Resident; in the early spring of 1915 we were involved together in the pursuit of agents of the German holy-war mission to Persia, and he nearly made history by actually capturing Wassmuss, the most famous of them all, near Bandar Dilam, a small port north of Bushire; Wassmuss managed to escape from his Persian guards during the night, and the next day Noel himself narrowly escaped capture by tribesmen already suborned by our German colleague. Shortly after this he was transferred to Basra, and I still recall with gratitude that it was largely owing to his good offices that my

own summons followed as quickly as it did. The Ahwaz post for which he had been selected, officially Vice-Consul Arabistan,[1] Bakhtiyaristan, Luristan and Pusht-i Kuh, was one that any young officer might have coveted. Even without Northern Khuzistan, Luristan and Pusht-i-Kuh, which came to be dealt with by other A.P.O's., the Vice-Consul had a roving commission between Isfahan at one end and the head of the Persian Gulf at the other, and there were always opportunities or pretexts for visiting Tehran and Basra (later Baghdad) for consultation. Noel, who a year or two before the war had been runner-up for the Kader Cup, the premier pig-sticking event in India, was an exceptionally hard rider and performed many notable feats of rapid travel both in the plains between the Karun and the Tigris, and also in the Bakhtiyari mountains. While still nominally holding this post he contrived to get himself sent to Tiflis on a mission for General Dunsterville and was captured on his way back by the Bolshevik-inspired Jangalis near Rasht on the Caspian Sea. 'He was treated with great rigour from the first and was kept a prisoner for five months until released under the terms of peace made after the defeat of Jangalis; he had made several attempts to escape, being thwarted in each case by sheer bad luck, and each unsuccessful attempt resulted in increased severity in his treatment.'[2] On his release he returned to Baghdad thirsting for fresh adventures and was sent to Sulaimani as already recorded.

It was also at Bushire that I first heard of Soane, the queer accountant in the Imperial Bank of Persia, who some years before had lived Persian-fashion in the little village of Sangi outside the town and avoided all European society. In 1905, at Shiraz, he embraced Islam as a Shi'a and was reputed to have married a Mujtahid's[3] daughter there. In the following year, as branch manager of the Bank at Kirmanshah, he began to study the Kurdish language and people. After resigning in 1907 he made the journey described in his classic of Kurdish travel, *Through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise*. Later he was employed by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and in 1914

[1]The old name Khuzistan was revived some years later by Riza Shah for official use and is to be preferred.

[2]Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, *The Adventures of Dunsterforce*, London, 1920, p. 79.

[3]See footnote on p. 342.

was in charge of drilling operations at Chiya Surkh near Khanaqin. I first met him at Basra early in 1916, when he arrived with several other British residents of Iraq who had been arrested by the Turks at the outbreak of war but had subsequently been sent across to the Mediterranean and released. In July of the same year he was sent to Dizful, to serve as A.P.O. with two squadrons of the 23rd Indian Cavalry, who had recently established our ascendancy in that region by mopping up several large parties of Bakhtiyari tribesmen on their way home from a spell of activity with the Turco-German holy-war mission in North-west Persia and who were billeted in the château erected by the French archaeologists at Shush. Soane was a man of strong opinions and of violent likes and dislikes. Bakhtiyaris, Indians, joy-riders from G.H.Q., other uninvited travellers, poor linguists, *efendis*, all were so many red rags to a bull. Later on, the nature of his duties required him to work in closer touch with the military than at Dizful; his methods were in many ways not entirely English, yet, owing to his efficiency and remarkable knowledge of the country and people, he was generally far more popular with the commanders than many regular officers endowed with all the orthodox British virtues.

In March 1917, after the fall of Baghdad, Soane was moved up to Khanaqin with the object of establishing contact with the Kurds and I succeeded him at Dizful, from which base I travelled for some months in Luristan. In April 1918 I received a telegram instructing me to proceed forthwith to Ahwaz to replace Noel who, as I have just mentioned, had been captured in North Persia; my immediate task at Ahwaz was to conduct negotiations with the ruling Khans of the Bakhtiyari tribe to ensure the safety of the oil-fields for the duration of the war.

The Khans were several days late for the rendezvous, and it was not until the 22nd April that arrangements were successfully completed and I received a telegram of appreciation and congratulation from His Majesty's Minister in Tehran. For the last day or two I had been feeling far from well, and it was only by taking an incredible quantity of aspirin beforehand and a good deal of some excellent champagne in the course of it that I managed to last out the dinner which I gave that night to celebrate the conclusion of the agreement. The next day I was

ordered to bed, and on the 24th I was admitted to the military hospital dangerously ill with typhoid. I must have picked up the infection when I stopped to drink tea with a former member of my mounted escort, in the course of a ride through the villages west of Dizful. Noel's misadventure was thus a fortunate thing for me, for had I still been at Dizful, where there was no doctor, when the period of incubation ended I could hardly have lived. As it was it was only thanks to the skilful and devoted nursing of the two Military Nursing Sisters who were sent up from Basra as 'specials' that I survived several complications to tell the tale. In due course I was invalided home (the journey took from the middle of June to the end of September), but my troubles were not yet over; on Armistice Day I went down with Spanish influenza and, although I was fit to be discharged from Millbank Hospital after sixteen days, my weakness brought on a recurrence of the phlebitis which, indeed, had been troubling me off and on ever since I left Ahwaz, and I was obliged to be more careful than ever.

At last, in April 1919, I was pronounced fit to return to Iraq, but for light work only. I reported at Baghdad towards the end of May, having been absent from duty for just thirteen months, and, in accordance with the medical recommendation, was posted to Headquarters as Assistant (Administration) to the Acting Civil Commissioner, Captain A. T. (later Sir Arnold) Wilson, an old friend from my Bushire days. This kind of routine work was not at all to my liking. The only thing I remember about my short tenure of the appointment is that it fell to me to ensure that Salar-ud-Daula, the *enfant terrible* of the Qajar dynasty of Persia (who had once more turned up in the Kurdish regions of the Turco-Persian frontier making trouble, but had been induced to give himself up to us), should be made as comfortable as might be possible in an E.P. tent behind barbed wire in the middle of a dusty camp with temperatures standing at 105°F in the shade.

I was accordingly overjoyed when one evening I returned from a visit to the Sporting Club to find pinned to my pillow a note in Wilson's upright, angular handwriting: 'C.J.E.—Soane is being given 14 days leave—it will probably be 3 weeks. He must be replaced and I can only send you. Can you arrange to leave tomorrow night for Baiji by train and thence by car?

You should assume the rank of Major from date and I will fix up with G.H.Q. later. A.T.W. 8/6.'

My train took just eleven hours to cover the 130 miles from Baghdad up the right bank of the Tigris to Baiji, the short section of the Baghdad railway completed by the Germans before the war. The General had sent his Vauxhall car (a rare thing in those days) and a Ford vanette to meet me, and I was whisked away in clouds of dust to a bridge of boats at Fatha, where the Tigris cuts through the Jabal Hamrin, and then across what seemed to me a dry and formless grey-brown desert to Kirkuk, the headquarters of the liwa of that name. I arrived at noon and put up at the joint Political and R.A.F. Mess. I had just an hour with Soane before he left for Basra, and then reported to General Fraser. The Political Officer for Kirkuk, Major S. H. Longrigg, placed an office at my disposal in the old Turkish serai (where the Mess was also housed), a large building of two or three courts and a warren of rooms. My windows looked out eastwards over the river (or rather the river bed, for at that season the Khasa is only a mere thread trickling through a broad expanse of shingle) to a modern leprous-looking bridge, the great, square, untidy mound on the far side, a panorama of dull grey and burnt-earth coloured houses built of roughly-quarried stone set in mortar, two or three minarets that would have made Pisa green with envy, and numerous plaster domes surmounted by stork's nests occupied by young birds already large but not yet ready to fly.

Delighted as I was to get away from the uncongenial desk work at Baghdad, I was not entirely pleased with my situation. The value of a Political Officer, as distinct from an Intelligence Officer, with troops in the field derives from the fact that he generally knows not only the language but also the geography, the tribes and the personalities of the area of operations, all at first hand; if he has also administered the country, as is often the case, his knowledge will be exceptionally thorough. I had none of these qualifications and felt that I had been pitchforked into a false position; my only advantage, a good knowledge of Persian, which most Southern Kurds of moderate education spoke and wrote fluently, would probably not come into play until the actual operations were over. Although I had known General Fraser on the Euphrates and had got on well with him,

he had the reputation of being very hostile to Political Officers as a species and was therefore unlikely, as it seemed to me, to overlook the gravity of my shortcomings. The event proved my fears, on this last score at any rate, to be groundless; all the members of his staff were delightful colleagues and the General himself could not have been more considerate.

With the help of Longrigg, his assistant Captain A. F. Miller, and Lees from Halabja, who had rejoined the R.A.F. for the duration of the operation, I set to work to fill the gaps in my knowledge as far as that was possible in the limited time available. The military side of the picture was given me by the G.S.O., Major Claude Auchinleck, and Lees took me up for my first flight in an aircraft, the first of many I was to make in Kurdistan.

In spite of a severe heat wave which carried the shade temperature up to 112°F., well over the average maximum of 105° for the time of year, the concentration of Fraser's Force was completed before the middle of June. On the 15th I transferred to the H.Q. Staff Mess, and we motored to Chamchemal.

IV CHAMCHEMAL

CHAMCHEMAL was the administrative centre of the qaza which we called by the same name but which under the Turks was known as Bazyan. It was subordinate to Sulaimani and comprised: on the south of the Qara Dagh, the nahiyas of Sangaw and Chamchemal Headquarters; on the north side of the range, the nahiya of Bazyan; and in the extreme north-west, astride the Qara Dagh fold as it sinks towards the Zab, the nahiya of Qala Sêwka (also called Aqjalar). It was thus an awkwardly shaped unit of administration, eighty miles in length from the Sirwan to the Zab, and varying from ten to twenty-five miles in width. After the armistice the Shaikh Bizaini tribe and the Jabbari Saiyids had opted to join Shaikh Mahmud, and the shape of the qaza had become in consequence more fantastic and unwieldy than ever.

The Shaikh Bizaini are a sedentary tribe established in two strings of villages close to the Zab, on both banks, along a

stretch of about forty miles, to the north-east of Kirkuk.[1] The Aghas claim descent from four brothers, Hasan Agha, Mahmud Agha, Hajji Hamza and Mulla Abbas, of whom the last two came to this region from 'the north'[2] perhaps at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The ordinary Kurd is seldom at a loss to suggest an ingenious derivation for names and the following story is told to account for the name 'Shaikh Bizaini'. The father or a remoter ancestor of the four brothers just mentioned was a pious and learned Shaikh, the Spiritual Director of numerous dervishes. One day, when riding across country with a single servant, he was held up by a band of highwaymen. He tried to bestir his mule into a gallop, and at every blow of his stick a hornet emerged from the mule's ear and attacked one of the assailants. The air was filled with agonized cries and the delighted servant, perceiving what was happening, urged his master to great efforts with shouts (in Persian) of: '*Shaikh bizan, Shaikh bizan!* Shaikh, beat him, beat him!'

In Turkish times the southern Shaikh Bizaini had been divided between the qazas of Koi, Chamchemal and Kirkuk Headquarters, but the common descent of the Aghas, who were remarkably numerous for so small a tribe, had preserved a certain cohesion and the whole group had declared for Shaikh Mahmud. Before very long the right bank sections had reverted to Arbil with the rest of the qaza of Koi, but on the left bank a narrow enclave measuring twenty miles in length and barely four at its broadest point, thrust in between the river and the rest of the Shuwan nahiya, to which the villages had previously belonged, subsisted until 1923 as part of a nahiya called Zab subordinate to Chamchemal. The tribe interested us particularly because the village of Taqtaq, and the ferry where the

[1]According to my list made at this time, there were about twenty-five inhabited villages (500 families) on the south (left) bank and eleven (350 families) on the north. Other villages away from the river, nearer Koi, were said to be of Shaikh Bizaini origin but to have broken away from their tribal affiliations.

[2]The *Sharafnáma* (1596) gives the name Shaikh Bizaini without further details in a list of tribes of the Jezirat-ibn-Umar region. The descendants of Hasan Agha are established in a group of five villages, of which the largest is Gayinj, on the left bank of the Great Zab near and north of the main Arbil-Mosul road. Isolated Shaikh Bizaini groups have been reported by travellers in Turkish Kurdistan south-east of Kastamonu, near the Kizil Irmak south-east of Ankara, and north of Erzurum. Jwamêr Agha, son of the Taufiq of Qasrok mentioned in the text, when telling me the story of the hornets, said that the original name of this tribe was Darbandi; but I think there was some confusion in his mind with the neighbouring group of four villages, mentioned on page 322 q.v.

main track from Kirkuk to Koi crossed the river, were in Shaikh Bizaini territory. The principal chiefs with whom we had to deal were on the north bank, Mahmud Agha of Sartik, a veteran grandson of Hajji Hamza, and on the south bank Taufiq Agha of Qasrok, grandson of Mulla Abbas, together with Taufiq's nephew, Faris Agha of Sarchinar.

To the south of Chamchemal one of Shaikh Mahmud's most devoted supporters was a certain Saiyid Muhammad Jabbari, who controlled a solid block of some two dozen villages situated on the right bank of the Basira River. This enclave running deep into Kirkuk territory was also formed into a separate nahiya, called Jabbari, subordinate to Chamchemal. The Saiyid had no serious rival among his relatives and by reason of his religious prestige commanded the unquestioning obedience of the villagers. His position was thus equivalent to that of a tribal chief of some importance. For one reason or another he was generally in the bad books of the administration.

The nahiya of Qala Sêwka (pop. 10,000)[1] was for a time mutilated by the incorporation in the Zab nahiya of a dozen villages near the river, but was eventually restored to its pre-war dimensions. It is bounded on the north by the Zab, on the east by Binzird mountain, on the south by a line running parallel to and three or four miles north of the Kirkuk–Sulaimani road, and on the west by the Shuwan nahiya. The dozen northern villages already mentioned were under the influence of a certain religious teacher named Shaikh Abdullah of Askar,[2] who had joined Shaikh Mahmud in his revolt. Nearer the road the majority of the villagers were tenants of, or labourers on, a number of state-owned canals (the largest of which, Aqjalar, sometimes gave its name to the nahiya) and were more amenable to central authority.

The nahiyas of Chamchemal Headquarters (pop. 12,000) and Bazyan (4,200), the core of the qaza, are the habitat of the Hamawand who, though one of the smallest, were probably, until about 1925 at any rate, the most celebrated fighting tribe

[1]Unless otherwise indicated, the population figures given in this and subsequent descriptions of nahiyas are those of the census of 1947; they are probably nearer the truth, even for twenty-five years earlier, than the rough estimates we used to make on the basis of the number of houses in each village as reported by Mudirs or revenue clerks.

[2]Ja'far Pasha al-Askari, Faisal's famous lieutenant in the Arab revolt, took his family name from this village of Askar, from which his father had emigrated.

of Southern Kurdistan. They are supposed to have come from the Persian plateau early in the eighteenth century and to have established themselves by conquest in the district; their very name suggests that they are comparative newcomers, and they still speak a dialect resembling that of Kirmanshah. They supported the Baban princes of Sulaimani against the Turks and, after the extinction of the principality, continued to be a thorn in the side of the Ottoman administration.

On several occasions the Hamawand re-transferred themselves for several years at a time across the frontier to the district of Qasr-i Shirin in Zuhab, only to fall foul of the Persians in the same way. Playing one government off against the other, they continued to terrorize the countryside from Mosul to Baghdad and from Kirkuk to Kirmanshah until Zill-us-Sultan, the eldest son of Nasir-ud-Din Shah Qajar, then Viceroy of Southern Persia with his capital of Isfahan, thought it prudent to appoint their chief, Jwamêr Agha,[1] to the governorship of Zuhab, an event attested by the great fort at Qasr-i Shirin still known as Qala-i Jwamêr Agha. After the fall of Zill-us-Sultan in 1888 Jwamêr rebelled again, but he was assassinated a few months later by a typical piece of Qajar treachery.[2]

Temporarily crushed, the tribe fled back to Bazyan and were exiled by the Turks, half to North Africa[3] and half to Adana, both places 500 miles away, or more, in a straight line. Their fighting return with their women and children from North Africa to Bazyan in 1896, seven years later, is among the epics of Kurdish tribal history. The men of the Adana party followed suit, and to buy off further trouble the Government agreed to release and bring back their dependants.

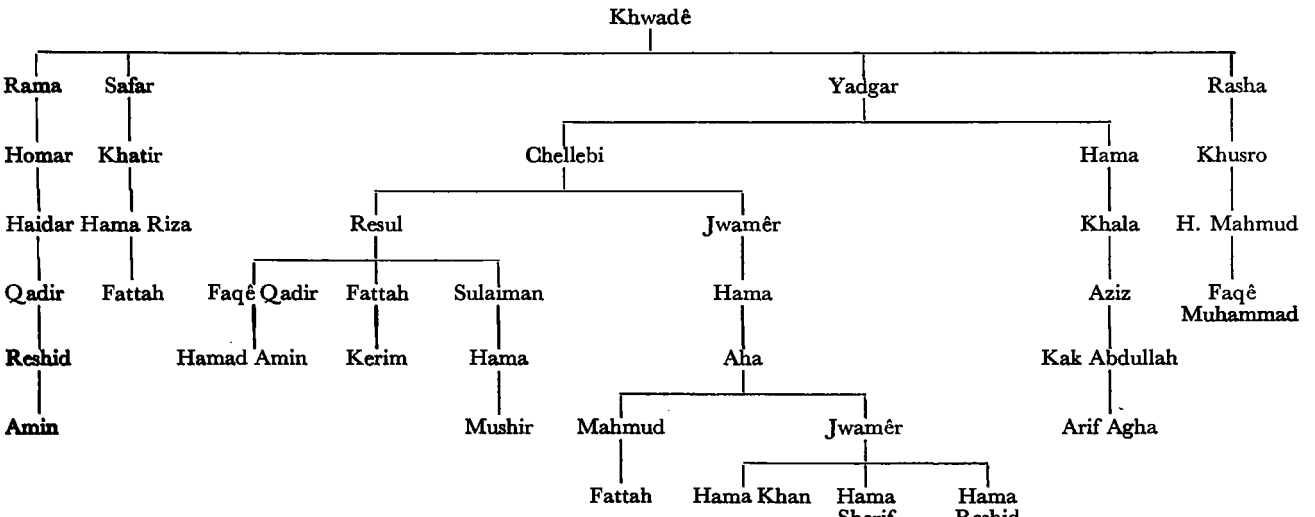
The nucleus of the Hamawand is the ruling family which claims descent from a common ancestor, Khwadê, who may have flourished at the beginning of the eighteenth century; tribal memory does not seem to go farther back to the eponymous ancestor, Hama. The family is divided into four branches,

[1]This is the Kurdish form corresponding to the Persian Javán Mard, 'young man', with the meaning 'chivalrous' or 'brave' in all its senses. The spelling Jawan Mir used by Soane, Curzon and others is incorrect.

[2]The incident is mentioned by Curzon, *Persia*, ii, p. 276; and by Rosen, *Oriental Memoirs of a German Diplomatist*, (London, 1930) p. 251.

[3]Soane says Tripoli in Syria, but my written Kurdish authorities say Tripoli in North Africa; the Hamawand themselves always speak of their adventures at Benghazi.

FAMILY TREE OF THE HAMAWAND



of which three are descended and take their names from three of the four sons of Khwadê: Ramawand from Ramazan, Safarwand from Safar, and Rashawand from Reshid; the most numerous branch springs from the third son, Yadgar, but is known as Begzada. Several minor clans, of which the Sêtabasar was the most important,[1] accompanied the Hamawand on their first migration. Two small tribes already settled in Bazyan, Kafroshi with five villages and Shinki with two, remained to become clients of the formidable settlers. At the time of our occupation Hamawand Aghas were established in all of the seventy villages of the two nahiyas except twelve, the property of Shaikh Mahmud, and five in the hands of the Sêtabasar; they referred to the non-tribal villagers as their 'Goran'.

Tribal names ending in -wand (*-wend*) are not characteristic of Kurdistan proper but are common, indeed usual, among the Lakks and the Lurs. This suffix is the root of the Lakki-Luri verb *wendin*, 'to throw'; it therefore means 'off-shoot' or 'scion', and the first part of the tribal name must consequently always be the name of an ancestor and never the name of a place.[2]

A second point of interest illustrated in the Hamawand family tree is the prevalence among the Kurds of shortened or pet forms of personal names, some of them as different as Dick from Richard: Hama is short for Muhammad, Rama for Ramazan, Rasha for Reshid; other such abbreviations are Aba for Abdullah, Aha for Ahmad, Bála for Bahram, Páta for Fattah, Khula for Mahmud, Micha for Mustafa, Nála for Nadir, Píza for Piroz (girl), Qála for Qadir, Shafa for Sherif, Sila for Sulaiman. There is no great consistency about their use: some men are always referred to by their full name and others always by the shortened form; with others either is used according to the preference or the degree of intimacy of the speaker. Nicknames are also common, such as: Aha Rhesh, Black or Swarthy Ahmad; Hamad-a Shiyn, Hama Blue-Eyes; Micha Pichkol, Little Mustafa. Most personal names being very common, it is usual to mention the name of the father and sometimes even

[1] Others which have preserved their identity are Hamayil, Witmawand, Qurkawand and Bahlawand. There is another small tribe named Sofiwand, half of which lives in Hamawand, and half in Jaf territory.

[2] A German scholar has derived this suffix from the root *band* (*bend*) which would give the meaning 'adherent'. The derivation given in the text, which I first had from an educated Lur at Khurramabad, seems to me inherently more probable and has parallels in other languages.

the grandfather of the man referred to, the names being joined by the particle -i: Kerim-i Fattah, Aziz-i Sherif-i Jelil.

Of the travellers in my list, the first to mention the Hamawand seems to be J. B. Fraser (1834):

> Our guide (across the Qara Dagh) mentioned as a curious circumstance that the tribe of Hamadavund which occupies some ground in this neighbourhood and which, he assured me, did not number five or six hundred families, had rendered themselves so formidable to another tribe called the Jaffs, who can muster from ten to twelve thousand houses or tents, that not a Jaff dared to approach their precincts—if he did he was infallibly put to death; while the Hamadavunds, raiding in parties of twenties or thirties, would go and plunder the Jaffs in their own houses. I think there must be some exaggeration in this statement since the Jaffs can give the Pasha one thousand good horsemen in time of need.

Clément (1853) and Brzezowsi (1869) both testify to the sinister reputation of the Hamawand:

> La principale tribu kourde qui occupe le pays est celle des Amaouans, si redoutée des autres tribus et renommée par sa bravoure, son audace dans le pillage et sa turbulance perpétuelle.
>
> La deuxième nuit (after leaving Sulaimani) nous nous arrêtâmes souvent pour reconnaître le terrain, car on craignait quelque embuscade des Hamovantes, brigands qui, installés en Perse de l'autre côté de la Diala, font des incursions continuelles et infestent tout le pays jusqu'au delà de Kerkuk et Arbil.

Most other travellers tell much the same story. Ainsworth (1837) mentions 'the Hamuana' as being in open rebellion against the Turkish authority. Felix Jones (1844) relates that they were plundering between Khanaqin and Qasr-i Shirin when he passed that way, but that their chiefs came to call on Rawlinson at Pul-i Zuhab. Maunsell (1892) says that he had some difficulty in procuring guides for the march from Kifri to Sulaimani as the road was 'said to be closed by raiding parties of Hamawand Kurds', and that the whole country was in terror of them so that almost everywhere the villagers took his party for Hamawands in the distance and turned out to resist. Dickson (1909) speaks of 'the dreaded Hamawand'. Only Mark Sykes (1903) travelled during one of the rare periods of Hamawand quiescence, following successful operations against them by Isma'il Pasha, and was lavishly entertained at Chamchemal

by one of their Aghas, 'Hamad Reshid Haider', probably Amin-i Reshid, head of the Ramawand; of the escort provided by this chieftain he says that 'they rode like centaurs, and the extraordinary facility with which they managed their rifles, firing right and left and turning completely in the saddle, would convince anyone who doubted the capability of mounted irregulars pursuing broken infantry.'

Soane (1908) gives a vivid description of the condition of terror in which his caravan, including the Turkish gendarme escort, made the passage from Kirkuk to Sulaimani. The atmosphere of such an adventure, in the reverse direction, is well conveyed in the following extract from a lively poem which my venerable and lamented friend Hajji Taufiq 'Piyre-Mêrd', owner and editor of the Kurdish weekly *Jiyn*, was good enough to dedicate to me some years later, contrasting the bad old days with the happier conditions prevailing under the Mandate.[1]

WULHAT Y HEMEWEND

(Shêwe y zman y Kurdiy w spas u nemekshinasiy be yad y Myster Edmends)

Caran de rhoj be heche heche w bareberiyewe,
Germa w sebuwn u lêzme w baran u terhiyewe,
Tirs y teriye, pêshkeshiy' swar, shewfrhêniy' diz,
Destiyaw y bar y kewtuw le cêga y xeliysk u xiz,
Erk y gziyr u xanebigiyr, moryane y nwên,
Bolhe y keybanuw, kifr y qetarchy, plhar y cwên,
Chengsuwteke y beaw u kerhuw y norduwe-nan y kon,
Cuwte w leqe y tewiyle w halhaw y ters u bon,
Agir y tepalhe, luks y gizgil, gefiyn y seg,
Destew yexe y qetarchy leser ka, w sherhe kutek,
Siyxurmeke y beyaniy be helhsandin u peley,
Loqe w triske y êster u bazdan y cogeley,
Laseng y bar ('Were, bere parseng y xwariyekey!').
Xo, kewty, pêt le xirhke chuw, l'ew deshte chiy ekey?
Hêcgar ke afretit leteka bu, be tirsewe
Her swarê der kewê, delhê 'Ay! cerdeye ewe'.
Bacu piytak y Zengene, giyru girift y Caf,
Her chiy'sh ke hat e rhê y Hemewend birdy saf le saf.

[1]For the system of writing Kurdish, here used see the Preface p. xiii. In this and other translations the poetry has of course suffered severely from the closely literal translation to which I have adhered in order to give the passages greater interest for students of Iranian languages.

B'em körewerhiyewe w kulemergiy w be chilhkewe,
Sêbende wergerhaw, be ser u rhiysh y kulhkewe,
Inca dechuwyt e sharhewe nawmalh y Asyme.
B'êt u binuwsrê, nabêt e xö y chêsht, eme keme.
Êsta . . .

THE HAMAWAND COUNTRY

(A specimen of the Kurdish language with thanks and acknowledgements dedicated to Mr. Edmonds)

In former times there were ten days of urging animals and lifting loads,
Heat and simoom and storms and rain and damp,
Terror of highwaymen, bribes to the escort, pilfering at night,
Lending a hand with fallen loads in steep and slippery places,
Leader's and billeting officer's fatigues, lice in the bedding,
Grumbling from the great lady, blasphemy from the muleteers, volleys of abuse,
Stew boiled to shreds, mould on the stale bread flaps,
Plunging and kicking in the mule-lines, steam of dung and stench,
Cow-pat fires, flames from oak-galls, barking of dogs,
Importunity of muleteers for fodder, fighting with sticks,
Prodding and slapping to get you up in the morning,
Trotting and bucking of mules and their leaps over runnels,
Ill-balanced loads—'Come, be a make-weight against its slipping'.
And then if you fell and sprained your ankle, out in those wilds what would you do?
Above all, if a woman were with you, fearfully
Whenever a horseman appears, she says: 'Oh dear! That is a brigand!'
Blackmail of the Zangana, hold-ups by the Jaf,
Anything too that came in the way of the Hamawand, they carried it clean away.
With all this worry, half dead and dirty,
With aching back and matted hair and beard,
At last you reached the city, a house within the Capital.
If so be it were written down it would hardly be a pinch of salt to a meal; it is far short of the reality.
Nowadays . . .

* * * *

Chamchemal was a singularly squalid village built along a stream at the foot of a large mound. The A.P.O., Captain L. Bond, was a prisoner in Sulaimani, but we found some of the civil staff who had remained at their posts; these included six

mounted Hamawand riflemen in Kurdish costume, whom I adopted as orderlies.

The morning after our arrival, the 16th June, we were up at half-past three for a reconnaissance in force towards the Darband-i Bazyan, which Shaikh Mahmud was reported to be holding with tribesmen on the southern shoulder and a mixed force of tribesmen and the British-trained Levies on the north. About eight miles beyond Chamchemal the ugly, broken, terra-cotta country comes to an end and the ground flattens out to rise in a gentle swell towards the north-east. In the clear morning light, across the yellow expanse of shimmering hay, we could see the long wall of the Qara Dagh coming up from the south-east, dipping down in front of us to form the V-shaped gap that has been the scene of so many locally decisive battles, and rising quickly again to a peak 1,700 feet above the level of the pass itself. Some 200 horsemen were observed scouting forward of the pass, and there was a little firing. On the 17th the whole force advanced to the village of Takya Kak Ahmad, about three miles from the gap.

The next morning, before daybreak and in complete silence, the infantry began to scale the heights on each side and had nearly reached the top when, with the first light of dawn, the guns opened on and over the pass. The men of the 85th Burmans were for the most part Chins and Kachins, primitive little men of Mongol type, who carried long, curved swords in addition to the normal weapons, just as the Gurkhas carry the *kukri*. They overwhelmed the tribesmen opposed to them and were reported to have been restrained with difficulty from cutting off the heads of the forty-eight enemy bodies left on the field.

I was riding with the General, and as we approached the gap a party of about a hundred prisoners was brought in from the northern shoulder, where there had been little resistance; the Levies among them held out their rifles for inspection, inviting us to satisfy ourselves that they had not been fired. I made haste to question the two officers, in Persian. The first had seen Shaikh Mahmud wounded in the ankle and hopping about on one leg. The other thought he had been wounded a second time, very seriously; if he was not dead he would probably have tried to escape to Darikali, one of his group of twelve villages in Bazyan on the other side of the pass 'a couple of

hours' ride distant' (Darikali, which was not then shown on any map, is in fact more than twenty miles away from the pass, over rough going). Both said that the Shaikh had left orders in Sulaimani that if he was defeated the prisoners were to be put to death forthwith; they urged that we should occupy the town before the news of the battle could arrive.

General Fraser immediately ordered the 32nd Lancers (Lieut. F. P. G. Denehy) to push on with all speed to Sulaimani. This they did with great dash, and the first intimation the townsmen had of the result of the battle was the clatter of cavalry galloping through the streets at about half-past six to the building called the Dabbo (dépôt) where the British personnel were imprisoned. These, as soon as they realized what was happening, exchanged roles with their gaolers and, throwing open the gates, joined Denehy in taking all necessary measures to make the town secure until the main force could arrive the following day.

Having dispatched the cavalry the General turned to the other important point in my report, the possibility that Shaikh Mahmud himself might be hiding, severely wounded, not very far away. Indicating the six tribal sowars whom I had brought with me, he said: 'Just send those men of yours to arrest Shaikh Mahmud and bring him in, will you.'

I wondered why, if it was as simple as all that, a Major-General had come to Kurdistan at all, with a brigade of infantry, cavalry, armoured cars, artillery, sappers, signallers and all the rest.

'I'm afraid they couldn't do that, sir.'

'What's the good of them, then?'

'I don't claim that they are any good, sir. I had never seen them till the day before yesterday.'

'Well, order them to go along at once.'

'I'm afraid they would desert the moment they got round that bluff.'

'Most unsatisfactory.'

'If you insist, I shall have to go with them myself.'

'I think (smiling) you are too valuable.'

'So do I, sir.'

I completed my interrogation of the prisoners and then mounted to canter through the gap after the General and the Staff. I had not gone far when a messenger stopped me with a

note from Auchinleck saying that they had seen a well-dressed Kurd, evidently a person of some importance, lying wounded on the roadside and that the General wished me to have him carried in. I found the man a little farther along. He was wearing voluminous Kurdish trousers tucked into top boots of Russian pattern, a bright royal-blue cloak heavily embroidered with gold at the shoulder, and wrapped around his head, a scarf of dark blue check under which I could just see a heavy black moustache; one boot was ripped open at the ankle and blood was oozing through his shirt at the waist. He said his name was Ali of the Ism'il Uzairi tribe, but would only answer my other questions with a groan. He was evidently in great pain and too severely wounded to be helped along as a walking case. I therefore sent one of my Hamawand gallopers back to a small Kurdish tea shop about 100 yards away to look for a quilt and again bent over the casualty. Hearing a shout I looked up to see my man with a quilt over his arm all right, but covered by the revolver of a British officer. 'I have caught this scallywag looting the battlefield,' he shouted in reply to my hail, 'and I'm going to shoot him.'

The man and the quilt having been saved, we tried to carry the prisoner along; but the movement caused him so much pain that we were forced to desist. I then noticed what looked like a motor field ambulance on the hillside about a quarter of a mile away. I cantered over and arranged with the doctor in charge to send a stretcher party to fetch him in, and to keep him under adequate guard in case his wounds proved less severe than they appeared to be. I was just about to ride away when a frown on the doctor's face or a contraction of the forehead, or some little gesture of that kind, suddenly carried me back to the House day-room at Christ's Hospital.

'Is your name by any chance Jenkins?' I asked.

'Yes, why?'

'J. P. J. Jenkins, Thornton A.?'

'Yes, but who the dickens are you?'

I had not seen him for fifteen years, since he was fifteen (for he had left early to go elsewhere) and I was fourteen. Until I was about forty I had a good memory for faces and people, and frequently had experiences of this kind.

Leaving the wounded prisoner with Jenkins I rode on to re-

join Headquarters in a pleasant field by the Tainal stream, where we were to bivouac for the night. I had hardly swallowed a very welcome cup of tea when the A.P.M. called me aside to say that as he was marching the prisoners along the road they had seen a well-dressed Kurd lying wounded on the roadside and had all exclaimed that that was 'the Shaikh'. I hurried along to where the prisoners were squatting under guard and interrogated separately a Levy officer and two of Shaikh Mahmud's relations. They all confirmed the glad intelligence. There was no inducement for any of them to tell a lie, rather the contrary. I returned to the General without delay and congratulated him on having caught his man at the first encounter. Headquarters at once split into two camps, the believers led by Auchinleck and the unbelievers led, as far as I remember, by the Intelligence Officer. The news was almost too good to be true, but I was quite confident that there was no mistake. Orders were wirelessed back immediately to the post at Bazyan that every care was to be taken of the prisoner; it was most important that he should not either die before he had been identified by a Kurdish personality, or escape; and any legend of a miraculous disappearance might cause untold trouble later.

There was no further opposition the next morning, the 19th June. About four miles short of Sulaimani, our eyes were gladdened, as only the eyes of those fresh from the parched alluvial plains can be, by a lovely sparkling stream flowing very fast over a broad, shingly bed; the water was deliciously cool as we cupped our hands to drink during a short halt. This was the Sarchinar, the largest of several water-courses that go to form the Tanjaro, here spanned by a Turkish bridge of ten arches known by the name of a near-by village, Qaliyasan; the stream rises only two miles above the bridge, at the very foot of Azmir, in a series of springs so copious that it is already a small river fifty yards from the source.

Leaving the main body to camp near the bridge we rode on with a small cavalry escort and entered the town about an hour before noon. The prisoners were all well, and I was delighted to greet among others the senior A.P.O., Major F. S. Greenhouse, who had stayed with me at Bushire in 1913 on language leave from India and had succeeded me as A.P.O. at Shushtar in 1917. Bond was sent back at once to Bazyan with a friendly

Kurdish officer to identify our distinguished prisoner and on arrival confirmed that it was indeed Shaikh Mahmud. On the 23rd the whole relieving force marched through the town; the released prisoners were with us at the saluting base and the assembled notables on the opposite side of the road were, the General hoped, duly impressed.

The rest of the story of Fraser's Force is quickly told. On the 16th June a column which had marched up the Sirwan valley from Khanaqin and another from Sulaimani re-occupied Halabja and reinstated Lees. During July other mobile columns combed the districts of Surdash, Shar Bazhêr, Barzinja, Pênjwin and Khurmal; another visited Qara Dagh and Sangaw; villages were searched, Shaikhs implicated in the rising and other bad characters were arrested, many rifles were confiscated, and much looted property was recovered. These columns were naturally accompanied by Greenhouse and the other A.P.O.'s who knew the country, while I remained in Sulaimani to get the administrative machine working again.

An amusing incident occurred in connexion with the re-occupation of Halabja. This is a small market town, situated at the south-eastern end of Shahrizur in the shadow of the Hewraman at its highest part, and thus in the heart of the Jaf country. The Jaf are perhaps the most important tribe of Southern Kurdistan. Towards the end of the Ottoman régime the Government had not attempted to maintain a regular civil servant as Qaimmaqam but had appointed to the post a member of the ruling family of that tribe, Usman Pasha. By all accounts he was an easy-going man who was frequently absent from his post, and all effective authority had gradually passed, even during his lifetime, into the hands of his wife, Adila Khan. At the time of the occupation she was already a widow but had remained the uncrowned queen of Shahrizur. During the rebellion she had been a staunch supporter of the administration, rendering services for which she was later decorated with the high Indian title of Khan Bahadur.

Towards the end of June General Fraser decided to go himself to Halabja to convey to the Lady (as we generally called her) the appreciation of the Commander-in-Chief. He took with him Greenhouse and the Lady's two sons, Ahmad and Izzat, who had come into Sulaimani clad in the expensive silks

and exaggerated turbans affected by many of the Jaf Begzadas with her loyal greetings. There was no made road, and as the party approached the eastern end of the waterlogged plain, the cars missed the track and sank to their axles. The General leapt out to direct the salvage operations; as he pushed his car from behind the wheels raced free in the soft mud, covering him from head to heel with a filthy and noisome slime. Wiping the obstruction from his eyes he caught sight of the Begzadas standing on one side as interested spectators, not having lifted a finger to help. This was hardly in accordance with the standards of University College School and Clare, and he ordered Greenhouse to convey to them with all the vigour at his command the expression of his disgust at this unseemly behaviour, coupled with the advice that if they wished to get on with the British they should learn to put their shoulders to the wheel, figuratively and literally. 'Yes,' replied the elder, quite unabashed, 'His Excellency the General speaks well, but tell him to look at our clothes; why, this gown (*kewa*) alone cost three hundred rupees, to say nothing of my cloak and turban, whereas the whole of his outfit (pointing to the faded tropical uniform of khaki drill) cannot be worth twenty rupees.'

As Greenhouse told me the story my memory once more carried me back to my schooldays, this time to the Little Erasmus form room, and I could almost hear myself construing:

Once in particular when they came upon a narrow, muddy place which was hard for the wagons to get through, Cyrus halted with his train of nobles and dignitaries and ordered Glus and Pigres to take some of the barbarian troops to help to pull the wagons out. But it seemed to him that they took their time with the work; accordingly, as if in anger, he directed the Persian nobles who accompanied him to take a hand in hurrying on the wagons. And then one might have beheld a sample of good discipline: they each threw off their purple cloaks where they chanced to be standing, and rushed, as a man would run to win a victory, down a most exceedingly steep hill, wearing their costly tunics and coloured trousers, some of them, indeed, with necklaces around their necks and bracelets on their arms, and leaping at once with all this finery into the mud, they lifted the wagons high and dry and brought them out more quickly than one would have thought possible.[1]

[1]Xenophon, Anabasis I.v.8, Loeb Library translation.

We were fain to agree with General Fraser that the Jaf Begzadas had thoroughly disgraced the Old Iranian tie.

On the 1st July Soane returned to Sulaimani and I handed over to him my duties as P.O. Fraser's Force. A communiqué published on the 3rd August announced that the whole of Southern Kurdistan had been pacified. Shaikh Mahmud, as soon as he was sufficiently recovered to stand the strain, was tried by military court for rebellion and condemned to death; the sentence was commuted to one of ten years' imprisonment, and he was sent to India.

V THE BABANS

THE modern history of the Sulaimani region can be said to begin with the rise, in the second half of the seventeenth century, of Baba Sulaiman, the founder of the last of several successive dynasties of rulers, each of which took the surname of Baba.[1] The family tree here given is based for the earlier generations on the Kurdish *History of the Baban Rulers in Shahrizur and Ardelan* by Saiyid Husain Huzni (Ruwandiz, 1931), and does not purport to do more than indicate the names of the more important princes and, very roughly, their order of succession. The authorities differ among themselves not only regarding the exact relationship of some of the earlier rulers[2] but also, more naturally, regarding the dates to be ascribed to each; for owing to internecine family disputes fomented by the rivalries of Turkey and Persia most reigns were interrupted more than once (the great Abdur Rahman Pasha was deposed no less than five times between 1789 and 1813), so that there were reigns within reigns, and opinions must of course vary as to what constituted temporary usurpation and what effective occupation of the throne. The date of the accession of Ahmad Pasha, the last autonomous ruler, may be mentioned as having been fixed by the following chronogram of the poet Nali:

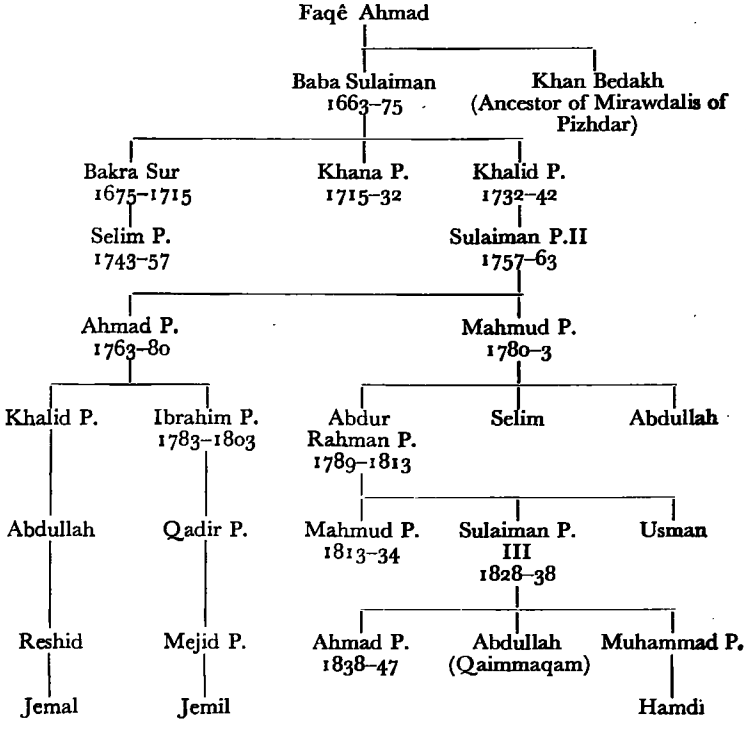
[1] This, with both *a*'s short, is the original and correct form of the name. The later form 'Baban' with both *a*'s long is said to be a Turkish corruption.

[2] In particular the table given by Muhammad Amin Zaki in his *Tariyx y Slêmaniy w Wulhaty* (Baghdad: Najah Press, 1939) gives Baba Sulaiman no children, showing Bakra Sur as his brother and Khana and Khalid as the sons of another brother, Taimur.

Shah y Cemca, Naliya, 'Tariyx y Cem' tariyxiye.
The King who ranks with Jam(shid), O Nali,
'The date of Jam' is his chronogram (date).

According to the *abjad* system of notation the sum of the numerical values of the Arabic letters that make up the words '*Tariyx y Cem*, the date of Jam' (spelt, of course, according to the Persian and not the modern Kurdish rules), is A.H. 1254 = 1838–9.

THE BABAN FAMILY



The first centre of the Baban authority was Qala Chuwalan the ruins of which can still be seen on the north bank of the river of that name below the village of Chwarta, the present headquarters of the qaza of Shar Bazhêr. Ibrahim Pasha, who acceded in 1783, transferred the capital some twelve miles to the south-west, across the Azmir range, to the village of Malkandi and built a new town, which he is generally stated to have

named Sulaimani after the then Pasha of Baghdad; a Kurdish tradition, however, lingers to the effect that the site was that of an earlier Sulaimani built by Baba Sulaiman, and it is interesting to note that the Persian 'Scroll of dates and facts connected with the History of Kurdistan' translated by Rich (vol. i, appendix 3) records under the year A.H. 1199 (1784–5) the *second* building of Sulaimani. At its greatest extent the Baban realm included Koi and Bana in the north, and in the south Kifri, Qara Tapa and even, it is sometimes claimed, Mandali and Badra. By 1820 the population of the town was estimated by Rich at 10,000 souls.

I know of no contemporary account of the Baban realm when the capital was at Qala Chuwalan[1] or even in the days of Abdur Rahman Pasha, cousin and successor of the founder of Sulaimani, whose reign is felt to fall within recent times and, for all its vicissitudes, is still recalled in local memory as a period of sturdy Kurdish independence. Nor are Kurdish sources of any great value. The recent local historians have relied far more on Rich and other European writers than on any indigenous records or traditions, and no two versions of any occurrence before 1800 seem to agree. A good example is the celebrated and popular story of the 'Twelve Horsemen of Mariwan', who made a night attack on a Persian army of 10,000 men and forced it to retire in panic. Three different versions which I have traced, although circumstantial to the extent of naming some or all of the heroes, place the incident: one (following Rich) in the reign of Baba Sulaiman, another in that of Ahmad Pasha (1763–80), and the third in that of Ibrahim Pasha, a whole century after Baba Sulaiman.

After Abdur Rahman Pasha Baban autonomy became more and more compromised, yet almost to the last the character of the administration remained essentially Kurdish, and the rulers maintained their own regular army and other signs of petty royalty.

Rich, who was at Sulaimani itself for about four months as the invited guest of Abdur Rahman's son, Mahmud Pasha (1813–34), gives a particularly full and lively account of the

[1] I have mentioned in Chapter II the visit of the Carmelite missioner, Fr. Fidelis, in 1749, and it is just possible that research in the Vatican library might help to fill this gap in our knowledge.

Baban court at that time—the intrigues of the Ottoman Pasha of Baghdad and the Persian Prince-Governor of Kirmanshah, the resulting family dissensions, the personalities of the various officers of state, weddings, mourning ceremonies, dancing, and the almost daily sporting events such as displays of swordsmanship, shooting, dog and partridge fighting, horse-racing, and wrestling.

Mignan, in the spring of 1830, found Sulaiman Pasha (1828–38), brother of Mahmud, on the throne and, in the course of a disappointingly meagre account, says that the government was being 'administered by a Pasha who is by birth a Koord, subject to neither Turk nor Persian' and that the ruler was 'frank and honest'. Fraser, in the spring of 1834, describes the 'small state' of Sulaimani as 'the prey of an accumulation of misfortunes which have reduced it to extreme misery' and Sulaiman Pasha as 'a pleasant person but harrassed by Persian exigencies'. Ainsworth (1837) was 'most kindly received and most hospitably entertained' by the Pasha (not named but doubtless Sulaiman), who had 'a battalion of regular troops as a guard with irregular mounted Kurds and Kawasses'; Persian influence was evidently in the ascendant, for at his first audience he found a Persian delegation placed on the Pasha's right and there is no mention of the presence in the town of any representative of the Ottoman suzerain; the Persians, however, were not popular, for the Pasha afterwards thanked the Englishman, who had been on his left, for some pro-Turkish remark which had 'discomfited the Farsis'. In 1844 Felix Jones placed on record a high opinion of the then ruler, Ahmad Pasha (1838–47), of whom he mentions that he had within a year of his accession 'raised and disciplined, according to European tactics, a respectable force, which at the present time amounts to about eight hundred men'.

Finally, in 1847, Ahmad Pasha was defeated near Koi by Nejib Pasha of Baghdad, and Baban autonomy came to an end. Ahmad's brother, Abdullah Pasha, was put in charge of Sulaimani, but specifically as an Ottoman official with the grade of Qaimmaqam; he was dismissed in 1851 and replaced by a Turk.

The high offices of state under the Babans were more or less hereditary but can hardly have been restricted each to one

family; for in all oriental towns the leading houses tend to group themselves in two or more factions, and at Sulaimani appointments would doubtless have changed hands according as the ruler of the day was favourable to, or under the influence of, the Turks or the Persians. Rich's friend, Mahmud Masraf, who combined the offices of Prime Minister and (as the second name implies) Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was at the same time the chief impresario of the sporting events organized for the distraction of the distinguished guest, is today represented by his descendant Hama-i Abdur Rahman Agha of the Aziz-Agha family, so surnamed after Mahmud's eldest son Aziz, mentioned by Rich as 'a fine young man who has taken mightily to me'. Another prominent family is that of Sahib-Qiran descended from a certain Ahmad Beg Sahib-Qiran who, according to one version of the story, was one of the Twelve Horsemen of Mariwan and whose son Mahmud was Bashchawush, that is Sergeant-Major-General or Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces under one of the later Babans; distinguished members of this family were the poets Mustafa 'Kurdi' and Abdur Rahman 'Salim' (cousins, grandsons of Ahmad) and, two generations later, in our time, Ahmad Beg-i Fattah Beg, the poet, and Salih Zaki, an officer who rose to high administrative office; Lady Adila of Halabja was the granddaughter of a grandson of the first Ahmad Beg, who had settled at Senna. A third important family, whose connexion with the Babans I do not know, is that surnamed Ahmad-Agha; a well-known member was the veteran Sherif Pasha, who attended the Peace Conference at Versailles and was responsible for securing the insertion in the treaty of Sèvres of the articles relating to the possible formation of a Kurdish state; the principal contemporary members of the family are Ahmad Beg-i Taufiq Beg Taburaghasi, who served in turn as Mutasarrif of Sulaimani and of Arbil and will be mentioned frequently in the following pages, and Hama Salih Beg who was for many years regularly 'elected' to the Iraqi Parliament as a member for Sulaimani and thus, in spite of his comparative youth and silence in debate, became the Father of the House. Another family more important than all of these, that of the Shaikhs of Barzinja, will be discussed separately in the next chapter.

In 1919 several descendants of the former Baban rulers were

still to be found at Sulaimani, but they were neither rich nor influential. On the other hand Hamdi Beg, grandson of Sulaiman Pasha, had inherited extensive and valuable estates just outside the city of Baghdad;[1] Jemil Beg, great-grandson of Ibrahim Pasha, was an influential land-owner near Kifri; and several others were building up successful legal practices at the Baghdad bar which eventually brought them to cabinet rank in the Iraqi Government.

At the date of the British occupation less than seventy years had elapsed since the extinction of Baban rule, and most of the adult population must have heard at first hand from their fathers glowing, and no doubt much embellished, accounts of those spacious days of Kurdish independence. The following poem by the celebrated Kurdish poet Shaikh Riza Talabani (*circa* 1842–1910) well expresses feelings that were doubtless widely shared.

WULHAT Y BABAN

Le Biyrim d'ê Slêmaniy ke Dar-ul-Mulk y Baban bu;
Ne mehkuwm y Ecem, ne suxrekêsh y Al y Usman bu.
Leber qapiy' sera sefyan debest shêx u mela w zahyd;
Mutaf y kabe bo erbab y hacet Gird y Seywan bu.
Leber tabuwr y esker rhê nebu bo meclys y Pasha;
Seda y moziyqe w neqqare ta eywan y Keywan bu.
Drêgh bo ew zemane, ew deme, ew esre, ew rhoje,
Ke meydan y criydbaziy le desht y Kaniyaskan bu.
Be zerb y hemleyê Beghday tesxiyr kird u têy helh da;
Slêman y zeman, rhastit d'ewê, bawk y Slêman bu.
Ereb! inkar y fezl y êwe nakem; efzelin; emma
Selaheddiyn, ke dinyay girt, le nesl y Kurd y Baban bu.
Qubuwr y pirh le nuwr y Al y Baban pirh le rhehmet bê;
Ke baran y kef y ihsanyan wek hewr y Niysan bu.
Ke Ebdullhah Pasha leshkir y Waliy' Sney shirh kird
Rheza ew wexte umry penc u shesh, tifl y debistan bu.

THE BABAN LAND

I remember Sulaimani when it was the Capital of the Babans;
It was neither subject to the Persians nor slave-driven by the House of Usman.
Before the palace gate Shaikhs, Mullas and Ascetics stood in line;

[1]They included Harthiya which was later acquired by King Faisal for his first country residence and private farm.

The place of pilgrimage for those with business was the Gird-i Seywan.
By reason of the battalions of troops there was no access to the Pasha's audience chamber.
The sound of bands and kettle-drums rose to the halls of Saturn.
Alas for that time, that epoch, that age, that day,
When the tilting-ground was in the plain of Kaniyaskan.
With the shock of one charge he took Baghdad and smote it;
The Solomon of the Age, if you would know the truth, was the father of Sulaiman.
Arabs! I do not deny your excellence; you are the most excellent; but
Saladin who took the world was of Baban-Kurdish stock.
May the bright tombs of the House of Baban be filled with God's mercy,
For the rain of bounty from their hands was like April showers.
When Abdullah Pasha routed the Wali of Senna's army
Riza was five or six, a little boy at school.[1]

It is not easy to fix upon any particular date or circumstance as marking the beginning, or even a turning point in the development, of Kurdish nationalism in the modern sense. Modern nationalisms, unlike earlier manifestations of a similar spirit, tend to attach tremendous importance to language. It would be tempting, then, to suggest that some particular significance attached to the year 1892 when, as I have already mentioned, the first Kurdish newspaper was published in Cairo. But in 1892 Hajji Qadir of Koi (*circa* 1817–94), whose patriotic poems in Kurdish are still recited with approval in Kurdistan, was already seventy-five years old and thus formed an unbroken literary link with the days when the Baban principality was, in the words of Shaikh Riza, 'neither subject to the Persians nor slave-driven by the House of Usman'. The publication of *Kurdistan* in 1892, the revival of Kurdish literary activity during the brief honeymoon that followed the Young-

[1]For an account of Shaikh Riza see Chapter XIX below. Gird-i Seywan (l.4) is a low hill just outside Sulaimani on the south-east, formerly, as the name indicates, the place where the great reception tent was pitched, and now a cemetery. Kaniyaskan (l.8), the Spring of the Gazelles, now gives its name to a quarter of the town. Abdur Rahman Pasha was the principal member of a coalition which in 1810 took Baghdad (l.9), expelled the Pasha, Kuchik Sulaiman, and elevated in his place Abdullah Agha, nicknamed Tutunchi, the tobacco-man (the incident is mentioned by J. M. Kinneir, *A Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire*, 1813). The date of Abdullah Pasha's victory over the Persians under the Wali of Senna (l.15) was 1842; the anachronism must be pardoned to the poet's patriotic exuberance.

Turk revolution of 1909,[1] the fresh fillip given to Kurdish aspirations, especially among the officer-intellectual elements, by the doctrine of self-determination enunciated by President Wilson towards the end of the war of 1914–18, were thus merely stages in a continuing tradition of thought. The proposal that Sulaimani with the adjacent Kurdish districts should once more become an autonomous territory—a policy imposed upon His Majesty's Government by military rather than political considerations—did not come to the people as anything strange.

It is of course the case that nationalism is often used as a cloak for the ambitions of some self-appointed leader or for the natural impatience of tribesmen under any kind of ordered administration; and I have no doubt that Shaikh Mahmud saw himself as another Abdur Rahman Pasha, with a benevolent British Government intervening, not to exercise any control over his autocratic rule, but only to prevent the Persian and the future Arab Governments from interfering in the manner of the Governors of Kirmanshah or the Pashas of Baghdad. But at Sulaimani there was present in addition, among all classes of the population, an abiding conviction, rooted in their history, that the town contained the germs of a revived and extensive Kurdish state of which it was the fore-ordained capital. The belief had little apparent justification either in the physical appearance and commercial importance of the place, or in the academic attainments or political experience of the citizens. But it was always in the air and seemed to give to what was little more than a tumble-down village something that I can only describe as a 'personality', so strong that few Kurds, whether strangers or returned exiles, could stay there very long without succumbing to its heady influence.

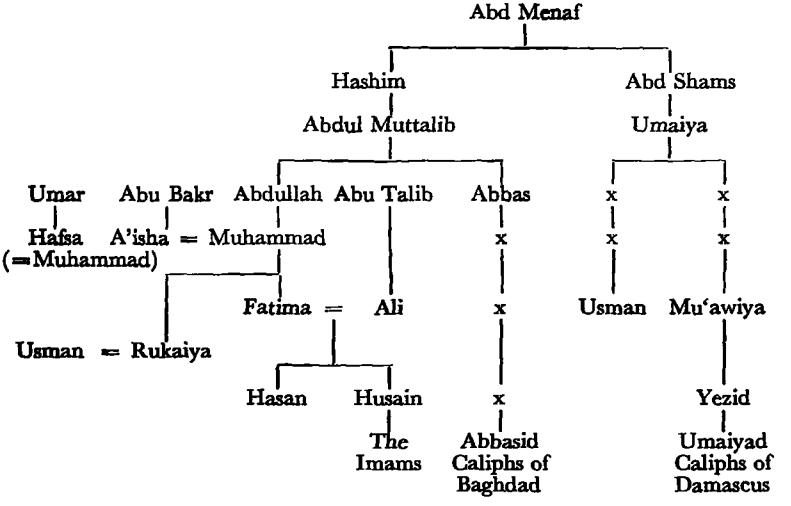
VI SHAIKHS AND SAIYIDS

SHAIKHS, Saiyids and the dervish orders loom so large in the daily life of Kurdistan that I will ask any experts among my readers to bear with me for a few moments if I pause at this point to recall, for the benefit of the others, just

[1]The first Kurdish political club was founded at Constantinople in 1908 by General Sherif Pasha and Amin Badr Khan.

so much of the early history of Islam as is relevant to this and the chapters that follow.[1]

The Prophet Muhammad was born at Mecca in A.D. 571 and started his prophetic mission just before he was forty. In 622 he found it expedient to move from Mecca to Medina and the Muslim era dates from this Hijra or 'flight'.[2] By the time of his death in 632 not only had he established a religion but he was in fact ruler of the greater part of the Arabian peninsula. The relationship to him and to each other of the principal actors in the events that followed is best shown in the form of a family tree.



Muhammad was succeeded first by his close friend and father-in-law Abu Bakr (632), and then in turn by another father-in-law Umar (634), a son-in-law Usman (644), and another son-in-law, who was also his cousin, Ali (656–61); these four were known as the Orthodox Caliphs or Successors. By 650 the Arab armies had wrested Syria from the Byzantines,

[1]The first part of this chapter is, of course, based on general reading, illuminated, or perhaps it would be safer to say coloured, by my own contacts, over many years in Persia and Iraq, with all sorts and conditions of men. After the works of E. G. Browne I have found particularly useful D. B. Macdonald's *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory* (London, 1903), Nallino's article 'Sufismo' in the *Enciclopedia Italiana*, D. M. Donaldson's *The Shi'ite Religion* (London, 1933), and H. A. R. Gibb's *Mohammedanism* in the Home University Library Series, 1949. Dates are given in the Christian era.

[2]Years of the Muhammadan era are accordingly distinguished by the letters A.H.

overthrown the Sasanian dynasty and incorporated Persia, including Arabian Iraq, in a Muslim empire.

But the succession had not passed without heartburnings and rivalries. Umar, Usman and Ali were all assassinated. Ali was succeeded as Caliph by Mu'awiya, the Governor of Syria, who even in Ali's lifetime had made himself independent of any central authority; Mu'awiya established the capital at Damascus and founded the dynasty known as Umaiyad after his great-grandfather. Husain, Ali's younger son by Fatima the Prophet's daughter, was killed in battle against Mu'awiya's son Yezid at Kerbela in Iraq on the 10th of the lunar month of Muharram in 680, and the Muslim world split definitely into the two principal factions which still divide it today: the majority, called Sunni—the People of the Tradition, who accepted the victors; and the Shi'a or legitimist 'Party of Ali', who held that the office of Caliph should be vested in a descendant of Ali and Fatima.

In 750 the Umaiyad dynasty was overthrown by a revolt in which the Shi'a took part. The supreme power passed, however, not to any descendant of Ali's, but to a collateral branch descended from his uncle Abbas; the capital was transferred to Baghdad. From the beginning of the ninth century onwards the Caliphs steadily lost all real power and became little more than puppets of their foreign pretorian guards, until in 1258 the dynasty was finally extinguished by the Mongols.

The divine revelations as recited by Muhammad were collected about twenty years after his death, in the reign of Usman, into a book known as the Koran or Reading. The Shar' or Sheri'at, a whole system of theology, jurisprudence and social practice, was progressively worked out, on the basis of the Koran and of traditions of the actions and utterances ascribed to the Prophet on various occasions, into four generally accepted and mutually recognized codes or rites, called after their putative founders Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali; the last of these jurists was Ahmad ibn Hanbal, who died in 855. The great majority of the Kurds are Sunni Muslims of the Shafi'i rite.

The simple piety of primitive Islam, and still more the elaborate theology of the ninth-century doctors, lacked the emotional element that was indispensable if the religion was to

retain its hold, in particular, on the non-Arabs in the expanding Empire. The gap was filled, under the influence of Eastern Christianity, first by asceticism and then by mysticism; and, as the need arose, texts could be found in the Koran to justify the first and to serve as starting points for the second. The mystical idea of direct 'experience' of, and ecstatic communion with, God was, strictly speaking, alien to the Koranic conception of man's relations with the Almighty. Nevertheless the mystics claimed that their beliefs represented an esoteric teaching originally confided by Muhammad to Abu Bakr and Ali, the first and fourth Caliphs; and, in the fourth century, after a long and bitter struggle, the system of ideas developed by them was finally accepted into the framework of Sunni orthodoxy. The early adepts came to be known as Sufi, from *ṣúf* meaning wool, after the rough cloaks they wore, and the name has persisted. Mysticism was followed by metaphysical speculation which, under the impact of neo-Platonist ideas, led sometimes to the wildest pantheistic and antinomian doctrines.

The Sufi system became the religion of the masses, and the disciples of teachers eminent for their saintly lives or their learning were organized into the dervish brotherhoods which are to be found all over the Islamic world today. At the head of such an order, or a branch of it, stands the Shaikh or Pir, the Old Man. In his capacity as teacher the Shaikh is the Murshid or spiritual Director, the disciple is the Murid or Aspirant, the teaching is the Tariqat or Path, the oratory where the Shaikh establishes his headquarters is the *takya* or *khánaqáh*. The Murid, after making a declaration of repentance (*tauba*) 'receives' the Path from the Murshid who 'gives' it; when he has become sufficiently proficient in the knowledge and practice of the Path he may be granted a certificate appointing him the Khalifa,[1] that is 'Successor' or 'Vicar', of his Murshid; he is then entitled to pass on the teaching; if he attains a sufficient degree of proficiency he may assume the style of Shaikh and become the Murshid of a new generation of Murids. Every certificate of competence must contain a complete list of the spiritual succession of Khalifas back to Abu Bakr or Ali, the ultimate authorities for every Path. The succession at any *takya* tends to pass

[1]This is the Arabic form of the word which has become naturalized in European languages, with the specialized meaning, as Caliph.

from father to son; the sons of Shaikhs are called Shaikh but they cannot by reason of birth alone become Murshids and initiate neophytes; they must first receive the Path in the regular way. Persons claiming to be descended from Ali and Fatima are styled 'Saiyid'; they are numbered in thousands, among Sunnis and the Shi'a alike, in all parts of the Middle East. Saiyids, as might be expected, frequently take a Path and in due course become Shaikhs. Shaikhs who are not at the same time Saiyids are distinguished in Kurdistan as Prayer-carpet Shaikhs (*shêx y bermalh*).

Not only the founders of dervish orders but successor Shaikhs of outstanding personality have at all times commonly been credited with the power of working miracles and have attracted to themselves, and after death to their tombs, the superstitious and almost idolatrous veneration of their disciples. They and their descendants have, in consequence, tended to amass wealth and acquire worldly power. The orders with the largest following in Kurdistan are the Qadiri and the Naqshbandi.

The Qadiri order was founded by a famous saint, Shaikh Abdul Qadir al-Gilani (1077–1166), and is a good example of a Path that has come to be accepted as perfectly orthodox; a descendant of the Founder has always held, and still holds, the office of Primate of the order and keeper of the tomb in Baghdad; successive holders received from the Ottoman government the title of Naqib al-Ashraf; in 1920 the Naqib of the day, Saiyid Abdur Rahman, as the leading Sunni of Iraq, was selected by the British Occupation Authorities to form and head the first national Council of State.

The Naqshbandi order was founded by Muhammad Behaud-Din of Bukhara (1317–89). It is also accepted as orthodox, but, whether owing to the absence of any highly respectable Superior like the Naqib of Baghdad in the neighbourhood or owing to something in its teaching, uneducated members of this order in Kurdistan seem to be particularly prone to manifestations of eccentricity.

In the south of Kurdistan Murids of the Qadiri order are generally called dervish (*derwiysh*), and those of the Naqshbandi sofi.[1] Towards the north the distinction does not seem to be so carefully observed.

[1] I shall use this spelling when referring to Kurdish adherents of the order.

The Shi'a dissent was at first primarily a political movement. To the legitimists Ali and his descendant-successors were known not as Caliphs but as Imams, Leaders in Prayer. More than one internal schism occurred amongst them in later years over the succession. Of these the most important and the most interesting is that of the Isma'ilis who preferred Isma'il, the elder son of Ja'far, the sixth Imam, to his younger brother Musa, who was accepted by the majority; they recognize seven Imams only and are famous in history as the Assassins, whose local chief in Syria was known to the Crusaders as the Old Man of the Mountain. Here however we are concerned only with the main body, those who recognized twelve Imams beginning with Ali and his sons Hasan and Husain (the martyr of Kerbela), and descending in a direct line from Husain through Ja'far and Musa until the twelfth disappeared miraculously about the year 873.

It was not until the tenth century, during the domination of the Caliphate by the Buyid[1] dynasty from North Persia (932–1055), that the first collection of distinctly Shi'a traditions was compiled and an independent theology and jurisprudence codified. The chain of authorities for these traditions was in most cases carried back to the sixth Imam, Ja'far (702–765), who had conducted a school at Medina and actually had had among his pupils Abu Hanifa and Malik ibn Anas, who gave their names to two of the four orthodox Sunni rites; it was during his Imamate that the Caliphate passed from the house of Umaiya to the house of Abbas, but he seems to have made no claim to the supreme office. The elaboration of a dissident theology associated with his name could only, and doubtless was intended to, exacerbate and perpetuate the political feud. According to an early story the great schism was nearly healed at the beginning of the eleventh century by the acceptance of the Shi'a into the orthodox community as adherents of a fifth rite, the Ja'fari, which was to have equal status with the other four; but the negotiations broke down over the sum to be paid to the Caliph of the day for this accommodation.

[1]So called from a name written by European authorities sometimes Buya and sometimes Buwaih; it can be read either way in unpointed Arabic. I have preferred Buyid for the perhaps inadequate reason that when marching from Qazvin to Lahijan on the Caspian in 1920 I passed near a village called Buya, alleged to be the original home of these rulers.

The schism was further embittered and its perpetuation ensured with the accession to the throne of Persia of Shah Isma'il, founder of the Safawi dynasty, in 1502. The Shi'a creed was imposed upon the country as the established state religion; the mourning ceremonies of Muharram, introduced by the Buyids in Baghdad, were revived and elaborated, and the public cursing of the first three Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman, was introduced—all no doubt as part of a campaign to rouse the passions of the people against the national enemy Turkey, whose Sultans claimed to have succeeded to the Caliphate, and to undermine the loyalty of certain groups in the population of Turkey itself. In 1746, after the demise of the Safawi line, by one of the many treaties which temporarily interrupted the chronic state of war between the two countries, Nadir Shah, a Sunni, undertook that the public cursing of the three Caliphs and the Prophet's wife, A'isha, should cease and that the state religion of Persia should be Sunni; but the preamble also records that in the course of the negotiations he had sought, unsuccessfully, to obtain the Sultan's recognition of the Ja'fari as a fifth orthodox rite. In modern times the Iraqi constitution of 1924 provides that every religious court shall administer the rules of the different rites as occasion may require, that the Qazi, or judge, shall himself belong to the same rite as the majority of the local inhabitants, and that in Baghdad and Basra there shall be both a Sunni and a Ja'fari Qazi; but the rivalry for political and administrative power has not been mitigated at all as the result of the official equality won by the Shi'a in the State.

The early Shi'a, as they developed their theology, were exposed to much the same influence as their Sunni contemporaries but they seem to have been pervious, or to have given hospitality, to certain ancient beliefs endemic in Western Asia rather than to the neo-Platonist influences which so profoundly affected the development of Sufism among the Sunnis. Some of these beliefs found a place in the principal doctrine which distinguishes the Ja'fari creed as finally fixed, the doctrine of the Imamate according to which, among other things, the Twelve Imams were sinless, infallible and possessed of supernatural qualities bordering on the divine. But there were in the fold elements which could not be contained by such a compromise

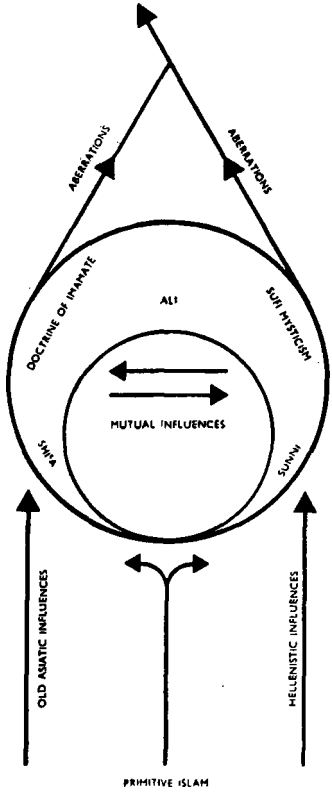
line and were bound to develop, or revive, doctrines of incarnation, reincarnation, transmigration and the like closely resembling the wilder speculations of the Sufis. On the Shi'a side these people were called *ghulát* exaggerators, and classed as heretics. Sunni orthodoxy has always been more accommodating and slow to denounce groups that have not themselves openly broken away.

There thus comes a point where it is difficult to distinguish between Sunni on the right and Shi'a on the left. The fact that a particular group venerates Ali (who, it must be remembered, was not only the first Imam of the Shi'a but also the most human and colourful of the orthodox Caliphs and, according to Sufi belief, one of the two original recipients of Muhammad's esoteric teaching) is not in itself sufficient to justify its classification as Shi'a; Saiyids enjoy especial respect among the Sunnis as well as among the Shi'a; although no Shi'a partisan would ordinarily[1] name his son Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman or Yezid, names such as Ali, Hasan, Husain and Ja'far are as common among the Sunnis as any others. But the pull to left from right seems to be stronger than that to right from left, and where for political or other reasons it is difficult for any group to maintain an entirely neutral position, once it has given the leading place in its veneration to the Twelve Imams it may fairly be said to have come down on the Shi'a side. The diagram opposite may help to elucidate the argument of this paragraph.

The Safawis themselves furnish a classic example of some of the tendencies just described. Shaikh Safi-ud-Din, the ancestor six generations back of Shah Isma'il, was born in 1252. Having graduated as a Murshid in the ordinary way after a period of discipleship at the feet of a celebrated saint, Shaikh Zahid of Gilan, he founded at Ardebil in about 1300 the independent dervish order named after him Safawi. The evidence is that he and his son were Sunnis and the order a normal Sufi brotherhood. His grandson, Khwaja Ali, who succeeded in 1392, was the first to betray Shi'a tendencies. Khwaja Ali's grandson,

[1]An interesting exception to this rule came to my notice recently in the persons of two brothers named Umar and Usman. The explanation given me was that the father had lost all his sons in infancy while all the daughters had survived; he therefore made a vow so to name his next sons, if he had any, on the theory that children bearing such repellent names could not possibly attract the evil eye or other similar calamity.

Junaid, is recorded to have been able to mobilize 10,000 fighting men from among his Murids. In 1502 Junaid's grandson, Isma'il, was strong enough to seize the throne of Persia. Though wandering dervishes abound in that country, organized brotherhoods, as I have said, seem to have found a Sunni atmosphere



more congenial to their development than a Shi'a one. Nevertheless the Safawi order was sufficiently vital to flourish for another century after Khwaja Ali on typical Sunni-Sufi lines until the time of Isma'il himself, who was adored by the élite of his army as their Pir rather than as their King and was, moreover, best known in Europe as the 'Grand Sophi'. Eventually the order seems to have been absorbed by the Bektashis of Anatolia, of whom I shall have more to say in a later chapter.

Of the many prominent landmarks that impress themselves on the memory of travellers in the region of the old Turco-Persian, now the Iraqi-Persian, frontier few are more striking than the twin pinnacles (7,300 and 7,250 feet) of the great massif of Kurhakazhaw. In a fold of the southern spurs, three miles from the lesser peak and fourteen miles due east of the town of Sulaimani, lies the considerable village of Barzinja, which gives its name to the most numerous and most influential Saiyid family of Southern Kurdistan.

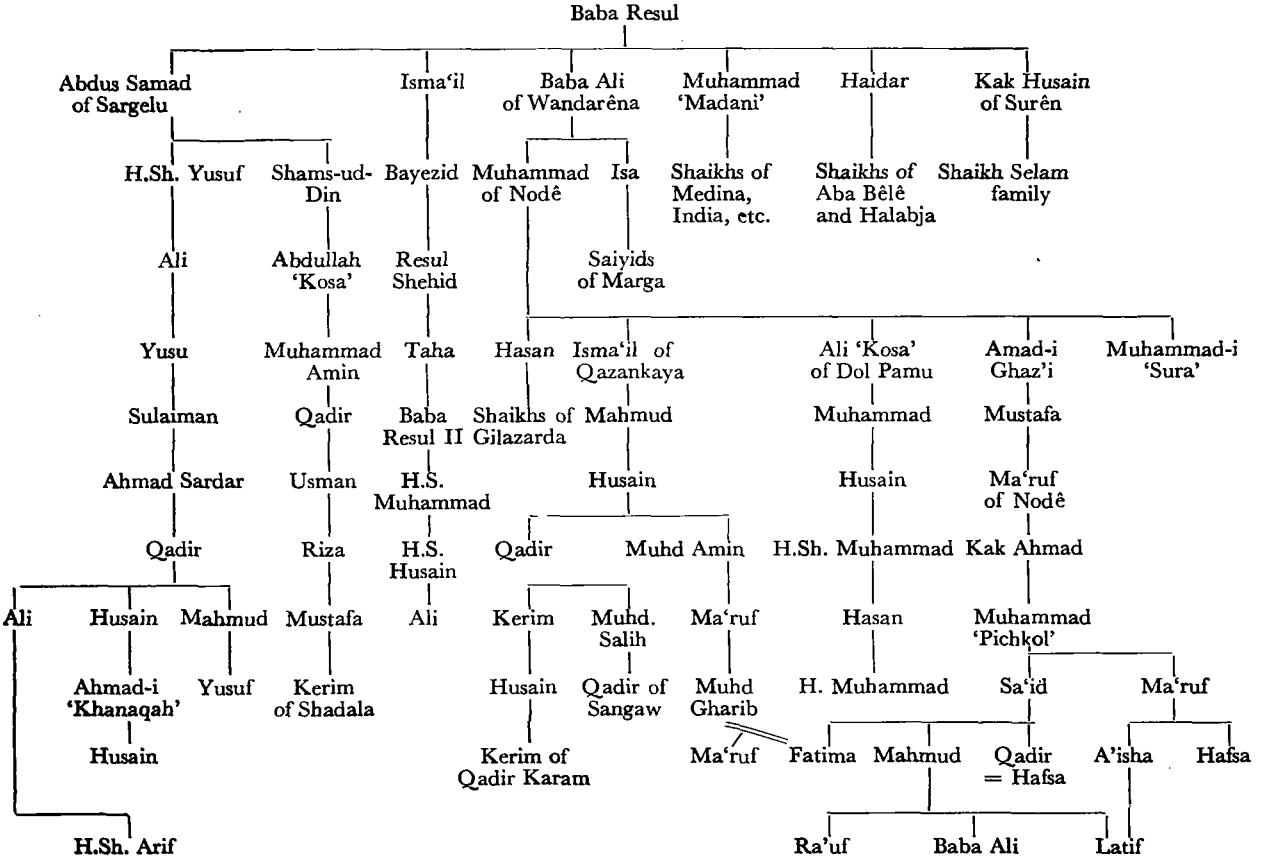
The founder is said to have been a certain Isa Nurbakhsh, son of Baba Ali Hamadani and nephew of Baba Tahir Uryan, the celebrated mystic and dialect poet of Persia. The family tree[1] shows him as a Saiyid in the seventh generation from the seventh Imam, Musa al-Kazim.[2] Saiyid Isa, they relate, set out from Hamadan in company with his brother Musa to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca. At Medina they were told in identical dreams that somewhere on the onward road they would find a large black stone, which they must carry with them wherever they went until bidden in dreams to halt and build a mosque. This duly happened on the return journey at the present site of Barzinja, where they had lain down to sleep, at the end of a weary day, in front (*ber*) of a bower of branches (*zinc*) erected by some shepherds. Obedient to the divine command they stayed and built the mosque that still stands on the spot where they slept that night, inserting the black stone, in the manner of a commemorative foundation stone, in one of the walls. The date of this event is generally given as A.H. 656 (1258), which happens to be the year of the extinction of the Caliphate of Baghdad at the hands of the Mongols.

On the occasion of my second visit to Barzinja in 1929 the Saiyids gave me a more elaborate version of the story which, though it involves a grave anachronism attributable to the confusion of Saiyid Musa with his ancestor the seventh Imam, is nevertheless sufficiently picturesque to deserve reproduction.

[1] I have to thank my friends H. E. Shaikh Baba Ali for having prepared for me a very full extract from the tree preserved in his family, which has enabled me to verify or correct the material I collected when in the country, and H. E. Muhammad Sa'id Qazzaz (now, 1957, Minister of the Interior) for supplementary information regarding the descent of Hajji Shaikh Arif of Sargelu and Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Shadala, who figure in Chapter XIV.

[2] The intermediate ancestors in ascending order are the Saiyids Baba Ali, Yusuf, Mansur, Abdul Aziz, Abdullah, Isma'il.

FAMILY TREE OF THE SAIYIDS OF BARZINJA



The Caliph Harun ar-Reshid, in the course of one of his excursions in disguise through the city of Baghdad, came upon a man about to eat the flesh of a dead donkey and upbraided him for his loathsome action. The man replied that any meat was lawful to one who was starving. The Caliph thereupon gave him a valuable rosary, bidding him sell it and buy lawful food. The man took the rosary to a Jewish goldsmith, who, perceiving his helpless condition, claimed it as one that had been stolen from his own house by a burglar a short time before. The goldsmith lodged a complaint with the Qazi and, in support, produced two witnesses, also Jews, posing as Saiyids in green turbans. The Qazi accepted the evidence of the two 'Saiyids' and ordered the amputation of the poor man's hand. Two or three days later the victim again encountered Harun and begged an alms. The Caliph recognized him and abused him for his improvidence, saying that the proceeds of the sale of the rosary should have kept him in comfort for several years. Hearing the story of what had happened, the incensed monarch had the goldsmith with his witnesses executed and, ignorant of the imposture, ordered that all the Saiyids in Baghdad should be hunted out and put to death. Saiyids Isa and Musa therefore fled to Hamadan and soon afterwards decided to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, with the sequel already related.

The date of the foundation of the Barzinja family of Saiyids is of some importance in the history of certain social and confessional developments in Southern Kurdistan, and deserves a few words of analysis.

According to the family tree Saiyid Musa died childless and all members of the family now found in Kurdistan or known to be resident in Turkey, Syria, India or elsewhere, are descended from a certain Baba Resul surnamed Gewra, the Great, who is of the ninth generation from S. Isa.[1] Baba Resul was blessed with eighteen sons and nine daughters, but only six of the sons left progeny in the male line. The extract from the family tree given in tabular form on the previous page shows the descent of the principal Saiyids mentioned in this book. Baba Resul was succeeded at the Barzinja headquarters by his son Isma'il, whose

[1]The intermediate ancestors in ascending order are the Saiyids: Abdus Saiyid, Resul, Qalandar, Abdus Saiyid, Isa Ahdab the Hunchback, Husain, Bayezid, Abdul Kerim 'Qutb al-A'zam'.

descendants are still found there and in neighbouring villages. Several branches of the family are popularly known by the names of the villages where the other five sons, or their important descendants, founded parent *takyas*: Sargelu, Gilazarda, Qazanqaya, Dol Pamu, Nodê, and so on.

An important date for the study of the chronology of the family is A.H. 1207 (1792–3), the date of a *firmán* granted by Sultan Selim III to S. Taha, great-grandson of Isma'il and therefore of the fourth generation from Baba Resul, by the terms of which certain revenues were allotted for the upkeep of the mosque. If S. Taha was at the height of his influence, enjoying the esteem of the Sultan, in 1792 it would not be unreasonable to assume a date of birth of about 1745.

Another date that can be fixed with certainty is that of Shaikh Ma'ruf of Nodê, great-great-grandfather of Shaikh Mahmud, who was just rising to a position of great prominence when Rich was at Sulaimani in 1820. According to the memoir prefixed to an edition printed at Sulaimani in 1936, of Ma'ruf's '*Aḥmadí*', a rhymed Kurdish-Arabic vocabulary, the Shaikh was born in A.H. 1166 (1752–3) and died in A.H. 1252 (1836–7). According to another book printed at Sulaimani in 1939, *Manáqib-i Kák Aḥmad-i Shaikh*, 'The Miraculous Acts of Shaikh Kak Ahmad', the son was born in A.H. 1207 (1792–3), (therefore when his father was forty years old), and died in A.H. 1305 (1887–8) at the ripe old age of 95.

S. Taha of Barzinja and Shaikh Ma'ruf of Nodê were thus near contemporaries, the former being of the fourth and the latter of the fifth generation from Baba Resul. In a polygamous country the sons of rich families may have tended to marry a first wife young, but infant mortality was high and the men as they aged tended to take other wives progressively younger than themselves; 30–40 would not be too much to allow as the average for a generation. I do not know the exact age of the contemporary Saiyids of the Nodê family, but 1880 for the birth of Shaikh Mahmud[1] and 1915 for his son Baba Ali cannot be far out, both giving an average of 32 or 33 for the generations since Ma'ruf. Assuming an average of 33 for the Nodê branch and 40 for the Barzinja branch we get a date of about 1585 for

[1]Shaikh Mahmud died on the 9th October 1956; an obituary notice in the Sulaimani press gives his date of birth as A.H. 1298= A.D. 1880–1.

the birth of Baba Resul, who can thus safely be said to have flourished early in the seventeenth century.

If the mosque was founded in 1258 we may reasonably assume 1225 to be the approximate date of the birth of S. Isa Nurbakhsh, and this gives us an acceptable average of exactly 40 years for the nine generations from S. Isa to Baba Resul.

At this point we run into difficulties. The family tree gives only seven generations for the 480 years from S. Isa to the Imam Musa, who was born about 745. Although very little is known about the life of Baba Tahir in spite of his fame, according to the anecdote quoted by Browne[1] he was a grown man living in Hamadan at the time of a visit paid to that town between 1055 and 1060 by Tughril Beg the Seljuq. Six generations from the Imam Musa to Baba Tahir gives an acceptable average of just under 40, but if Baba Ali was a brother of Baba Tahir, there is a gap of a little over 200 years, perhaps six generations, between him and S. Isa.

The predominance of the Shaikhs of the Nodê branch of the Barzinja family dates from the disgrace and flight from Sulaimani in 1820 of Maulana Khalid, the famous Naqshbandi teacher, through whom numerous Shaikhs of the order in all parts of the Muslim world trace their spiritual lineage. A contemporary account of the esteem in which he was held and of his fall is given by Rich:

June 24th. There is a great Mahometan saint living in Sulaimania. His name is Shaikh Khaled; but the Koords think it profanation to call him by any other name than *Hazret i Mevlana*, or the holy beloved one; and talk of his sayings as being *Hadeez*, or inspired. He is of the Jaf tribe and is a dervish of the Nakshibendi order, which he embraced at Delhi under the guidance of the celebrated Soofee Sultan Abdulla. He has 12,000 disciples in various parts of Turkey and Arabia. All the Koords call him evlia or saint, and a great many of them almost put him on a footing with their Prophet. Osman Beg (the Pasha's younger brother) who with the Pasha and almost all the principal Koords are his mureeds or disciples, told me that he was at least equal to the famous Mussulman saint, Sheikh Abdul Kader.

October 20th. This morning the great Sheikh Khaled ran away. It is not yet known what direction he has taken . . . His escape was

[1] *A Literary History of Persia*, Cambridge 1926, ii, pp. 117 and 260.

secret and sudden . . . The other day the Koords placed him even above Abdul Kader and the Pasha used to stand before him and fill his pipe for him; today they say he was a Kafir or infidel and tell numbers of stories of his arrogance and blasphemy. He lost consideration on the death of the Pasha's son (on 12th October); he said he would save his life and that he had inspected God's registers concerning him, etc. The cause of his flight is variously reported. Some say he has been making mischief between the Pasha and his brothers, who had desired that he should be confronted with them. Others say he had formed a design of establishing a new sect and making himself temporal as well as the spiritual lord of the country . . . All the regular Ulema and Seyds, with Shaikh Maaroof as their head, hated Shaikh Khaled, who as long as his power lasted, threw them into the background.

The flight of Maulana Khalid is still spoken of in Sulaimani, and I have heard the claim put forward that the real cause of his flight was his defeat and humiliation at the hands of Shaikh Ma'ruf in a miracle-working contest (which of course may have something to do with the cure to be prescribed for the Pasha's ailing son).

Shaikh Ma'ruf was a prolific writer of religious works, but apart from the incident of Shaikh Khalid he is popularly remembered chiefly for his *Kitáb-i Aḥmadí*, the book I have already mentioned,[1] a sort of 'Arabic without Tears'. In the rhymed preface, after the doxology, the author simply says: 'In this booklet written in Kurdish I explain the Arabic language in order that my son Ahmad may without trouble become acquainted with the Arabic vocabulary; I have therefore named it *'Aḥmadí'*. This is not good enough for the biographers, who claim that both the name of the book and the birth of the boy were miracles, because the book was written three years before the child's birth at a time when both the father and the mother (like Abraham and Sarah) were already too old to expect any children at all. A comparison of the date of the birth of the father with that of his son, however, shows, as I have already noted, that he, at any rate, was only 39 or 40.

At the age of 68 Shaikh Ma'ruf had no doubt occupied a secondary position too long to aspire to wear the mantle abandoned on the field by his eminent rival and it remained

[1]Two editions of this book have been published at the local presses: Ruwandiz, 1926, and Sulaimani, 1936.

for the son, Kak Ahmad, to attract to himself all that superstitious veneration which the untutored Kurds have been accustomed to lavish on their chosen saint. His reputation has not become tarnished with time, nor by the unworthy behaviour of some of his heirs.[1] *The Miraculous Acts of Shaikh Kak Ahmad*, published in Kurdish, consists of an introduction by the Editor, Hajji Taufiq 'Piyre-Mêrd' (who mentions, as an indication of his subject's international renown, that he wrote on behalf of some erring Indian Rajah to Queen Victoria and that she not only granted a pardon but also wrote a reply), and eighty pages of biographical material and anecdotes, translated into Kurdish from the Persian dictation of the Shaikh's life-long famulus and house-steward, Aziz-i Usman Agha, surnamed Khwaja Efendi, quite in the manner of the biographies of the great saints of an earlier age.

In theory the performance of miracles is neither an essential nor (according to some) a particularly desirable part of the stock in trade of a dervish Murshid, but popular esteem does in practice depend to a large extent on the degree of his success in convincing the public that he in fact possesses thaumaturgical power (*karáma*). In Kurdistan, not surprisingly, the most highly appreciated of such gifts is the ability to confer immunity against fire-arms by written charms worn on the person or sewn on to the clothes in little envelopes of brightly coloured cloth, for which there is a special word, *gulebend* or bullet-stopper. Considerable space is accordingly devoted to this subject in the *Acts*.

Before his death Shaikh Ma'ruf had instructed his son to perform the pilgrimage and then await the arrival of a great man who possessed the original patent, based on a knowledge of the values of the letters of the alphabet, of the significance of certain numbers, and of the virtues of certain passages of Holy Writ. Kak Ahmad 'accordingly tarried in Mecca for three years until God sent that blessed personage to him from Morocco'. He duly acquired the patent, but before handing out any talisman to others tested its efficacy on himself in the following circumstances.

A maid in charge of the food issued daily to the theological

[1] The family have taken the surname Hafidzada, meaning 'children of the grandson', understand 'of the grandfather *par excellence*'.

students in the great mosque at Sulaimani, having fallen in love with the handsome face and melodious voice of one of their number, sought to seduce him in the manner of Potiphar's wife and then denounced the young Joseph for having attempted an indecent assault upon her. Appearances left room for no possible doubt of the truth of the charge, and the fanatical Ahmad Pasha Baban rejected repeated efforts of Kak Ahmad (who of course did know the truth) to obtain a reprieve from the death sentence pronounced upon him. As the guards led the student, bound and blind-folded, out to the hill of execution Kak Ahmad hurried home, and, having put on a cloak that had belonged to his father and bound the *gulebend* on his arm, caught up with them just in time to pull the lad into his embrace under the cloak as the firing squad pressed their triggers. The two fell to the ground, the whole city resounded with lamentations, and the maid ran to the Pasha to confess the truth. The horrified ruler in his turn rushed to the scene of the tragedy in time to see them both rise from the ground safe and sound, Kak Ahmad's arms still embracing the boy whose life he had saved.

The Shaikh's reputation was now made. The miracle was duly reported by Namiq Pasha of Baghdad to the Sultan, Abdul Hamid, who invited Kak Ahmad to visit Istanbul. The holy man excused himself but sent a *gulebend* by the hand of the Mufti of Sulaimani with a letter of instructions. The emissary was received with great honour but a faction at the Imperial Court hostile to the Qadiri brotherhood persuaded the monarch to allow them to test the talisman on a bullock. By the grace of God and the efficacy of the charm the bullets made no impression on the animal; but when the Sultan returned to his private apartment, where no stranger could enter, he found lying on the table a letter written in the hand, and couched in the style, of Kak Ahmad himself upbraiding him for having ignored the instructions and having used the talisman for a frivolous purpose. This miraculous letter finally dispelled any lingering doubts that might have remained in the royal mind regarding the quality of the distant Kurdish saint and, to make amends for his moment of doubt, the Sultan granted him the revenues of five villages in Shar Bazhêr: Nodê, Bizênyan, Azaban, Kharajyan and Wêladar.

The editor in his introduction claims that the *gulebend* of Kak

Ahmad did in fact on at least one occasion save Abdul Hamid's life:

On the day when the Armenians placed a bomb under the mounting-block before the gate of the Hamidiya mosque, timed to go off under his feet at the very moment when he would be stepping on to the stone to mount his carriage, seventy or eighty carriages and between one hundred and two hundred persons were blown sky-high and perished, but no blood issued from the horses harnessed to the royal carriage and Sultan Hamid got into it shouting, 'I am wearing Kak Ahmad's *gulebend*; how can a bomb make any impression on me?'[1]

The Acts recorded fall for the most part into the usual pattern: Vengeance (as in the grim story of the Ja'fari cleric from Persia who, at the memorial readings after the death of Shaikh Ma'ruf, ventured to argue with Kak Ahmad about the nature of punishment after death and was told that he would know all about it for himself before morning); Appearances in dreams to disciples in distress; Clairvoyance such as the detection of hospitality not paid for by the host or of meat not properly slaughtered; Knowledge of future events; Creation of gold coins, generally for his steward when at a loss how to pay for his master's expenses and generosity; and so on. Many of the stories are quite interesting but for reasons of space I will reproduce only one more, chosen for its connexion with an incident of local history already recorded in an earlier chapter, and as an example of the naïve assumption that seems to underlie many of them that as against outsiders any Kurd is deserving of the miraculous intervention of a Kurdish saint on his behalf without very much regard to the real merits of the case.

The Hamawand tribe, who were exceedingly bold and brave, had reduced the Turks and the Persians to a state of terror. Finally the Government by a stratagem enticed them to Sulaimani and exiled them in a mass, children and grown-ups, women and men, entire families and even their servants and dependants. Some of them were assigned to the island of Rhodes, another group was sent to Tripoli in Africa, others were sent elsewhere. After some years they all made their escape. The party from Tripoli became involved in

[1]The incident referred to must be the attempt on Abdul Hamid's life at the Selamlik on Friday, 21st July 1905. See Sir A. T. Waugh, *Turkey: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, London, 1930, p. 105, and Ryan, op. cit., p. 41.

fighting on the way, and a force of Arabs pursued them. One evening they reached the banks of the Euphrates and wished to cross but no boat or ferryman was to be seen, and the enemy were approaching rapidly. At that critical moment they heard a voice, the exact sound of the voice of Kak Ahmad, saying: 'Follow me'. So they went after the voice and lo! there, tied to the bank, was a ferry-boat. They crossed in groups one after the other. When the enemy reached the river they saw that the ferry-boat was on the other side and returned frustrated. All the Hamawand, every man jack of them, tell this story.

Maulana Khalid is a personage of great importance in the history of the dervish orders for it was he who first introduced the Naqshbandi Path into Southern Kurdistan. He was a Jaf tribesman of the Mika'ili section and was born at the village of Qara Dagh in 1779. After studying first under his father and then, in the manner of the time, under a variety of teachers in Senna, Sulaimani, Baghdad and elsewhere, at the age of 26 he made the pilgrimage. From Mecca he went on to India and, as Rich mentions, continued his studies under Shah Abdullah of Delhi, who initiated him into the Path and licensed him to hand it on to others. On the way home he stopped for some months at Senna where he initiated his former teacher. After his return to Iraq, perhaps about the year 1808, he resided alternately in Sulaimani and Baghdad, acquiring a great vogue as a Murshid among all classes, high and low.

He never returned to Sulaimani after the affair of 1820, but it is not always admitted that he was worsted by his Qadiri rival. A Naqshbandi Murid once assured me that the exact opposite was the case. 'You must know,' he said, 'that Shaikh Ma'ruf hated Shaikh Khalid. He had as pupils his own son Kak Ahmad and Shaikh Abdur Rahman of Talaban,[1] and one day he ordered them to go and kill the great man. They started out, but as they approached the presence a sort of paralysis seized their feet and only left them if they turned to go away. They recited all the appropriate formulae prescribed by their own Path without avail and returned to report failure. Ma'ruf sent them again, but this time they were overcome by temporary blindness. They then decided that it would be useless to persist and that they would be wiser to pay their respects to the

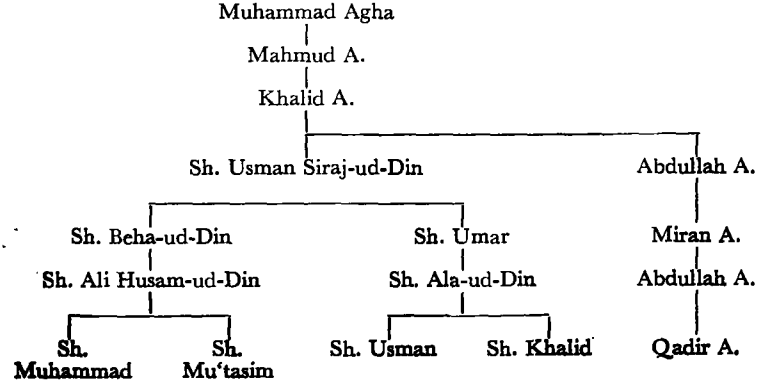
[1]See p. 271.

saint as pious pilgrims. They had thus made their way into the presence when Kak Ahmad, seeing a figure robed in white in the half-light of the chamber, raised his pistol to fire; but his hand was paralysed in the act. Then at last the two emissaries fell on the ground, kissed the feet of their intended victim, and begged to be initiated into the Naqshbandi Path. He satisfied their desire but, Shaikh Abdul Qadir-i Gilani having told him in a dream that his future lay in Syria, he decided to depart.[1] However that may be, outside Sulaimani his standing does not appear to have been compromised in any way, and he continued to flourish, first at Baghdad and later at Damascus, until his death in 1826 at the early age of 47.

In my time the most important Naqshbandi Murshids, of all three of whom I shall have something to say in the following chapters, were Saiyid Ahmad-i Khanaqah of Kirkuk and Shaikhs Husam-ud-Din and Ala-ud-Din of the Hewraman. The first belonged to the Sargelu branch of the Barzinja family and appears in the left-hand column of the family tree. The other two were Prayer-carpet Shaikhs, grandsons of Shaikhs Usman Siraj-ud-Din, a member of the leading Agha family[2] of the considerable market village of Tawêla. Their influence was perhaps greater on the Persian side than on the Iraqi.

[1]There is nothing incongruous about this. The veneration paid to a great saint like Shaikh Abdul Qadir is universal and not confined to members of the dervish order which he founded. It is not uncommon for one person to receive two Paths. The author of the *Miraculous Acts of Kak Ahmad* records that in later life his hero entertained the happiest relations with Shaikh Khalid's principal successor, Shaikh Usman of Biyara, with whom he exchanged Paths.

[2]The following tree given to me by Qadir Agha of Tawêla shows the principal members of the family:



Another important dynasty of Saiyids, most of whom are to be found on the Persian side of the boundary in the neighbourhood of Halabja, claim descent from a famous saint generally known as Pir Khidhr of Shaho, of whom it is related that whenever he sat down on the bare ground fresh green grass and spring flowers would immediately appear in the place, even in the depth of winter. I was once told that his real name was S. Shihab-ud-Din and that his tomb is still to be seen on the frontier mountain of Bamo. The claim of his descendants that Shah Abbas (1587–1629), when he came to these parts, was proud to give him a daughter in marriage would put his date in the first quarter of the seventeenth century and so make him a contemporary of Baba Resul of Barzinja.

There are in Southern Kurdistan other Saiyid families such as the Shaikhani of Gil and the Na'im of the Arab fringes, but they are of little political importance. The role of the Prayer-carpet Shaikhs of the Talabani family is tribal rather than religious and an account of them will best be left to the chapter dealing with tribal and administrative conditions in the liwa of Kirkuk.

VII LIFE AT SULAIMANI

UNDER the Turks the liwa of Sulaimani consisted of the five qazas of Chamchemal (which I have already described) to the west, Halabja to the south-east, Headquarters in the centre and south, Shar Bazhêr to the north-east, and Pizhdar, or M'murat-al-Hamid, in the extreme north. Of the various qazas of Arbil which had been transferred in 1918 to the dominion of Shaikh Mahmud only Ranya, west of Pizhdar, remained after April 1919. A British A.P.O. had been placed in charge of each of these qazas except Pizhdar which, under the general superintendence of A.P.O. Ranya, was administered by a Qaimmaqam, Babakr Agha, chief of the Pizhdar tribe, a very remarkable man of whom I shall have much to say in due course.

The normal population of Sulaimani town was just about

10,000 of whom 9,000 were Muslim Kurds, 750 Jews and 120 Chaldean Christians.[1] For purposes of municipal administration it was divided into seven quarters (*gerhek*): Goyzha, Malkandi, Kaniyaskan, Dargezain, Sarshaqam, Chwarbakh and Julekan (the Jewish quarter). Dargezain is interesting as having been founded, according to local accounts, by a group of six or seven Sunni families from a quarter of the same name in Hamadan, whence they fled to escape from the persecution of the Shi'a majority.

Before the war Sulaimani had been famous for the manufacture of the rifles with which a large part of Kurdistan on both sides of the Persian boundary was armed; Mark Sykes (1902) mentions that at the time of his visit there were no fewer than 150 competent gunsmiths turning out very creditable imitations of the Martini-Peabody. The craft gradually died out after our occupation, but the cartridges continued for some time to be the standard weights used in the bazaar for weighing out groceries and other commodities. The more important merchants were interested principally in the tobacco industry, but among the smaller traders there were as many doing business with Bana, Saqqiz, and Senna in Persia as with Baghdad, Kirkuk and Mosul.

None of the writers mentioned in my list of British visitors had anything very flattering to say about the external appearance of the town, and the entries in my own diary at this time are no exception. 'A most disappointing place, mostly in ruins and in any case little more than a collection of mud huts; . . . the general impression I get is one of open spaces revealed by broken walls and crumbling ruins with brittle hay growing to a height of over a foot on the neglected mud roofs; . . . almost the only building with an outward appearance of good repair is the mosque of Kak Ahmad near the western entrance of the town, its neat minaret decorated with a glistening pattern, in green and white tiles and bricks, as are the cupola and the Mu'azzin's gallery.' This, of course, was not the whole truth for, as I discovered later, hidden behind many of the peeling mud walls were considerable mansions built of burnt brick in the Persian style, with pleasant gardens, trellised arbours, run-

[1]These figures are based on a register compiled by the Municipality in 1925, when the population had returned to normal after the devastation of 1918–19.

ning water, and tanks looking deliciously cool with their turquoise-blue tiles.

Nevertheless it was not surprising that Sulaimani should have had a particularly woe-begone appearance at this time. For the last year of the war trade had been at a standstill, cultivation had been neglected, Turkish exactions had been merciless, and famine had taken a heavy toll of human and animal life. When Noel arrived in November 1918 corpses were lying in the streets and in deserted houses, there had been cases of cannibalism, and of the normal population less than a third remained; it was similarly calculated that about two-thirds of the population of the surrounding villages had scattered or perished. His first duty had been to provide food and clothing for the starving and naked, and to procure seed, plough-cattle and implements for the cultivators. These humanitarian services were never forgotten and were frequently recalled with gratitude in later years, never with more touching emphasis than in public speeches delivered at a reception on the occasion of my last visit twenty-seven years later.

The business of cleaning up the town had of course been interrupted by the rebellion, and for some time after the relief we lived in great squalor. Military H.Q. occupied the former Political Office, actually a secondary school built by public subscription, which the people not unnaturally were constantly pressing us to release, while the Political Mess and Office were now housed in the 'Dabbo', already mentioned as having been the prison of the British personnel during the rising. This was a large, dusty compound surrounded, like a Persian caravanserai, by a warren of small rooms, where we lived and worked in promiscuity with Kurdish servants, Indian surveyors, the guard, muleteers, storemen and other persons of indeterminate occupation. The sole furniture of my room was a camp-bed and a canvas water-bucket set on the bare stone floor, and the light of the hurricane lantern was so poor that it was virtually impossible to read or write after dark. Flies by day and sandflies by night were a perpetual torment, and in the whole of my career I can remember no more unpleasant experience than the two whole days and nights which I spent in bed, or rather on my bed, in the open verandah of the Dabbo, racked by sandfly fever, the symptoms of which are a splitting headache

and an extraordinarily high temperature,[1] while an appalling *rhesheba*, the 'black wind' of Kurdistan, covered my sheets and pillow, and filled my mouth, eyes and ears, with all the chopped straw, grime and filth of an oriental stable-yard.

The *rhesheba* blows in many parts of Kurdistan and is an important element to be considered in the assessment of the climate of any locality. In the summer it is hot and relaxing, like the *khamsín* of Egypt or the *sharjí* of lower Iraq; in winter it is bitterly cold. Various explanations of this phenomenon have been given by travellers. In my experience the worst places are under the lee of a long ridge, on the south-west; the wind from the north-east comes over the crest with a bump and streams down the mountainside and some way across the valley before it dies away; this is exactly the situation of Sulaimani and Koi. More than once, when sleeping on the roof I had my bedclothes ripped off me and, when I got out to retrieve them, the camp-bed lifted like a match stick and blown over into the courtyard; on *rhesheba* nights it is wiser to sleep below, stifling as this may be.

During the first week or two after the re-occupation much of my time was taken up with a military Court of Inquiry into the causes and circumstances of the outbreak. I have quite forgotten what conclusion we came to, and all I remember (apart from my resentment at the waste of time) is that the weather was unpleasantly sultry, that we sat from half-past six in the morning till five in the afternoon with the shortest of breaks in the middle of the day and that the President spent most of the time asleep with his face buried in his arms on the table while I interrogated the witnesses in Persian, myself translating question and answer for the other member, Colonel B——, to make a verbatim record in long hand.

One of our earliest tasks was to reform the Levy regiment and to reorganize the police; in the evenings accordingly, after the sittings of the Court of Inquiry, I used to preside over the administration to the recruits of a new oath of fidelity prescribed by the General. Neither of these forces had supported the rebellion with any enthusiasm; indeed Mahmud's own brother,

[1] I believe that the name was given to this affliction long before the connexion with the sandfly was actually proved; though in no way dangerous it is most exhausting and after a bad attack like this one I generally felt quite weak for three weeks or more.

Colonel Shaikh Qadir, the Commanding Officer of the Levies, had taken the chief British instructor, Major A. M. Daniels, into his own house for several days, and his wife, Hafsa Khan,[1] a masterful lady who took a prominent part in local politics for many years, was reported to have slept in the passage across the doorway of Daniels's room in order to ensure that no emissary of her brother-in-law should do him harm; nevertheless both Qadir and his wife fled the town when the relief column arrived and were too fearful to accept the safe-conduct which I was authorized to give them.

The senior Kurdish officer was Bimbashi Riza Beg, who had seen active service in more than one Turkish campaign and who was now to receive a sword of honour from General Sir George MacMunn, the Commander-in-Chief, in recognition of his loyal services. He was good company in the evenings, a lively raconteur given to the most fantastic exaggerations. In spite of the set-back of the rebellion we were at that time ahead of the rest of the occupied territory in entrusting administrative responsibility to men of the country, and as soon as he could be spared from his military duties he was appointed A.P.O. Shar Bazhêr.

Several of the other officers were men of the world, competent soldiers and well-read in Turkish and Persian literature. Of these I need only make specific mention here of one who in later years became a great friend of mine and to whom I owe a lasting debt of gratitude for help and guidance in prosecuting my Kurdish studies. It was one day towards the end of my time at Sulaimani that I received a visit from a stranger, who had only just returned from Turkey and in consequence had not been involved in the events just chronicled. He introduced himself, in the mincing Turkish pronunciation, as Tevfik Vehbi (Taufiq Wahbi), Major-on-the-Staff. I was much impressed by his manifest ability and recommended him for immediate appointment to the post of A.P.O. Ranya, to replace Captain R. E. Barker who, with Babakr Agha's help, had successfully held the district during the rebellion and was about to be demobilized. I believe he took up the appointment after my departure, but when I next met him he was serving as the first Commandant of the Military College set up in Baghdad on the

[1]The name of a lady of prominent family is followed by the male title of 'Khan'; she is referred to as 'Khanim', the Lady, when the name is not mentioned.

lines of Sandhurst to train officers for the newly established Iraqi Army. He is now a member of the Iraqi Senate.

On most evenings the Levies used to turn out for dancing in the open square in front of the Dabbo. I do not know enough about either music or dancing in general to give a very satisfactory description of the *chopiy* of Sulaimani. As far as I can see, it is very similar to, if not identical with, dancing as practised by villagers in other parts of Kurdistan, in Western Persia, and no doubt Asiatic Turkey. The variations are known by special names, but I cannot be sure whether the difference is always in the step or sometimes only in the tune or the words of the accompanying song. Most varieties have this in common that the dancers form a line, have the arms hanging at their sides, and hold hands at the level of the hips; the music is provided by two or more pipers (*zurnajen*), so that it can go on indefinitely, and perhaps drummers (*deholhjen*); the performer on the extreme right of the line is the leader (*serchopiykêsh*) and both he and the outside man on the left wave scarves with the free hand in time to the music; the dance consists of a series of steps which cause the line to sway backwards and forwards and also sideways; newcomers join in, or individual dancers drop out as they tire, without interrupting the figure. In the commonest variety, called *Rhoyne* (Andante), the line is in the form of a segment of a circle and gradually revolves until each dancer has moved round in a complete circle or more. Other varieties which I noted at different times and at different places are: *Sêpêyiy*, three step; *Milanê*, in which the shoulders of each dancer were pressed especially closely against those of his neighbours; *Shêkhaniy*, a fast step with pronounced hops and tending to end up in horse-play; and *Ayishok*, to the words of a love-song celebrating 'Little A'isha', in which the dancers formed a complete circle. When women join in the *chopiy*, as they commonly do out in the villages, it is called *Rhesh-belhek*, Motley.

Open-air amusements and celebrations have always been popular in Sulaimani, as Rich's narrative clearly shows, and I was often regaled with stories of an annual spring carnival of ancient origin, a kind of saturnalia, which had fallen into disuetude either during or only shortly before the war. At the vernal equinox, which marks the old Iranian new year, the

whole population would flock out to the Sarchinar springs for a festival which involved the appointment of a Lord of Misrule with very real powers, the temporary upsetting of many of the canons of ordinary behaviour, and the almost complete suspension of normal administration. Senator Taufiq Wahbi, in some notes on Kurdish folk-lore contributed to *Sumer*, the journal of the Directorate-General of Antiquities in Iraq,[1] refers briefly to this custom.

On the morning of the appointed day the people of Sulaimani leave the town and gather in the place of celebration. A king is enthroned, his courtiers and guards are appointed. The king proceeds on an ox followed by his courtiers amidst the crowd towards the camp where tents are pitched, *diwans* are formed, and cauldrons are set out. Certain individuals masked with the skins of sheep and goats represent domestic animals in mime throughout the ceremony, which lasts for three whole days. The chief is implicitly obeyed. He even imposes taxes on persons whether absent or present at the meeting. He continues to enjoy the title of 'Pasha' until another similar celebration is held. In my opinion this celebration is in fact a commemoration of Feridun's rebellion against the tyrannical Dragon-King Zahhak in which, as we read in Firdausi's *Shahnama*, Feridun overthrew Zahhak and recovered the throne of Iran. The Kurds say that Feridun led his forces to the attack mounted on a cow.

I naturally had a good deal of business with the Mayor, through whom prices were fixed and the food supply of the town assured. Ghafur Agha was a leading citizen of the Dargezain quarter and claimed descent from one of the original Hamadan refugees; in confirmation of his Persian origin he quoted to me the name of his grandfather, Agha Taha, pointing out that whereas the title Agha in Persia always comes before the name, in Kurdistan it is always placed after it. I remember that a certain Mushir Agha of the Begzada family of Hamawand, whom we had appointed, on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, to command the guards on the Kirkuk–Sulaimani road, was anxious to marry Ghafur Agha's daughter and was constantly pestering me to 'order' his prospective father-in-law to lower his price for the bride; I wondered whether it was fair on a town girl to encourage a match with such an uncouth tribesman, and I fear that I did not execute

[1] 'The Rock Sculptures of Gunduk Caves' in *Sumer*, vol. iv, No. 2 of 1948.

his commission with any great persistence; however they were eventually married, I believe quite happily.

Another important person, and a striking character, was Rabi'a Khan, head of the bakers. In any oriental town there is always a danger that the bread supply will prove to be the weak point in the defences of the local authority against subversive intrigue. But Rabi'a was another of those masterful ladies who are not rare in Kurdistan; she detested Shaikh Mahmud and was intensely loyal to the administration. Thanks to her sage advice and her firm control over her fellow tradesmen we were spared any difficulties in this connexion.

One of my earliest callers was the Chaldean priest, a sombre black-bearded figure wearing a black cassock and a black turban wrapped closely round a red skull-cap. He told me that his flock consisted of about thirty families, all resident in the Goyzha quarter, and that most of the humbler members followed the trade of *mutábchi*, makers of the loosely woven black sacks in which tobacco is baled. The leading layman was a highly respectable and respected merchant named Kerim Alaka, whose advice was always sound and two of whose sons were among the most reliable clerks in our office; one of them later studied medicine and returned to his native town to serve the community as a doctor.

The Jews who, as I have already mentioned, numbered about 750 souls, had a quarter to themselves, a long straggling tail to the town at the down-stream end, where the drainage of the other quarters converged; here, as was usual in Kurdistan, they practised the unpleasant trades such as dyeing, tanning and the distillation of spirits.

There was, of course, a constant stream of tribal visitors from all parts of the liwa coming in to assure government of their loyalty after the recent troubles. The accompanying photograph (Plate 1 (*a*)) of Babakr Agha, Chief of Pizhdar, with Mahmud Pasha, the last great Chief of the nomadic Jaf and brother of Usman Pasha, husband of the Lady Adila, was taken on the occasion of an artillery display given by Brigadier-General Morris at Qaliyasan for the edification of the people generally and the tribal chiefs in particular. It well illustrates two contrasting sartorial styles and will serve as a convenient point of departure for a description of Kurdish male costume.

The Kurdish names of the principal articles of clothing are as follows: *pêlhaw* (foot-gear), which may be *kewsh* (a leather shoe generally having no heel, a long pointed flap up behind, and the sole rising to a point at the toe) or *kelhash* (resembling the Persian *malikí* or *giva* with the soles of compressed rags and the upper of woven cotton); *gorewiy* (socks) or *gorewiy' laskdrêj* (stockings); *derpê* (white cotton drawers of peg top cut, not infrequently worn without trousers); *rhanik* (trousers of locally woven material), or *pantolh* (trousers of imported cloth); *bendexön* (the 'pyjama-cord' for keeping up the *derpê* or *rhanik*, tied not round the waist but low on the hips); *binkras* (under-vest); *kras* (shirt, generally of white cotton like the drawers); *feqyane* (pointed shirt-sleeve long enough to hang down to the ground but more commonly worn either rolled round and up the fore-arm outside the jacket, or with the two tips tied together behind the neck); *suxme* (a jacket put on before the following); *choghe* (jacket worn over the *suxme*, also outside the drawers but inside the trousers); *pishtên* (waist-band, generally a piece of cotton print, sometimes several yards in length, twisted into a rope and wound round the waist);[1] *pestek* (thick felted waistcoat worn over the jacket); *klhaw* (soft skull cap) or *teple* (hard felt hat); *mêzer* (turban consisting of the cap or hat wound about with one, two or three 'squares' which are called *camane*, *mishkiy* or *chefte* according as they are of cotton, of grey and black striped silk woven in Persia, or bright coloured silk woven in Baghdad, and which may be worn in combination); and finally the *ferenciy* (short felt overcoat), or the *qapuwt* (long felt overcoat), or the Persian or Arab *'abá* or cloak.

It is usual to carry a dagger, the handle of which may be of ivory or of horn; it measures about sixteen inches over-all and is slightly curved towards the point; the scabbard is of wood and

[1]The *pishtên* is not wound round and round in one direction. A length of eighteen inches or so of one end of the twisted material is held upright against the body in front; the rest of the band is held coiled like a rope for convenience of handling and is carried first to the right, round behind and forward from the left; here it is looped round the upright section drawn tight and carried back in the reverse direction of left, behind, right; it is now looped again and carried back, right, behind, left, and so on. The winding which starts down on the hips (just clear of the cord of the trousers if these are being worn) works upwards and is continued until the whole length has been used; the layers are then pressed together and the two ends are secured so as to keep the whole waistband firm and tight. The *pishtên* may then be as much as a foot in width, affording valuable support to the body. The chain effect of the looping in front can be seen clearly in the photograph of Babakr Agha.

is generally covered with leather, but it may be cased in hammered silver or, rarely, gold; it is worn thrust into the *pishtên* and may have a rosary (*tezbêh*) for the wearer to fiddle with wound round the handle. Villagers often carry a tobacco pouch hitched on to the *pishtên* at the side, and a long pipe with a small bowl either in the *pishtên* or pushed down the back of the neck inside the *choghe*.

In the south Arab influence shows itself in the wearing of the *kewa* (Arabic *zabún*), a gown reaching from the neck to the ankles with the sides meeting across the front of the body and divided at each side, from the ankle nearly to the knee, by a short slit; it is held together by a flat belt or a narrow *pishtên*; a *kewa* may be of plain cotton or of bright patterned silk according to the wealth and taste of the wearer. A *choghe* cannot be worn with the *kewa* and is replaced either by the *selhte*, a short 'Eton' jacket (a favourite colour being bright blue), or by an imported European jacket or overcoat or, where Persian influence is felt, a similar garment made of Cashmere shawl. Trousers of peg-top cut may be worn under the *kewa*, but the *derpê* is worn in any case. The '*abá* is frequently worn over all. This is the style affected by all but the poorest classes in the southern towns, by the Jaf, by other tribesmen who, like the Hamawand, live south of the line Beranan–Binzird, and by the religious Shaikhs almost everywhere. The poorer or less pretentious townsmen and villagers of the south wear the *choghe* and a rather skimpy *rhanik* of the plain home-spun cloth, often grey or fawn in colour, called *buzuw*.

The central fashion prevails from the Azmir–Qarasird line northwards to about the latitude of Ruwandiz, that is to say in the northern qazas of Sulaimani, in the greater part of the liwa of Arbil, and in the adjacent Persian district of Sauj Bulaq, the Mukri country. The peg-top trousers tend to be baggier than those of the south, the *choghe*, if made of imported material, may be thickly quilted, the *pishtên* is often tied very broad, and when the *pestek* is worn over all the wearer has a hunched over-clothed appearance; indeed the thickness of the clothes which a Kurd can wear in the hottest weather is quite astonishing. The material of the *choghe* and the trousers (whether *pantolh* or *rhanik*) is generally the same but not necessarily so. The colour of suits of imported cloth varies with the stocks available in the

bazaars but the most fashionable, as I remember them, were bottle-green, dark claret, and a particularly horrible mustard. *Buzuw* is commonly biscuit, or 'off-white' with grey stripes.

From Ruwandiz northwards and in most parts of the Mosul liwa the trousers are ample, hang straight, and are sometimes slightly bell-bottomed. *Choghe* and *rhanik* are almost invariably made of local *buzuw*, the best qualities of which used to be woven by the Jews and Armenians at Zakho in a wide choice of the most attractive designs, colours and waterings. The suits are made up from two lengths, about a foot wide, one for the *choghe* and one for the *rhanik*, ranging from a plain biscuit or electric blue (the dye for which is extracted from the root of the lily) to strips of varying width and colour, with lozenges or other decorations inset in the broader stripes; the *choghe* length generally has more of such ornaments than the *rhanik*, and the whole suit is further embellished by embroidery round the collar and sleeves, at the trouser pockets and round the ankles.

In all three regions, except when the *kewa* is worn, it is usual, on a journey, to tuck the end of the trousers inside the stockings (which are loosely knitted and generally natural 'off-white' in colour) so that they hang for all the world like a pair of well-cut plus-fours. Sometimes, under Russian influence, the trousers are thrust into top-boots.

There is a bewildering variety of head-dress everywhere, and even when the materials are the same it is often possible to make a shrewd guess, according to the way the turban is tied or even the angle at which it is worn, from what district or tribe the wearer comes. A turban is generally tied over a *klhaw*, but in some places over a *teple*. In the extreme south it is generally composed of a single *camane*, the same cotton square of white and dark-blue check imported from Manchester for the Arab *kafiya*, tied small and tight; but some men wear the *camane* Arab fashion, held in place by the Arab *'aqâl* or by another *camane* tied round the head. As one goes north the tying becomes looser and the *camane* is combined with a *chefte* or a *mishkiy* (or even both) to make the large, clumsy and most unpractical article affected by many of the Jaf Begzadas, worldly Shaikhs, and town notables. In the Hewraman the turban is tied round a low *teple*. In Pizhdar and Mukri a common form of turban is made up of two *mishkiys* wound round a *klhaw* which is not the

ordinary skull-cap but a rather stiff cone made of green, purple or orange velvet, and having a tassel at the peak; the *mishkiy* square is particularly large and the resulting turban is unpleasantly heavy; a length of ordinary cotton print is sometimes used instead of the squares. Farther north the hard felt *teple* comes back in various shapes, and in some fashions the encircling turban-cloths are sewn on to keep them permanently in place.[1]

Early in July Greenhouse and I arranged to hire a little house belonging to one of our clerks, a dear old gentleman named Sa'id Efendi who spoke and wrote an old-fashioned classical Persian of which Sa'di need not have been ashamed. There was a delightful little garden with the usual tiled tank, fed by a perpetual runnel, in the shade of a vine trellis, and the house itself was a good example of the modest local domestic architecture, of which I will now try to give a general description.

The typical house and garden are, of course, completely enclosed, by the outer walls of the house where it abuts on the street (*kolhan*) and elsewhere by a wall (*diywar*) of mud brick (*xisht y kalh*) protected by a coping (*sereswane*) of twigs covered with mud. The entrance to the garden (*baxche*) is by a small gate-house or porch (*dalhan*) with perhaps a low platform (*seko*) of beaten earth or of stone and mortar on each side to serve as benches; similar seats on the outside of the gate-house are called *xwacanushiyn*. Immediately within, and in line with the porch, are the bake-house (*sertenuwr*) and kitchen (*chêshtxane*), a bath

[1]In Plate 1 (*a*) Mahmud Pasha is wearing a Cashmere overcoat, trousers thrust into top-boots and, being an old man, an unusually light turban of a single *camane*. The picture of Babakr Agha illustrates the very baggy *pantolh* of the central style, the link method of tying the *pishtên*, the *feqyane* tied round the cuff, and the large loose turban of cotton print tied round the conical *klhaw*; in Plate 11 (*a*) he is wearing the *pestek* over the *choghe* and a more characteristic turban of *mishkis*. In Plate 2 (*b*) S. Taha's costume is in the central style, but the head-dress is his own national knitted 'Balaclava' and the short jacket over the *choghe* is unusual. Sh. Mahmud (Plate 11 (*b*)) is wearing a padded *choghe* and a turban of combined *camane* and *chefte*, but the *camane* is unusually light in colour. Plate 6 (*a*) illustrates the 'plus-four' effect of peg-top *rhanik* of *buzuw* thrust into stockings. Plate 2 (*a*) shows the southern style at its most elegant: silk *kewa*, medium *pishtên* (the revolver ammunition in a belt strapped over it is just visible), *selhte*, *feqyane* tied behind the neck, loose turban of at least one *camane* and two *cheftes* with tassels. In Plate 12 (*b*) Sh. Qadir is wearing a similar costume but with a white silk *'abá* over all. In Plate 1 (*b*) the Hamawand horseman in mid-stream has the *feqyane* tied behind the neck and is wearing the *camane* Arab fashion with *'aqál*. In Plate 13 (*a*) Sa'id Agha of Ja'faran, in front, has the *kewa* tucked back, showing the calico *derpê*.

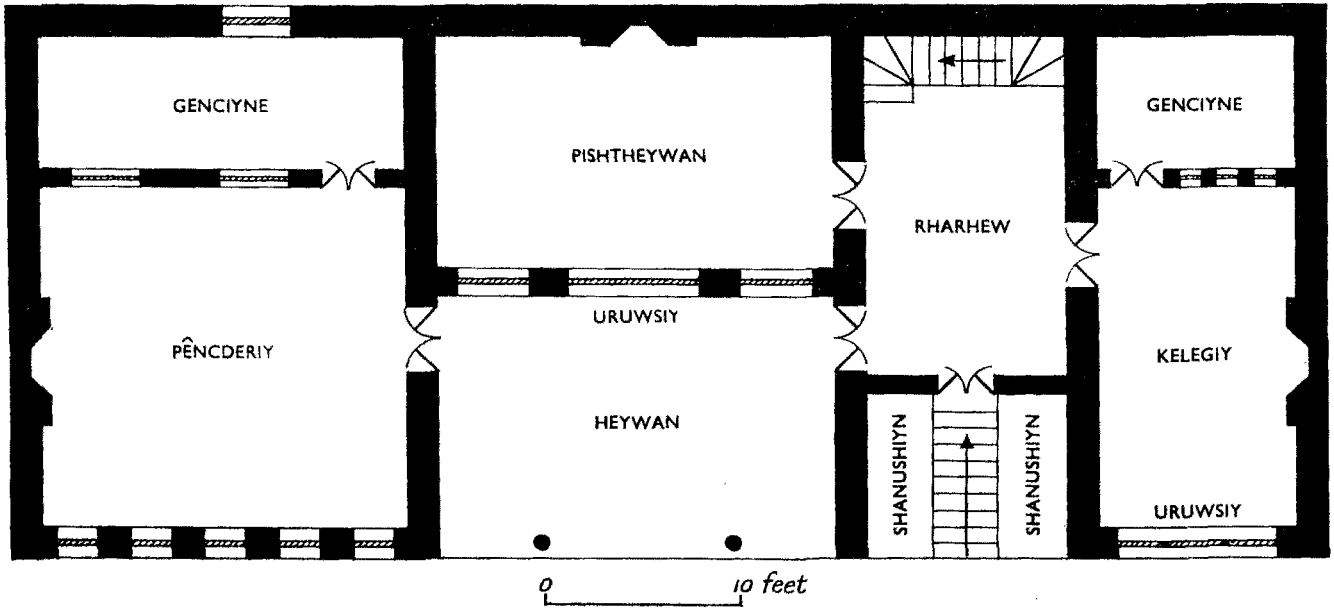


Fig. 1. Plan of Kurdish Town House: First Floor. Scale about 1: 100".

(*hemam*) and the latrine (*abxane*). Beside the tank (*hewz*) there is probably a *seko* where carpets are spread for the evening gathering. The house itself is approached through the garden and is built of stone and lime (*berd-u gech*) or burnt brick (*xisht y suwr*); it consists of a ground floor or basement (*jêrxan*) which may be divided into servant's room, straw-store (*kayên*) and even a stable (*tewiyle*), and of an upper storey (*serxan*). This may be reached by a flight of steps (*pliykane*) leading up either direct from the garden or from the end of an open passage (*rharhew*) which bisects the ground floor in depth. In either case the stairs lead to another *rharhew* which divides the rooms of the first floor. These are arranged with a frontage of three rooms and a depth of two or perhaps a frontage of two and a depth of two or three; they may be of several kinds. In any case, on one side of the upper *rharhew*, instead of a room there will be a verandah (*heywan*) completely open at the front. The forward part of the first floor *rharhew* is also used as a verandah, but is called *shanushiyn*. The roof over the *heywan* is supported by wooden pillars (*kolheke*) often embellished with capitals (*kotere*) of quite classical form that certainly represent a very ancient tradition. On the other side of the *rharhew* (or, if there is a three-room frontage, beyond the *heywan*) there is a sitting-room called *sêderiy*, *chwarderiy* or *pêncderiy* according as it has three, four or five french windows flush with the front wall; if there is a third front room it is probably a *kelegiy*, that is a room with the front formed of sash windows (*uruwsiy*) sliding up behind elaborate woodwork. The room immediately behind the verandah, from which it is lighted, is called *pishtheywan* and may be used as a bedroom. There is generally an open fire-place, with chimney, in each of these rooms, and sometimes in the *heywan* and the *rharhew*. A very small house in this general style would consist of a single living-room behind a verandah, and is called *hode-w heywan*, 'room-and-verandah'. Behind the *sêderiy* and *kelegiy* are narrow closets (*genciyne*) which may be lighted by windows in the wall between them and the room in front or by small casements in the outer walls of the house. On the inside the walls of all rooms are plastered and have arched recesses to serve as shelves. The roof (*serban*) is constructed of main beams (*kariyte*) of poplar (*spindar*) and cross-rafters (*darerha*), upon which are placed, first a course of thin oak branches or twig

with their leaves (*chiluw*), then a layer of reeds or coarse grass (*zel*), then about eighteen inches of earth, and finally a top-dressing of about three inches of mud plaster mixed with chopped straw; the projecting eaves are called *göswane*. Every roof is provided with a heavy log or a large cylinder of solid stone (*bagirdên*), and is rolled immediately after rain to keep it watertight; in Sulaimani there is a pleasant custom whereby the richer families having two or more compounds of the kind described and, in consequence, more *jêrxan* rooms than they need, allow poor families to live in them and ask nothing more in return than that they shall roll the roofs at the appropriate times; such lodgers are known as *jêrmalhe*. A single second-room floor (*balhexane*) is often built over the *rharhew* of the first floor and serves as a bedroom. In summer the middle and lower classes sleep on the roofs, and at sundown there is a scene of great animation as the bedding is brought out and laid on wooden benches of the coffee-shop type (*textebend*), or on lightly constructed cots, or on carpets spread directly on the roof itself; privacy is ensured by screens of *chiygh*[1] and by nets which are intended to keep out sandflies as well as mosquitoes and are in consequence of so close a mesh that they cut off any breeze there may be.

At Sulaimani a moderately high roof commands admirable views in all directions, but the view that remains the most vividly impressed on my memory is that up the valley north-westwards to the great 10,000-foot mass of Pira Magrun which, as I have mentioned earlier, stands out in the valley detached from the Azmir–Qarasird ridge. Viewed from the south-east the jagged summit always suggested to me the profile of a very old man with beetling brows, prominent nose and pointed chin, gazing up to heaven with the calm, inscrutable detachment of a death-mask. In later years I came to think of him, but only when seen from this angle, as a malevolent genius cynically planning behind the mask of indifference the many and continuous calamities that befell the town of which he ought to have been the guardian.

My personal servant Abbud, who had even stronger views

[1]The *chiygh* (*chit* in Luristan) is made of reeds or canes set upright and held together by black or coloured yarns passed between and around the reeds in varying designs, and by strong selvages at top and bottom. The ground plan here given is based on a selection of plans kindly sent me by S. Reshid Arif of Koi.

than I had on the standard of living appropriate for a Political Officer, was highly pleased with our decision to move out of the Dabbo. He was a quite unsophisticated lad of about nineteen or twenty, by profession a gondolier of Basra. With his elder brother he had been in charge of the Chief Political Officer's *balam*, which we towed up behind our launch during the advance up the Tigris to Kut in 1915, and I had noticed that even in the most arduous circumstances the smile never left his face and that his long flowing shirt was always spotlessly white. It was on the strength of these qualifications that, during a visit to Basra in 1918, I had accepted his offer to replace my Bushiri, who wished to return to his own country.

A few days after our move my establishment in these strongly Sunni surroundings was completed by a second Shi'a, my syce Qurban Ali, who had followed me up with my pony, 'No Trumps', by road from Baghdad. He too seemed delighted to have arrived; he dived forward to kiss my hand before launching out on a harrowing description of the hardships of the journey and the delays which he had finally got over by ignoring all orders and pushing on faithfully without any escort. He was a Bakhtiyari from Shushtar (where he had entered my service three years before) and therefore a Lur, but he was far more out of his element among his Kurdish kinsmen than Abbud the Arab, for whom 'Girbun', as he called him, was always a figure of fun. He was oldish, rather simple-minded, and afflicted, especially in moments of anger or excitement, with an obstinate stammer. 'What s—s—savages these K—Kurds are,' he would say, 'and what ridiculous clothes they wear; yet, I beg to s—state in your s—service, they point at my hat as something s—s—strange; s—stupid Sunnis, they have even asked me twice if I, a good Shi'a, was a Musalman; but, I beg to s—state in your s—service, what can you expect from people who call a horse (*asp*) "donkey" (*ulágh*)?'[1]

Qurban Ali arrived at an appropriate moment, for Soane had now been back a fortnight, and I was looking forward to the

[1] *Ulágh* is the ordinary Persian word for donkey, but the Southern Kurds use the word to describe any mount, and therefore most frequently a horse; for donkey they use *ker*, corresponding to the other Persian name, *khar*. The Bakhtiyari hat then in fashion was made of black or brown felt, low, rounded at the top, brimless of course, and worn without any turban; the trousers were black, cut straight and very wide.

greater opportunities for touring which my diminished responsibilities seemed likely to offer.

Early in August, Greenhouse went on leave and I was joined by Captain H. C. D. Fitzgibbon of the 13th Hussars, who had come up to command the re-organized Levies. We decided that the standard of living needed yet another boost and that, to this end, he should take advantage of a forthcoming duty visit to Baghdad to engage a professional cook, and to buy a consignment of choice stores, and wines of a nobler vintage than the local but by no means undrinkable claret with which we had hitherto made do. One day towards the end of the month the cook duly arrived, a diminutive creature, as black as your hat, dressed in a heavy tweed sports jacket, very abbreviated khaki shorts from which two skinny legs protruded like bent wires, and a little cloth cap of Victorian shape, sadly worn and battered. His name being quite unpronounceable we decided to call him Rustam after the legendary Persian hero.

Our Kurdish cook had been giving us the same dish for lunch and dinner every day for weeks, a stew of tough mutton or goat, tomatoes and ladies-fingers (*bamê*), until we could stand it no longer. Rustam had arrived only just in time to save our sanity, and our hearts beat high with expectation as the first meal of the new dispensation was announced. I lifted the lid with something of a flourish and saw Fitzgibbon's face harden into an ashen stare as if he had gazed upon Medusa: it was the old familiar mixture of goat, tomatoes and ladies-fingers. It transpired that Abbud, whose masterful personality had dominated the counsels of the kitchen in the days of a local cook even more unsophisticated than himself, had been teaching his business to the *cordon bleu* from distant Goa. For Abbud no dish could be complete without tomatoes,[1] and a few nights later, when Rustam after an indiscreet visit to the '*araq* shops in the Julekan quarter had sent up a quite uneatable meal, urged in his defence that there had happened to be no tomatoes in the bazaar that day and that it was most unreasonable to expect the poor man to make bricks without straw. Although, like many of his kind, Rustam had to have an occasional fling, he was in fact

[1]The tomato is a basic ingredient of Arab cookery. During the last war, in 1942, an Iraqi cabinet was nearly forced to resign when tomatoes disappeared for several days from the Baghdad bazaar as the result of an attempt to control the price.

quite a good cook and, once the preliminary difficulties had been adjusted, we were able to give several successful and lively dinner-parties to our British and Kurdish colleagues before I left on transfer at the end of August.

In the meantime the ordinary routine of office work had not diminished as much as I had hoped; but I managed to work in the three short tours over the Azmir to Shar Bazhêr described in the next chapter.

VIII SHAR BAZHÊR

THE prospect that greeted my eyes when I reached the top of Azmir for the first time offered a striking contrast to the broad, orderly, synclinal valleys enclosed by the first three ranges of my general description: a confusion of lofty ridges running in all directions, massive buttresses, bulging domes, neat rounded cones, wild crags and soaring pinnacles, with no definite pattern distinguishable at first sight; only the long, even, 7,000-foot crest of the *chaîne magistrale*, here called Surkêw, could be seen coming down in the usual direction from the north-west.

Immediately opposite the point where we were standing, twenty miles away to the north-east, the continuity of the chain, and of the frontier, is interrupted for a distance of about twenty miles by three small rivers that break through from the east: the Shilêr, the Qizilja and the Gogasur, which rise respectively about thirty, twenty-four and sixteen miles away on the other side. When Surkêw reaches the gap made by the Shilêr the boundary line swings eastwards to follow the watershed round the source of that river, but not round those of the other two; the result is a wedge running some thirty miles deep into Persia; about eight miles north of the market village of Pênjwin the boundary leaves the returning southern arm of the wedge and, following an irregular line southwards for twelve miles, first cuts across the Qizilja and the Gogasur fourteen and eight miles from their sources, and then rejoins the *chaîne magistrale*, now to be called Hewraman, eight miles from the Gogasur gap. The sector of the chain between the Shilêr and the Qizilja is called

Larhê and the name between the Qizilja and the Gogasur is Tariyar; both lie entirely in Iraq; Tariyar is heavily wooded, flat-topped, and just about 6,000 feet in altitude over most of its length.[1]

The Shilêr and the Qizilja have no sooner broken through the barrier than they unite to form the Siwail, which continues to flow, with many twists and turns, in a general direction of due west. The Gogasur comes up from the east-south-east, acquires the name of Qala Chuwalan from the ancient Baban capital on the right bank, and immediately afterwards receives a left bank tributary called the Alasiyaw, which must be mentioned not for its importance but because of the number of times I had occasion to cross it in the course of the tours described later in this chapter. Finally, seven miles farther down-stream, and about eighteen miles in a straight line from the Shilêr–Qizilja confluence, the Qala Chuwalan is joined by the Siwail and, the name Qala Chuwalan[2] prevailing, the combined waters turn suddenly northwards to carve their way by unbelievable cañons to the Zab, just where that river is itself zigzagging through the frontier range. The northward turn of the Qala Chuwalan is so unsuspected and the local system of nomenclature so misleading that it is hardly surprising that the expert eyes of travellers like Maunsell and Dickson should have been deceived, and that for many years all maps should have shown the river as continuing to flow north-west along the northern base of Azmir–Qarasird and as reaching the Zab by way of the deep ravine of Palko north of Dukan, some sixty miles down-stream of the actual confluence. The persistence of the error was curious since, in this particular, Ker Porter, Rich, Fraser,

[1] I often thought that Tariyar would make an admirable summer station for Iraq, if security could be assured so near the frontier; indeed, it was the village of Ahmad Kulwan on the eastern slope that was recommended to Rich when he wished to escape from the July heat of Sulaimani.

[2] The nomenclature of rivers presents much the same difficulties as that of mountains. Certain names like Zê (Zab), Sirwan and Tanjaro apply to the river only and are used to describe it over much of its length. But far more frequently different reaches are known as the water (*aw*) or stream (*chem, chom*) of such and such a village, district, ford, or even person. Just above the Qizilja confluence, for instance, where I once crossed it, the Shilêr is called Chem-a Reshid and on the upstream side of Larhê Rich was given the names 'Aw-i Beestan' and 'Aw-i Tattan' from near-by villages. The Qizilja starts as the Aw-i Piran, after a village on the Persian side. I myself have crossed the Gogasur (the name used just after its entry into Iraq), at reaches called the Water of Sêbuwaran (Three Fords), of Tankabuwar (Easy Ford), of Zalan (a village) and, of course, of Qala Chuwalan; Rich on his way to Ahmad Kulwan crossed it at 'Tenguzee'.

Brzezowski and Chirikov had all described the course correctly; it was not put right until October 1921, when Dr. F. M. Halley, the Civil Surgeon at Sulaimani, rediscovered the true confluence.[1]

In my earlier general description of the geography of Southern Kurdistan, for the sake of simplicity I named a fourth parallel range between Azmir–Qarasird and the *chaîne magistrale*, but I was being over-tidy. When these mountains were being formed there seems to have been at the same time a strong pressure to make a series of folds running from south to north (of which the rib marked by the heights of Daru—7,000 feet, Sarshiw—7,000 feet, Hazarkaniyan—7,400 feet, and Gamo—7,750 feet, is a good example) so as to distort the regularity of the hitherto familiar pattern. The prevailing trend of the geological structure remains indeed south-east to north-west, but Kurhakazhaw does not form one long rampart with Gojar-Kurkur. The waters of the Gogasur and the Siwail first cut through the line separately from east to west and then, below the confluence, as the Qala Chuwalan, break back and through again to run west of and parallel with the Daru–Gamo rib. West of the Qala Chuwalan the mountain structure resumes the normal direction as a fluted mass of more or less parallel ridges and narrow troughs rising to the central spine of Gojar-Kurkur, which emerges to the north-west as the clearly defined hog's back of Asos dividing the broad plains of Marga and Bitwên on one side from that of Qala Diza on the other. Each of the troughs has its own internal watershed separating the slopes that drain eastwards to the Qala Chuwalan from those that fall westwards to the Zab itself above Dukan.

The whole of the Qala Chuwalan basin west of Larhê–Tariyar is included in the qaza of Shar Bazhêr[2] which is thus enclosed: on the south-west by Azmir; on the west by the watershed just mentioned; on the north by the Zab and its tributary the Bana Water, where they also mark the frontier; on the

[1] See the note in *G.J.* Vol. LVIX (1922) p. 146 and Halley's own article 'The Gorge of the Qala Cholan and its Confluence with the Lesser Zab' in *G.J.* Vol. LXXXVI (1935) p. 158. Although Rich and Chirikov got it right in their written descriptions, both Rich's map and the *Carte Identique* prepared by the Boundary Commission of 1849–52 (see p. 134 below) show the same error.

[2] The Shilêr wedge to the east and the 10-mile stretch of the Qizilja between Tariyar and the frontier lie in the nahiya of Pênjwin, which is subordinate to Halabja.



I(*a*) MAHMUD PASHA JAF AND BABAKR AGHA



I(*b*) IN THE HAMAWAND COUNTRY



2(*a*) AHMAD-I HAMA SALIH BEG JAF



2(*b*) SAIYID TAHA

north-east by the *chaîne magistrale*; and on the south-east by the line of low hills that bounds the northern edge of the Sharizur plain after Azmir has disappeared underground.

Shar Bazhêr is traversed by three principal caravan tracks leading from Sulaimani to Persia. These, taken from east to west are: the first over the Goyzha pass to Chinginiyan, round the north side of Kurhakazhaw to Pênjwin, and thence to Senna; the second over the Azmir pass and through Harmin and Shiwakal to Bana; the third due north by the Qayawan pass, the Qashan bridge over the Qala Chuwalan, the village of Mawat, and the Tayit bridge over the Zab to Sardasht.

Six of the first seven British travellers in my list crossed Shar Bazhêr, but none of their successors, and the Frontier Commission of 1914 worked entirely from the Persian side in this sector; in 1919, therefore, Fraser's record of his journey in 1834 was the most recent description of the country available in English. Cuinet, when compiling his monumental work, seems to have been unaware of the existence of these sources as well as of Clément's (1856) detailed narrative—Brzezowski (1869) did not publish his until 1892—for after giving the population of the qaza as 6,600 and the name of the headquarters as Chiokl (evidently an attempt to transliterate Shiwakal from an original in Arabic script) he could only add: 'Ce qaza est peu connu; on sait seulement que la plupart de ses habitants cultivent la vigne, le riz, le tabac, et les arbres fruitiers.'

Those travellers who described their routes in any detail are unanimous in their tributes to the majesty of the scenery. Mignan, at this point, becomes quite lyrical: 'Without any exception I may safely aver that Kurdistan is the loveliest country I have ever beheld . . .; these passes are in truth the most sublime and solemn solitudes that can possibly exist and rouse the breast of man to meditations bordering on rapture.' Ker Porter was struck by the beauty and general air of industry and prosperity in the Mawat region which he calls 'a scene of enchantment', 'a mountain paradise', and 'the finest specimen of romantic rural beauty I had seen since entering the East'. Sixteen years later Fraser found this same area depopulated as the result of the plague of 1831 and the devastation wrought by invading Persian armies, but is nevertheless loud in praise of the 'grand and imposing nature of the country' and of the autumnal

'Iris of brilliant colours which I have seldom seen equalled and never surpassed'.

The qaza, which measures some fifty miles from south-east to north-west with a constant width of about twenty, is divided into three nahiyas: Mawat to the north-west, Headquarters or more conveniently Chwarta in the middle, and Serochik to the south-east.[1] Tribally Mawat fell into the sphere of influence of the numerous and powerful ruling family of Pizhdar and will best be discussed in conjunction with the qaza of that name in a later chapter. The nahiya of Chwarta (pop. 18,000) is separated from Mawat by the lofty Daru–Gamo rib and from Serochik (pop. 9,500) by an irregular line running from Tariyar through the highest point (Kachal Baraw) of the Kurhakazhaw massif to Azmir at a point ten miles south-east of Sulaimani; that part of Chwarta which lies north of the Siwail was for a short time formed into a separate nahiya called sometimes Siwail after the river and sometimes Shiwakal after the village from which the ruling family of the district took their title.

The majority of the population of Shar Bazhêr are non-tribal peasants but, as in most parts of Kurdistan, a village of any size generally has a resident squire in the person of the principal (or the most sophisticated) landowner, or of a tribal Agha who has established himself there by force. The squire is required by custom and by considerations of prestige to maintain a guesthouse (*diywexan*) where even the humblest traveller can claim entertainment and bedding; the host expects no payment, direct or indirect, for a short stay but, as I have already mentioned in connexion with the position of the tribal Agha, recoups himself from the community. He is not necessarily identical with the Mukhtar (*köxa*), the official village headman, who has certain responsibilities *vis-à-vis* the Government and who may be the squire's chief henchman or his chief enemy according to the circumstances. Where there is no squire the Mukhtar

[1]This, the natural geographical arrangement, is that now in force. Cuinet and an old Ottoman almanack for 1895 in my possession show Serochik as subordinate to Gulambar (Halabja); from 1919 onwards the nahiya was attached sometimes to Shar Bazhêr, sometimes to Halabja, and sometimes direct to Sulaimani according to the exigencies of the political situation. In the early days of our occupation, when tribal reasons often prevailed over geography, a group of nine villages known from the two largest as Saraw-Mirawa situated between Daru-Sarshiw and the Qala Chuwalan and not under Pizhder domination were included in Chwarta, while a similar number near the frontier and on the Siwail side of the Gamo rib had fallen under Pizhdar influence and were administered from Mawat.

makes himself responsible for the entertainment of travellers in the mosque, there being no prejudice against the admission of persons not of the Muslim faith. The guest-house or the guest-room of the most important person of the village becomes a kind of club where relations, guests, travellers and neighbours drop in to exchange news or transact business; those present dispose themselves in a single line along the walls according to a rough order of precedence, the place of honour being farthest from the door.

The Siwail district is divided by local geographers into two parts: Upper Siwail 'of Ma'ruf Agha' or 'of Shiwakal', comprising about a dozen villages on the south-western slopes of Surkêw; and Lower Siwail 'of Sulaiman Agha' or 'of Kinaru' comprising the rest, mostly situated on the eastern slopes of Daru-Gamo. The name Alan is used to describe the villages on both banks of the frontier reaches of the Zab near the Qala Chuwalan confluence. Another regional name which is frequently heard is Barkêw; it is applied to the country immediately west of Larhê-Tariyar between the Shilêr on the north and Gogasur on the south.

The Aghas of Shiwakal, then in the fourth generation, claim descent from the ten sons of a certain Selim Agha (himself a grandson of Usman Agha, a famous head of the Piran tribe farther north),[1] who was brought in by one of the Baban rulers and installed on a feudal basis as warden of the marches. I do not remember whether many of them were officially registered as the legal owners of any part of their villages, but whether it was due to the fact that they had been installed by the Babans, or whether it was that they exercised their squires' privileges with tact and restraint, I never heard any challenge by the peasants to their right to the customary income; in this respect Siwail differed markedly from the neighbouring nahiya of Mawat, where the Pizhdar Aghas had imposed themselves by force.

Several villages in Chwarta south of the Siwail river were owned by Shaikh Mahmud or his near relations, but quite a considerable proportion of the land was registered in the names of the humble cultivators themselves.

With only two or three exceptions all the villages of Serochik were owned by the Saiyids of the prolific Barzinja family. In

[1]For the Piran see Chapter XV.

the southern half of the nahiya water is on the whole scanty in summer and autumn, in contrast to the rest of Shar Bazhêr. Viticulture is therefore the principal activity, but poplars and tobacco are grown where possible, as well as the usual winter crops of wheat and barley which depend on rain alone.

The south-east corner of the nahiya in and around the Dol-a Gelal, which drains southwards to Shahrizur and the Tanjaro, and part of Barkêw, are the home of a curious group of small semi-nomadic tribes called Nawdar (Within-the-Gap) or Ghawara (Outsiders).[1] They represent elements of the population of Shahrizur which were driven out by the coming of the Jaf Muradi in the eighteenth century as described in a later chapter. The opprobrious name Ghawara, as well as the popular stories that they avoid water and never wash, no doubt originated with the conquerors who expelled them.

My first trip to Shar Bazhêr was made with the specific purpose of examining the desirability of transferring the seat of the qaza administration from the old Turkish headquarters at Sitak, which was so close to Sulaimani that officials were tempted to come to town on the slightest excuse, to some more central position north of the Gogasur. Office work was still heavy, and I was obliged to see as much as I could between the end of official hours on Saturday and eight o'clock on Monday morning. I accordingly left late in the afternoon of the 24th July and crossed the range by the Azmir Pass, the view from which I have already described. Descending through thick woods very different from the bare slopes of the Sulaimani side we reached Sitak in just three hours of leisurely riding from the start and, in accordance with the custom of the country, were received by the officials and leading inhabitants lined up on the outskirts. It was a pleasant village of some twenty houses situated among groves of poplar, plane and willow, and surrounded by extensive tobacco gardens and some fields of wheat and barley. The owner, or squire, was Shaikh Muhammad Gharib, the brother-in-law of Shaikh Mahmud, who had himself been appointed Qaimmaqam under the Shaikh's régime and who had been captured at Bazyan.

[1]The component clans are: Bêsari (seven villages, sixty families); Chuchani (four villages, fifty families); Hoz-i Hasani (two villages, thirty-five families); Parkhi (one village, thirty families); and Qawilayi (*100 families scattered after the famine of 1918*).

We mounted before six the next morning and, dropping down to the Alasiyaw about half a mile to the east, followed the broad bed northwards to its junction with the Gogasur, which we forded in two feet of water just above the confluence and below the ruins of the former Baban capital of Qala Chuwalan. Another hour, first over gentle slopes deep in waving hay, and then up a steep and rocky path between hedges of blackberry bushes and climbing vines, brought us to Chwarta, the village which had been suggested as a good site for the new qaza headquarters.

We were met on the outskirts by the Mukhtar and conducted to the broad roof of a spacious mosque, where a line of villagers, hand on breast, bade us welcome. Fresh and tender walnuts and almonds, grapes scarcely ripe, bowls of fresh milk and of curds (*mast*) and basins of mixed curds and water (*mastaw*), with carved ladles of pear wood floating on the surface, were set before us, and when the samovar had boiled, sweet tea in little Persian glasses was handed round. The preliminary honours thus discharged, we went up on foot through the village to continue the discussion of the business in hand by a spring in the cool shade of two or three giant planes.

Chwarta is situated at an altitude of 4,000 feet on the south-western slopes of a mountain called Sarsir and commands a superb view across the Gogasur valley to Azmir; it struck me as a most delightful place, nestling among almond and mulberry orchards in the shade of tall slim poplars, spreading walnuts, and enormous planes. The Kurds discovered many centuries ago that villages built on a mountainside have the great advantage of being what they call *yek hewa*, 'of single climate', and that they are less exposed to violent fluctuations of temperature than those built on the flat. This was a typical village of a large class and a brief description will serve for all.

The houses are built in rows and in three or four tiers up the slope. The ground-floor (*jêrxan*) of each is wedge-shaped owing to the gradient and, while serving as a barn or stable, provides the horizontal platform on which the upper residential storey is wholly or partly built. The roof of the upper storey may be flush with a path separating it from the next tier or may itself give access to the door of the house above. It is thus possible to walk along any of several roof promenades until the row of

houses is interrupted by a cross lane. Where the walls can be founded on the terra firma of the slope they are of undressed stone set in mortar, or of mud; but where they are built out over a lower room they are of light wattle-work. Bedrooms often take the form of small detached bowers raised on poles, with *chiyghs* placed round the top to ensure privacy. Many villages are bisected by a ravine formed by the torrents of winter and spring, the houses being built-up on each side half facing each other.

The mosque, most frequently found at the lower end of the village, generally takes the form of *hode-w heywan*, the single room with verandah, built on a platform two or three feet above ground level; it faces a small walled courtyard which may be paved and in which there will be a cistern continuously brimming over with flowing water. There is one grave disadvantage about the otherwise pleasant custom of entertaining strangers here; owing to the convenient proximity of water the immediate neighbourhood tends to become the organized or unorganized public latrine.

More agreeable is the other focus of social life, the principal spring, which is generally situated above the village. In the shade of one or more ancient plane-trees there will be a *seko* where idlers sit to exchange news and views, drinking glasses of tea supplied by the *chaichi*; close by will be another cistern, lined with stone and having large, smooth, shining slabs round the brink, where the individual villager may perform the ablution and say the midday or afternoon prayer; not far away, fed by a runnel or by an independent spring and discreetly surrounded by a dry stone wall, will be another and larger communal tank where the women do their washing and gossiping. When there is plenty of water as much as possible will be led off on each side of the village in skilfully levelled channels through the tangled orchards to terraced vegetable and tobacco patches. Somewhere in the gardens there will probably be a flour-mill worked by direct drop.

Chwarta seemed to me admirably suitable for the new qaza headquarters. It was reasonably central. Although the population had shrunk during the recent famine to twenty families it had housed over a hundred before the war and was thus clearly capable of expansion. Sarsir, though a link in the Kurhakaz-

haw-Gojar chain, stood rather out of the straight in a well-detached position overlooking the valleys of the Gogasur to the south and the Siwail to the north, so that the domed summit (5,250 feet) offered an excellent point of vantage for visual signalling in every direction, a most important consideration at that time. There were easy tracks leading east, north and west, and I formed the opinion that there would be no great difficulty in finding a suitable alignment for a motor road from Sulaimani. Every Kurd is a born connoisseur of the digestive qualities of water, and, in the not entirely disinterested opinion of the minor officials from Sitak in our party, all these advantages were outweighed by the reputation of Chwarta spring water for being *giran*, heavy on the stomach. Nevertheless on my return I made the recommendation, and it was decided that the transfer should take place as soon as the Qaimmaqam designate, Riza Beg, should return from Baghdad, whither he had gone to receive his sword of honour from the hands of General MacMunn.

I returned to Sitak for the night following a track rather to the west of that by which I had come, so as to pass through the old Baban graveyard (where I noticed one stone inscribed with the name of 'the Lord of the Age, Sulaiman Khan') and to ford the river below the Alasiyaw confluence. I was in the saddle at half-past three on Monday morning and, taking for variety a rough and little used pass called Haruta about a mile south-east of the Azmir, reached Sulaimani in just under three hours, in good time for a bath and office at eight o'clock.

The following week-end I made a similar hurried excursion of exploration, this time over the Goyzha Pass, the nearest to Sulaimani and eight miles south-east of the Azmir. The ascent was rough and steep and took us a few minutes over the hour. The track down was easier, but the construction of a motor road over this pass seemed to be out of the question. After crossing the Alasiyaw two miles above Sitak and near the confluence of the Shukê Water coming down from Kurhakazhaw the road forks, left to Harmin and the Bana caravan track, right the main track to Pênjwin; the point is marked by a curious spring called Sazinda, the Musician or Warbler, bubbling up in the middle of the highway. We took the Pênjwin road and I was now able to enjoy several long canters over lovely going. We

passed Nodê, the home of the sainted Shaikh Ma'ruf, hidden in a deep watercourse (*shiyw*) on our right and two miles farther on turned aside for the night to Chingniyan, a well-built village, rich in vineyards and other cultivation, reputed for the excellence of its water, and owned by Shaikh Mahmud himself.

The next morning, a mile beyond Chingniyan, we passed through a narrow defile with the main massif of Kurhakazhaw on our right and on our left a curious hill shaped like a breaking wave called Katu; this stretch is known as the Dol-a Tu (Mulberry Dale) road from a ravine, familiar to local topographers, running up eastwards into the massif. We halted for our midday meal at a charmingly situated and prosperous village appropriately called Harmêla, Little Pear Tree. We looked down over the sparkling waters of the Gogasur (here called Tankabuwar) and across to the village of Wuliyawa, a caravan stage where an alternative track takes off for Bana by way of a pass called Kani Dizan, the Robbers' Spring, on the north side of the Shilêr wedge; the villagers told us that in the previous year, as soon as the news of the Turkish collapse had become known, the Saiyids of Barzinja had looted a hundred mule-loads of small-arms ammunition from a Turkish dump at Wuliyawa.

There was only about one foot of water at the Tankabuwar ford. Fishermen were busy close by with their nets. Immediately after crossing we left the caravan road and turned westwards up a steep slope and through a veritable forest of dwarf oak, until we reached a pleasant stretch of open country with pears and sumach growing wild in great profusion and extensive vineyards on the surrounding slopes. Cattle were sheltering from the heat of the sun under the larger trees, and a line of poplars betrayed the presence of the small village of Pilinga close by. We had hardly dismounted before carpets had been spread in the shade by the village spring and cistern, to be followed, of course, by bowls of *mastaw* and glasses of tea. There were only nine or ten families in the place, but the land was their own and they were happy in having no resident squire.

At half-past four, when the heat had abated, we mounted again, turned south-westwards over the hill and descended by a steep path back to the Gogasur, here flowing between high

cliffs. We followed the bed westwards past several invitingly deep pools for about two miles before crossing to the south bank, whence a short ride across park-like country brought us to the Shiwakal caravan road and the village of Harmin, also named after its pear-orchards, where we spent the night. I was away the next morning again before four o'clock and returned to Sulaimani by Sitak and the Haruta Pass.

My third and most interesting week-end trip (14th–16th August) was made to Serochik with the object of showing the flag in this hot-bed of sedition and installing the new Mudir, Abdur Rahman Agha, a member of a prominent Sulaimani family, who for greater safety had been authorized to recruit his own escort and other subordinate staff. From the top of the Goyzha pass we turned east, away from the Sitak road, down past the small village of Waldana to the Cham-i Alasiyaw, two miles above the point where I had crossed it on my last excursion. We then followed this water-course upstream in a south-easterly direction, crossing and recrossing it continually, until we reached the village of Kazhaw, which gives its name to the mountain and where Shaikh Isa of Hamadan chose the bride who became the ancestress of the prolific orthodox branch of the Barzinja Saiyids. We now left the river bed for more open country and reached our destination, Gêldara, after dark in just five and a half hours' riding from Sulaimani. A horrible *rhesheba* blew all night and covered us with all kinds of litter and filth as we tried to sleep.

Gêldara was a well-built, prosperous village of forty to fifty houses situated on the inner slope of a horseshoe hill called Kalla-i Gêldara, with extensive tobacco gardens (where the picking of the new crop was just beginning) near by and fields for ordinary winter and summer crops out on the flat below. It had been the administrative centre of the Serochik nahiya, and there was a good government serai with offices, revenue barns, and accommodation for the Mudir's family. I sanctioned the necessary repairs and commandeered the house of a fugitive Shaikh to serve as barracks for Abdur Rahman's mounted escort.

This and other business done, we rode out round the eastern arm of the horseshoe, getting a good view of a small plain called Dasht-i Zalin or Zerê which runs south-eastwards to the large village of Moryas four miles away and is reputed to be the best

land in the nahiya.[1] We then turned north in the direction of Kurhakazhaw,[2] a gaunt, rugged peak soaring up into the blue sky, 4,000 feet in four miles.

In ten minutes under the hour, before I had any idea that we were so close, our path turned sharply and brought us suddenly up against the very edge of Barzinja, a large village of between 150 and 200 houses built up in nine or ten superimposed tiers in a fold of the great southern spur of Kurhakazhaw itself. It might have been a painting in sepia, the different shades of dull brown relieved only by a few bright dresses in the great crowds of men, women and children that thronged the housetops as we rode in.

We dismounted at the famous mosque. It is a large building as village mosques go, the wooden doors, the matting of the ceilings and the poplar rafters all black and shiny, with smoke and age. The black stone of Shaikhs Musa and Isa measures about fifteen inches by twelve and is set in a wall of the *dalan* just by the door giving access to the prayer hall and is smooth and polished with much kissing. A large iron latch-ring is also claimed to be an exact copy of the corresponding ring at Mecca. The Mudarris in charge came to complain that although under Sultan Selim's *firmán* of 1792 half the revenues of Barzinja were to be devoted as *waqf* (religious endowment) to the upkeep and service of the mosque, it had for some years been diverted to their own purposes by the heirs of Saiyid Taha, the

[1]Many years later a motor road was constructed from Barzinja down this plain, which is still in the Qala Chuwalan basin, and over the watershed at its lowest point (4,000 feet) to join the Sulaimani–Halabja road near Muwan.

[2]In spite of many inquiries on this and other journeys I have found some difficulty in establishing the correct nomenclature of the Kurhakazhaw massif. The latest compilation (Xth Army, April 1942, 1 : 100,000) shows: (i) a central ridge running south-east to north-west with three peaks of 5,614, 7,254 and 7,347 feet respectively, only the last having a name, 'Geli', (ii) a parallel ridge on the north-east side of the other with three peaks marked respectively 5,370, 6,240 and 6,515 feet, the whole range being named 'Kurikazao' and peak 6,240 'Barda Kunti'; and (iii) an isolated peak on a south-western spur marked 6,693 and named Woshkasheo. It seems clear that the surveyors reversed the names of the two parallel ridges, and the weight of the evidence is as follows: peak 7,254 of the first ridge is definitely Kurhakazhaw, but the name is also commonly used to denote the whole massif; peak 7,347 (the highest) is most commonly called Kachal Baraw from the village of Baraw on its southern flank but sometimes just Kachali; peak 5,614 is Mirab (or perhaps Pisht-i Chinara); in the other ridge peak 5,370 is Pisht-i Hajji Mamand from the village below, peak 6,240 is Geli and peak 6,515 is Ka Nasir; isolated peak 6,393 is Kalla-i Sarim; I suspect that Woshkasheo is *wushkeshiyw*, dry ravine, which might be the name of any ravine coming down from the heights given to the inquiring surveyor.

original recipient, and I promised to ensure that the terms of the deed should be observed in future. Some years later I found myself championing the cause of the trustees against the Iraqi Ministry of Finance which, in the manner of all Treasuries, had sought to incorporate this income in the ordinary revenues of the State.

Though I never had time to visit it myself I ought perhaps to mention here what the Kurds consider to be the third wonder of this nahiya, the other two being Kurhakazhaw and the mosque of Barzinja. This is the castle of Serochik near Moryas. Local tradition has it that it was captured by S. Qalandar of Barzinja, the great-grandfather of Baba Resul the Great (and therefore in about the year 1500) from Selim-i Shakhdar, Selim of the Horns (the title recalls that of Alexander the Great in eastern legend), head of the Qawilayi tribe, the miserable remnants of which we have already met as a section of the outcast Ghawara. A British colleague, Captain C. H. Gowan, once told me that it was 'wonderfully well preserved for its age and well worth a visit'. According to a recent Kurdish traveller[1] it is built on an eminence with precipitous sides rising to a height of 300 feet out of a deep ravine; it can only be reached by a single narrow path from the south-west, and this is protected by a series of barbicans; the fortress itself is circular in shape and the walls are flanked by six towers; the living apartments, kitchens and barracks are built in two or three storeys and the central courtyard would hold 2,000 men; at the north-western side of the enclosure there is a spring of water that is so stimulating to the digestion (*sazgar*) that even the casual visitor arriving in the morning will feel the need of four or five substantial meals before he leaves in the evening.

I had no wish to receive hospitality from persons who might have been implicated in the late rebellion so, after warning the principal Shaikhs present that if they harboured any of the fugitives still on the proscribed list they might find the seat of administration moved from Gêldara to Barzinja itself, I pushed on with Abdur Rahman up the spur and round the flank of the peak to the hamlet of Wandarêna, where Baba Ali the Second, son of Baba Resul, had established his *takya*. After a short halt for lunch we continued north-westwards, crossing first a dry

[1] *Deng y Gêtiy' Taze*, Vol. IV, No. 1, April 1945.

watercourse that comes down from between the two great peaks of Kurhakazhaw and Kachal Baraw, and then a col between the latter on our right and Kalla-i Sarim on our left, to the village of Baraw, situated near the head of a long ravine that runs down north-westwards to Chingniyan on the Pênjwin road. After a short halt we retraced our steps to the dry watercourse which, after swinging first south-west and then north-west round Kalla-i Sarim, eventually joins the Alasiyaw where I crossed it on one of my outward journeys two miles above Sitak.

We followed the watercourse down to a spring giving enough water to form a stream in the shingly bed and then on to Shukê, a well-watered village of the Chwarta rather than the Serochik type with vineyards on the slopes, tobacco terraces, tangled orchards and lines of poplars; there was in addition a fine house belonging to a fugitive Shaikh with an imposing entrance, six or seven rooms, a private Turkish bath, and a carefully tended flower garden. Below the village the stream dried up again. We continued to follow the watercourse for over an hour through a winding and rocky defile, passing a single village where water reappeared in the shingle, until we emerged into more open country and reached Bizêniyan, once a prosperous village of a hundred houses as the extensive ruins testified but now reduced to ten, where Shaikh Mahmud and his wife both owned vineyards.

We were joined on the roof of the mosque by a garrulous little Mulla from Sulaimani and I was enchanted when, just before sunset, almost in the middle of a sentence and without a word of explanation or any sign of self-consciousness, he jumped up, walked to the corner of the roof, spread out his *'abá* and, raising his open hands to his cheeks, chanted the call to prayer in a not unmelodious voice. After supper I tried to organize a concert. Three of Abdur Rahman's sowars dutifully sat down and began to sing very nervously and, although I bade them give us examples of their own Kurdish songs, they would come back to Persian. Finally a village vocalist was found who had no inhibitions, and he bawled his piece with great gusto. But I fear I never learned to appreciate oriental music; the song seemed to me most monotonous, each line being a repetition of the same short phrase up to the last, which ended in an excruciating gasp

as if the performer was trying to drive the last ounce of breath out of his body.

I mounted at five the next morning and, leaving Abdur Rahman to return to his post at Gêldara, rode across country to the Alasiyaw, which I crossed at the same point as on the way out. But from Waldana, again for variety, I took the Little Goyzha pass, which is to Goyzha what Haruta is to Azmir.

I should have liked to round off my description of this glorious country with an account of two longer journeys in northern Shar Bazhêr which I made some years later, but considerations of space forbid. Instead I will reproduce an extract from Rich's record of his return from Senna by an unusual route across the qaza from north to south, which will serve to show both that I have not exaggerated its charms and also how little the economic and social life of the villagers had changed in the hundred years between 1820 and 1919.

September 12. We soon reached the top of the descent by which we entered the Bebbeh territory. Here a magnificent sight presented itself. The road led at once down into a deep and narrow valley which the eye could not fathom; on the opposite side, the country rose again to a height even greater than that on which we stood, and was crowned by two summits,[1] united by a curtain, the northern one of which was a singularly shaped hill which we had noticed from Swearwa. The aspect of the country was enchanting. It was richly wooded, with many villages and patches of cultivation, as verdant as an emerald, in the most picturesque situations. The lines and forms of the mountains were broken in the most beautiful manner . . . Our descent occupied about two hours, with very little interruption, through fine woods. It was very steep, but the road by no means so bad as one might have expected in so very mountainous a country. Certainly nothing could be more marked than the difference between *our* Koordistan and Persia viewed from this spot. The very soil seemed to have changed its nature and tint—everything was a mixture of the grand and the beautiful. We arrived at the bottom of the descent at half-past twelve, and crossed the Berozeh or Banna water, which is joined here by other mountain streams. This stream separates Persia from Turkey. It runs north and a little west, and falls into the Altoon Soo (the river of Altun Köprü, that is the Little Zab. C.J.E.) above the Karatcholan water[2] . . . I felt myself quite at home again. We ascended, and rode along the

[1] These districts are in the district of Siwell.
[2] The Karatcholan water joins the Altoon Soo near Shinek.

side of the opposite height . . . to the village of Merwa, in the district of Aalan. Here we were welcomed by real Koords, and might hope to enjoy some comfort. The village is beautifully situated on the side of a mountain, at no very great elevation above the river . . . A great quantity of tobacco is grown in the neighbourhood, the leaves of which the villagers are now drying on skewers and lines . . .

September 13. We set off at seven, and immediately commenced ascending the hill, towards the curious-shaped summit noticed before, and which is called Gimmo. These mountains abound in springs, many of which are taken advantage of by the cultivator, and conducted in little trenches round the sides of the hills, to be let down over the sloping lands as occasion requires. At a quarter past eight we reached the beautiful village of Deira, embosomed in a wood of the finest walnut trees I ever saw, which had a prodigious spread. Gardens, vineyards, and cultivation surrounded the village in every available spot on the sides of the mountain. The vines in many places crept up the trees and extended from one tree to the other, forming festoons and draperies. Multitudes of springs burst from the sides of the hill and dashed over the roots of the trees in numberless little cascades. Nothing was heard but the murmuring of the waters. It was not easy to pass so beautiful a spot without a pause to enjoy its loveliness. Accordingly, Omar Agha and I alighted under the shade of a walnut, by the side of a little rill, and the peasants immediately spread before us a collation of honey in the comb, fresh butter, buttermilk, peaches and grapes. We loitered here till ten minutes past nine, and then quitted this lovely spot with regret. We still continued ascending, and in about half an hour reached the highest part, which was very Alpine in its appearance. Innumerable springs started from the ground . . . There were no trees to be seen; but the ground was very verdant from the quantity of water. This spot is called Hazir Kanian or the thousand springs. We had here attained the highest part of our road; but still, at a considerable height above us were Gimmo and its fellow summit, both bare and stony. We continued for some time travelling under them . . . Villages and verdant patches on platforms, and sometimes as it were suspended on the sides of the mountains, diversify the scene. We could not go a hundred yards without coming to a spring of water so cold as to make the teeth ache when drunk . . . The road, as usual, was well wooded, and though loose and stony, was by no means bad for so mountainous a track . . . It was two o'clock before we arrived at the village of Kenaroo in the district of Siwell.

September 14. At half past six we mounted . . . We then descended to the Siwell River, which runs by the foot of Serseer, then turns north a little west, and joins the Karatcholan at Mawutt; after which they both run to the Altoon Soo. At the place where we crossed it, the water was up to the stirrup for a few paces and then it became shallow; . . . In winter it is frequently unfordable, and is passed on Kelleks, or rafts. . . We descended into the plain of Shehribazar and . . . into a deep valley or ravine formed by the Karatcholan River, and proceeded to the spot where the town of Karatcholan, the old capital of this part of Koordistan, is situated. There are now no remains of the town; but a few wretched huts of peasants occupy the spot.

September 15. We mounted at ten minutes past six; and all our party were in high spirits at the prospect of reaching Sulaimania in a few hours. I felt something like the elevation of spirits of a man returning to his own house; and indeed, the kindness and hospitality I have experienced at Sulaimania are well calculated to make me esteem it a kind of home.

At Sulaimani on my return from Barzinja I found awaiting me a telegram from A. T. Wilson offering me the post of 'Political Officer British Forces North-West Persia' with headquarters at Qazvin, to replace Colonel Tom Wickham[1] who was to accompany the Shah on a visit to Europe. In many ways I was sorry to leave, for the Kurds had aroused my interest and sympathy and I had become increasingly absorbed in the task of re-establishing regular administration in their distressful country. But after all Persia, even the Persia of the torrid south, had been my first love and the prospect of a spell of duty in the north filled me with pleasurable anticipation.

I left Sulaimani with a convoy of three Tin-Lizzies early in the morning of the 28th August, being seen off by the Mayor, a group of notables, my British colleagues and members of the office staff. My car began to give trouble at Qaliyasan only four miles out and continued to do so for most of the way. The others were little better, and we spent an hour and a half pushing them in turns over a steep hill just west of Chamchemal. As we approached Kirkuk under a grilling sun the broken, parched, terra-cotta foothills seemed more repulsive than ever; but we just seemed to be getting over our mechanical troubles when

[1]Later M.P. for Taunton.

the Burman driver of the second car, evidently overcome by the drowsiness which is so hard to fight off in such circumstances, steered over a precipice. Fortunately neither he nor Abbud was injured, but the vehicle had to be abandoned and Abbud and my kit left behind to be brought in later.

Early the next morning I pushed on to Fatha and lay up for the day in the hospitable tent of Major Selwood, commanding the 1018th Transport Company, before catching the night train from Baiji to Baghdad. The heat under canvas was intense, and Selwood's way of making the atmosphere bearable was to keep at hand a large syringe and several buckets of water and to souse at short intervals, not only the sides of the tent itself, but the ground and even the beds on which we were trying to sleep away the afternoon.



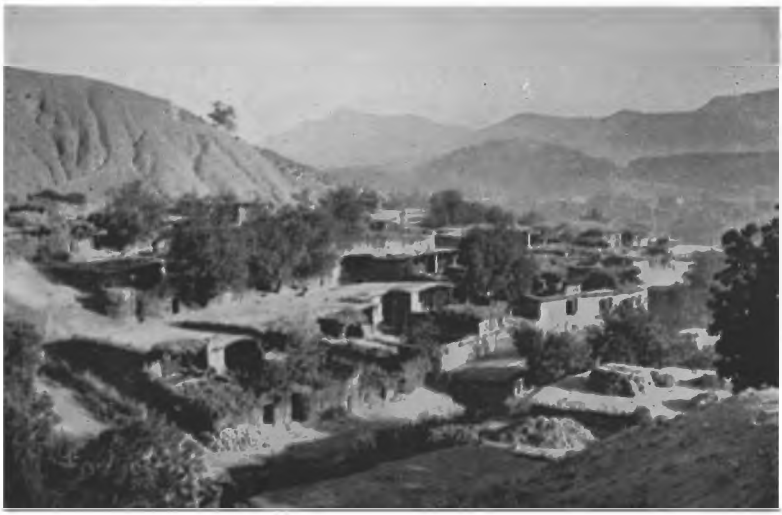
3(*a*) KURHAKAZHAW



3(*b*) BARZINJA



4(*a*) ALAN



4(*b*) PENJWIN

Part 2

IX SULAIMANI TWO YEARS LATER

NEARLY two years passed before I returned to Iraq for duty. In the interval there had been many important political developments which I must pause to summarize in order to put my own narrative in its proper setting.

On the 28th January 1920 a new and strongly nationalist Turkish cabinet issued a manifesto known as the National Pact, the first Article of which, while conceding the right of self-determination for the Arab districts south of the armistice line of 1918, embodied in unmistakable terms a refusal to contemplate the separation of the Mosul wilayat from the Ottoman dominions.

Notwithstanding the Pact the Allied Powers prepared a treaty of peace providing for the wholesale dismemberment of the Empire; it was signed at Sèvres on the 10th August by all concerned but had not been implemented owing to the military successes and rise to power of Mustafa Kemal in Anatolia. The text contained two Articles affecting the Kurds, Article 62 providing for local autonomy in a part of Eastern Anatolia where they constituted a majority of the population, and Article 64 reading as follows:

> If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the areas defined in Article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council then considers that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas . . . If and when such renunciation takes place, no objection will be raised by the principal Allied Powers to the voluntary adhesion to such an independent Kurdish State of the Kurds inhabiting that part of Kurdistan which has hitherto been included in the Mosul wilayat.

The Treaty of Sèvres was stillborn, but this dream of an independent Kurdistan remained on record in an international document and was not forgotten. The fate of the Mosul

wilayat was not to be definitely settled for another six years and the dark incubus of uncertainty continued to hover over the political scene, bedevilling all efforts to establish a secure and stable administration.

Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, signed as part of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919, had provided that certain communities formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire should be provisionally recognized as independent nations 'subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatary until such time as they were able to stand alone'. His Majesty's Government accepted the Mandate for Iraq in April 1920, at a moment when the central and southern (the Arab) districts of the country were in the throes of a formidable tribal rebellion stirred up by nationalist agitation. The rebellion was suppressed by early autumn, but not without difficulty. Military government terminated on the 4th October when Sir Percy Cox, the former Civil Commissioner, returned to Iraq as High Commissioner and took over responsibility for the civil administration from Sir Arnold Wilson, who had been acting for him during his absence as H.M. Minister in Tehran. On the 11th November a Provisional National Government was formed under the presidency of Saiyid Abdur Rahman al-Gilani, Naqib of Baghdad,[1] who has already been mentioned in the account of the dervish fraternities of Kurdistan. British Advisers were attached to the various ministries of the new Government and technicians to the departments. The members of the old Political Service, much reduced in numbers, were divided between the British Residency and the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior: of these B. H. Bourdillon[2] became Assistant Secretary to the High Commissioner, and H. St. J. B. Philby was selected to be Adviser to the Ministry with an Assistant; others were posted as Divisional Advisers (D.A.) to the Iraqi Mutasarrifs or, in a few cases, Assistant Divisional Advisers (A.D.A.) in qazas.

At home a separate Middle East Department was created in the Colonial Office and took over responsibility for Iraq from the India Office. In March 1920 Mr. Winston Churchill,

[1]The title Naqib was given by the Ottoman Government to the head of the senior Saiyid family in certain towns.

[2]Later Sir Bernard Bourdillon, Governor of Nigeria.

Secretary of State for the Colonies, convened a conference in Cairo, where the main lines of British policy in the Middle East were laid down.

Among the decisions taken was one that the candidature for the throne of Iraq of the Amir Faisal, second son of the Sherif Husain of Mecca, should be supported. In June, accordingly, the Amir reached Basra in a British ship and on the 23rd August, after a referendum in which the affirmative vote was officially returned as 96 per cent, was proclaimed King. The liwa of Sulaimani refused to participate in the referendum at all, and the dissentient 4 per cent was chiefly accounted for by Kirkuk, where the Turks favoured a ruler to be chosen from the House of Usman and the Kurds asked for a Kurdish administration. No representative from either liwa attended the accession ceremonies. Another pregnant decision taken at Cairo was that from the autumn of 1922 the Royal Air Force should take over from the Army responsibility for the defence of, and the preservation of internal order in, Iraq.

The transfer of administrative power from the High Commissioner to the Provisional Government had of course raised in an acute form the question of the future of the Kurdish districts. After the signature of the Treaty of Sèvres the Turks had not unnaturally redoubled their efforts to impress upon all the inhabitants of the wilayat that it was not worth the paper it was written on: there were threats of large-scale invasion, clandestine correspondence with leaders of urban society, secret missions to tribal malcontents, open incitements to rebellion, warnings to 'traitors', and, pervading all, the religious appeal for loyalty to the Sultan who was also Caliph. The principal targets of this propaganda, the Kurds, now found themselves torn by every kind of conflicting emotion: loyalty to their religion, respect for and fear of the might of their late masters, dreams of an independence obtainable only with a support which the British seemed unwilling to give, impatience with the restraints imposed by the authority actually governing them, a lively realization that economically they were bound hand and foot to Baghdad, and reluctance to accept subordination, even with a measure of autonomy, to an Arab Kingdom. In accordance with another decision of the Cairo Conference, therefore, the High Commissioner took steps to

ascertain their wishes and suggested a compromise solution, which was published in a communiqué on the 6th May, that is about seven weeks before Faisal's arrival.

The arrangements proposed for the two northern liwas may be summarized as follows:

(*a*) The Kurdish districts of the Mosul liwa should be formed into a sub-liwa under a British Assistant Mutasarrif, subordinate officials to be Kurds or Kurdish-speaking Arabs; appointments would be made by the High Commissioner but in other respects the sub-liwa would be administered as an integral part of Iraq.

(*b*) British officers should be associated with the administration of Arbil together with Koi Sanjaq and Ruwandiz, and in the appointment of Government officials regard would be had to the wishes of the people.

The arrangements proposed for Sulaimani were more elaborate and are quoted textually:

(*c*) Sulaimani will be treated as a Mutasarrifliq governed by a Mutasarrif-in Council, the Mutasarrif to be appointed by the High Commissioner and to have a British Adviser attached to him; pending the appointment of a Mutasarrif the British Political Officer will act in this capacity. To the Mutasarrif-in-Council will be delegated such powers, including right of appeal to the High Commissioner, as may be approved by the High Commissioner, after consultation with the Mutasarrif-in-Council on the one hand and the Council of State of Iraq on the other. Qaimmaqams for the time being should be British, to be replaced by Kurds as soon as competent men are forthcoming.

The scheme for Mosul, where Kurdish nationalism was in fact almost inarticulate, was never implemented; although the desirability on administrative grounds of dividing the unwieldy Mosul liwa has since been canvassed on several occasions, notably in 1944, the vested interests of the leading families of Mosul city have always been able to prevent it.

The wording of the recommendation for Arbil is accounted for by the fact that, although under the British military administration this had been an independent Division, the Provisional Government had proposed to restore the Turkish organization in which Arbil, Koi and Ruwandiz had been separate qazas subordinate to Kirkuk; on the intervention of

the High Commissioner, however, the Division had been constituted into a sub-liwa with a Kurdish Assistant Mutasarrif, who quickly became independent of the Mutasarrif of Kirkuk in all but name. After the referendum the curious situation arose that whereas the Assistant Mutasarrif at Arbil flew the Iraqi flag over the serai both his superior at Kirkuk and his subordinate at Ruwandiz did not.

Although no formal effect was given to these two sets of proposals the High Commissioner continued in practice to intervene actively in the affairs of the Kurdish areas until after the conclusion of the Treaty of 1926 with Turkey, and indeed almost until the end of the Mandate in 1932. At Sulaimani, after the referendum, the Political Officer continued to administer the liwa, with a Council but under the direct orders of the Residency.

Already in March 1921 at Qazvin I had received a communication from the Residency informing me that I had been appointed a Divisional Adviser in the new administrative organization of the Iraqi State and had been chosen for the post of Assistant Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior; I was instructed to hand over charge to my senior A.P.O. and to proceed to Baghdad at once. But the *coup d'état* of Saiyid Ziya-ud-Din and Riza Khan had taken place in Tehran a day or two before the date fixed for my departure and when, after abandoning my car on the road and battling my way through the deep snow on a camel, I reached Hamadan I found a telegram ordering me to return to Qazvin. Here I stayed until Norperforce was finally withdrawn in the late spring.

When in the middle of May I reported at Baghdad Philby pressed me hard to take up my duties as Assistant Adviser forthwith. But apart from the period of sick leave after my typhoid, when I was a semi-invalid, I had enjoyed no real leave at all since I had first come out to the Persian Gulf in 1912, and I felt entitled to insist on a spell in England so as to avoid the rigours of yet another summer before settling down to work in the torrid south. My diary covering the period April 1920 to August 1922 was lost in the circumstances described in a later chapter, but some photographs that have survived remind me that our ship stuck on the Shatt-al-Arab bar for nine days in

the sweltering heat, and that while we were there the Royal Indian Marine Ship *Hardinge* passed us bound for Basra with—it was an open secret—the Amir Faisal on board.

By the time I returned from leave to Baghdad early in 1922 Philby had been replaced as Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior by Colonel, now Sir Kinahan, Cornwallis, who had originally come out with the Amir Faisal as his personal liaison officer and mentor. There had been other changes in the appointments originally planned, and I was astonished and mortified to learn that I was not to take up the duty for which I had been cast, or even to have a Division in Iraq, but that I had been posted as A.P.O. Halabja in the Sulaimani Division which, as I have already mentioned, had elected to stay out of the new kingdom. This assignment seemed to me to be junior to any that I had held during the past five years and to contrast most unfavourably with my last as P.O. Norperforce where, with five A.P.O's. under my orders, I had been responsible to the G.O.C. for the relations of the Army with the Persian administration and public from the Turkish and Russian frontiers on the west and north to Tehran and Hamadan on the east and south, and where I had the consciousness of having done well. I derived no comfort from the considerations put to me that the Sulaimani Division was seething with unrest and required officers of special experience, that this was an executive and not an advisory post, and moreover that it was not an ordinary posting but was classed as 'special duty'. I felt that having been absent for so long, in Persia and on leave, during the period of change when far-reaching decisions were being taken, I had returned to a land that knew not Joseph and that I might be wise to return to the parent service from which I had already been seconded for seven years. At my request the High Commissioner telegraphed to Sir Percy Loraine, H.M. Minister at Tehran, asking if he would like to have my services for employment in Persia. Some time was bound to elapse before an answer could be expected and it was arranged that I should take up the Halabja appointment temporarily, pending the arrival of Noel who, at the end of his mission in Northern Kurdistan, had volunteered to serve under the High Commissioner in any capacity rather than return to India.

In Sulaimani too there had been changes. The Division had

remained tranquil throughout the Arab rebellion, thanks to Soane's efficient and vigorous rule, but the new arrangements had not appealed to him and he had elected to go. His successor, Goldsmith, a delightful fellow who had done well in the south and at Khanaqin, was in poor health. The atmosphere I found on arrival was what would have been described in the jargon of a later period as 'distinctly jittery'. The A.P.O. I was to relieve at Halabja was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. The wild tribesmen from the Hewraman mountains, led by a certain Mahmud Khan of Dizli on the Persian side (who, after taking a leading part in Shaikh Mahmud's rebellion of 1919, had been handed over to us by the Persian Government for deportation but had unwisely been allowed to return after a few months of detention, only to get in touch at once with Turkish Kemalist agents), were constantly marauding into the Shahrizur Plain, while others who had villages on the Iraqi side of the frontier were ejecting any official who attempted to collect, or even assess, the ordinary taxes on natural produce. In the middle of January poor FitzGibbon had been killed in an affray not far from Khurmal, and an attack on Halabja had only been turned back by a successful air operation. The A.P.O.'s situation was being rendered even more difficult by the intrigues at Halabja itself and among the Jaf tribes of the Lady Adila who, while still fundamentally faithful to the 'Glorious Government' coupled with the names of Soane and Lees, had fallen foul of its latest representative on the spot, no doubt because he had found the satisfaction of some of her ambitions incompatible with the requirements of peacetime administration.

At Ranya, directly exposed as it was to the intrigues of Turkish agitators, the situation was even more precarious. Sections of the Pizhdar, Bilbas and Ako tribes were in a ferment. In August 1921 Ranya itself had been attacked by tribesmen with a stiffening of Turkish soldiers and, although the raid itself had been successfully beaten back by air action, the A.P.O. was constantly occupied on minor police operations; he had moreover contracted a personal blood feud by shooting dead a local Agha who had attacked him in his office with a dagger, and was due for leave as soon as a replacement could be found.

In the central and southern parts of the Division and in the

neighbouring districts of the Kirkuk liwa the omnipresent Shaikhs of the Barzinja family, reinforced by every malcontent irked by the rule of law, were conducting an intensive war of nerves, behind a façade of Kurdish nationalism, with a view to securing the return, and of course the eventual reinstatement, of Shaikh Mahmud, who had already been brought back from India as far as Kuwait. Important in this agitation by reason of his outward appearance of moderation and good sense was a certain Shaikh Abdul Kerim, whose *takya* was at Qadir Karam, a village on the left, the Kirkuk, bank of the Basira River.

The whole position was of course basically unsound. The High Commissioner had surrendered almost all his physical resources to the Iraqi Government and British G.H.Q. were as averse as ever to the employment of Imperial troops in a remote area having no interest for them; sanction for the employment of the British-paid locally-recruited Levies was almost as difficult to obtain. The direct revenues of the Division might have sufficed for the cost of the ordinary civil service and police, but with no share in the proceeds of customs and excise or other central income the financing of anything more than a hand-to-mouth administration was out of the question. Most of the British officials in the Baghdad ministries and departments were as fanatical as any nationalist Arab in their refusal to admit that these Kurds, who had deliberately chosen to stay without the pale, had any right whatever to their assistance. Given a law-abiding and industrious community some kind of government might have carried on for a time, but in a country where the ordinary obligations of decent citizenship were regarded by nine-tenths of the population as intolerable impositions the Political Officer had a fantastically impossible task.

In the absence of any will to govern on the British side there seemed to be two possible alternative policies. The first would have been a unilateral decision to incorporate Sulaimani (and Kirkuk) in the Iraqi State whether the people liked it or not; but this would have been a breach of the solemn assurances which had been given in Parliament at home that the Kurds would not be forced into subjection to an Arab government. The second was the replacement of direct by indirect rule through some prominent Kurdish personality who could command

general support and who, at any rate, would not be vulnerable to the Turkish Caliphate-propaganda to which the simple-minded villagers and tribesmen were particularly susceptible. Had there been a member of the Baban family with the necessary qualifications the name might have rallied nationalist elements other than the Shaikhs; but the senior representative, who was encouraged to visit Sulaimani from Baghdad about this time, was found to know no Kurdish whatever and to be interested in the past history of his family rather than the practical politics of the day.

Goldsmith, not surprisingly perhaps in view of his environment, was inclined to recommend that Shaikh Mahmud should be reinstated. My own view was that Mahmud was incorrigible and that we should look farther afield, perhaps to a certain Saiyid Taha, son of Shaikh Muhammad Siddiq and grandson of the celebrated Shaikh Ubaidullah of Shamdinan in Turkey, whom I myself had never met but on whom our officers at Ruwandiz had reported favourably as a man of sober sense with modern ideas. Noel too, when he arrived, expressed grave doubts as to the wisdom of bringing back the man who had already proved so intractable unless personal discussions should show that he had learned his lesson. In the end our hands were forced by the speed of events.

The A.P.O. Halabja still occupied, as office and residence, a large double house belonging to Hamid Beg Jaf, a grandson of Usman Pasha (by his first wife, not the Lady Adila), which had been commandeered after his participation in the rising of 1919. It was situated on the western edge of the town, with the front door giving on to a narrow alley and having from the upstairs verandahs at the back a superb and unrestricted view down the vast expanse, dotted with ancient mounds, of the Shahrizur plain. The first thing my predecessor showed me when I went to take over was a small postern in the garden wall at the back which *his* predecessor, Lees's successor, had had made to ensure a rapid get-away if hostile *lashkars* from the gloomy recesses of the Hewraman, which seemed to hang over the town in perpetual and sinister menace, should enter and capture it from the east.

Such were the discouraging auspices under which I assumed charge of my new post.

X THE TURCO-PERSIAN FRONTIER: 1639–1914

THE old Turco-Persian boundary from the Persian Gulf to Ararat measured about 1,180 miles, of which some 700 ran through Kurdistan. Of this line Iraq inherited from the Ottoman Empire about 920 miles, including 440 in Kurdistan. The political and economic life of the Kurds has been profoundly influenced by their position astride this international frontier, and some knowledge of the secular dispute between the two Empires is indispensable for the proper understanding of my story; it has, moreover, its amusing side.

The earliest surviving document defining the boundary is the treaty concluded at Zuhab in 1639 after the victorious expedition of Sultan Murad IV against Shah Safi-ud-Din I; but this settlement was itself based on the conditions imposed nearly a century before, in 1555, by Sultan Sulaiman the Magnificent on Shah Tahmasp I. Both the Turkish and the Persian originals of the Treaty of Zuhab disappeared at unknown dates before 1843, but a copy in Turkish was preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna; it is signed by the Grand Wazir Mustafa and sounds more like a unilateral decree than a negotiated peace. The Persian official *Recueil des traités de l'empire persan avec les pays étrangers*, compiled by Mu'tamin-ul-Mulk (Tehran, 1908), gives as the Treaty a Turkish text with a Persian translation and an explanatory note to say that it was supplied by the Turks and is included in the collection because no Persian copy exists; but this is in fact an extract from the Turkish instrument of ratification dated in the following year, 1640.

The preamble of the Vienna document is worth giving in full as an example of the flowery and bombastic style favoured by the diplomatic draftsmen of the Middle East in the time of our Charles I:[1]

PRAISE to God, the holy, the gracious, the bestower of victory, who has opened the door of peace and concord with the key of the

[1]The translation here given is that prepared for the Erzurum Commission of 1843–8, with a few modifications of paragraphing, punctuation and spelling.

words *Verily I wish nothing so much as reconciliation* and dispelled the darkness of war and fighting with the light of quiet and happiness. Blessings and benedictions, so long as flowers spread their perfume and daylight shines, upon his Prophet, who has fully and clearly manifested the faith and with whose auspicious advent Islam was greatly rejoiced, and upon his family, children and companions, who have been active in propagating that faith.

NOW WHEREAS, by the will and good pleasure of Him who raised the skies without pillars and by the wisdom and omnipotence of Him who composed all things and who has no equal, good order in society and the conservation of the world depend upon the justice and equity of kings and upon their good understanding and union no less than upon their submission to the divine commands positive and negative; and WHEREAS the august Sultans have, in conformity with the sacred precept *Fear God and reconcile yourselves*, resorted to reconciliation, which is a source of happiness, and renounced hostilities and war so that the sword of mutual contrariety was put into the scabbard and nations that were making war with each other cordially reconciled themselves (*That is a favour from God, He grants it to whomsoever he pleases, and God is most Gracious*);

AND WHEREAS I, the most humble of all the servants of God, being charged and authorized to do or undo whatever concerns the Empire and the nation and to make war or peace just as I choose—an authority which I hold from the most glorious Padishah, defender of the faith, whose majesty is as great as that of Solomon, who is the substitute of God in the world, who has justified the maxim *An equitable Sultan is the shadow of God on earth*, the asylum of the greatest Musalman princes, the shelter of the most illustrious Turkish sovereigns, the support of Islam and the Musalmans, the exterminator of heretics and polytheists, sovereign of the two lands and the two seas, sovereign of the two orients and the two occidents, servant of the two holy cities, the treasure of mankind and the apple of the age, who is protected by the supreme Being whose divine assistance men implore, who is favoured by the most high and propitious God (May his Imperial Majesty's dynasty last till the end of the world and their reign be prolonged till the consummation of ages!)—had, in virtue of my full powers and my real character of Sultan's substitute, ordered the victorious Turkish troops to march from beneath Baghdad and had begun to go forward with the intention of entering Persian territory;

AND WHEREAS, on our arrival at a station called Haruniya, the most distinguished among the grandees, Shams-ud-Din Muhammad Quli Beg, Great Equerry, arrived there in the capacity of

Ambassador with a letter—from him who is the ornament of the Persian throne, the splendour of the kingdom of Jam, whose magnificence is equal to that of Darius, the great prince and illustrious lord, the precious pearl of the sea of royalty, the sun of the sky of sovereignty, the noble eagle of the high region of the dignity of Shah, the most illustrious and majestic prince whose troops are as numerous as the stars (May the most high God raise the banners of his strength from earth to heaven and exalt the edifice of his glory to the height of the vaulted sky!)—addressed to our great and august Padishah, and also a flattering letter to me;

AND WHEREAS the Ambassador asked that the fire of war should be extinguished and the dust of fighting dispersed, stating that his Majesty the Shah's will was that reconciliation and peace between the two parties should take place, and I, on my part also, wishing to act in conformity with the sacred text *If they incline to peace do ye also incline to it*, have readily consented for the sake of the safety and tranquillity of mankind to make peace;

AND WHEREAS a letter was sent to the Shah to the end that his Majesty might send a person of confidence with power to settle the conditions of the peace in a manner suitable to the honour and dignity of the two governments, and the Shah, according to the established laws and rules, has appointed to negotiate this treaty of peace and to establish and fix the state of the frontiers the most excellent and faithful Saru Khan (May he always be fortunate in transacting affairs on which quiet and security depend!);

THEREFORE, on his arrival at the Imperial camp at Zuhab, Saru Khan was received with marks of hospitality and, on the 14th day of Muharram in the year 1049 of the *Hijra* of the Prophet (upon whom be the best benedictions!), a Divan was held in the Imperial camp, at which the illustrious Wazirs, the Mir-Miran, the Commanders and Aghas, the Agha of the Janissaries, six Aghas of Companies and other officers were present, Saru Khan the duly accredited plenipotentiary and Muhammad Quli Beg were introduced, and the preliminaries were discussed with them so as to put the position on a good footing. The result of the discussion of both parties has been written down and is as follows . . .

If the Treaty is patronizing in tone the letter of ratification, with its reference to the subjects of the other High Contracting Party as 'horde of Red-heads (Qizilbash)' is positively insulting. Nevertheless the description of the frontier there given is in some respects clearer than that of the actual treaty and I give my own

literal translation of the relevant passage from the Persian of the *Recueil*:

They decided that of the boundaries and limits that are situated in the direction of Baghdad and Azarbayjan the places called Jassan and Badray shall appertain to us, and that the township of Mandali up to Dartang (the place called Sar-i Mil being fixed as the boundary of Dartang) and the plains between them shall appertain to us and the mountain situated in the vicinity shall appertain to the other side; that, Sar-i Mil having been fixed as the limit for Dartang, Darna shall appertain to us; that of the Jaf tribe the clans called Ziya-ud-Din and Harun shall belong to us; that Bêra and Zarduli shall remain for the opposite side; that the Castle of Zanjir situated on the mountain shall be demolished and the villages situated on the west of the said demolished castle shall remain for us and the villages on the east shall be for the other party; that in the neighbourhood of Shahrizur the mountain which is beyond the Castle of Zalm whatever parts look towards the said castle have been occupied by our Majesty, and the Castle of Hewraman with the villages which are part of or dependent on it shall appertain to the opposite party; that the pass of Chughan be fixed as the boundary of Shahrizur, that Qizilja and its dependencies be held by us, and that Mihrban with its dependencies belong to the other side. (The next place mentioned is Qutur, far to the north, over 300 miles away as the boundary runs.)

The places mentioned in the instrument of ratification which fall within our area and can be identified are shown in the map at the end of this chapter; Jassan and Badray (or Badra) are townships now in Iraq and adjacent to Pusht-i Kuh of Luristan, far to the south. According to Chirikov (see p. 137 n. below) the district of Darna and Dartang corresponded fairly closely with what came to be known later as the Pashaliq of Zuhab; it was bounded approximately by the Sirwan on the north-west, its tributary the Zimkan on the north-east, another tributary the Hulwan on the south-west, and on the south-east by a line running north or east of north through Sar-i Mil, which is about seven miles from Karind on the high road to Kirmanshah; Dartang itself was near the modern village of Rijab at the entrance to the gorge through which the Hulwan breaks out into the plain; on a map prepared by Rawlinson and Felix Jones and attached to the latter's paper Darna is shown on the left bank of the Zimkan twenty-six miles slightly east of north of

Sar-i Mil. Of the two Jaf clans mentioned the Harumi survives as the fourth largest section in Iraq, but the Ziya-ud-Din no longer exists with that name. Bêra and Zarduli present some difficulty; an extract from the Treaty quoted in an early Persian work has Dêra and Zardoyi; the Dêra Plain is about ten miles south of Sar Pul-i Zuhab on the high road (and thus outside the boundaries of the Pashaliq of Zuhab just given); Chirikov says, no doubt with good reason,[1] that Zardoyi was another name for Qala Shahin, a fort situated on the left bank of the Hulwan near the Dêra Plain. Qala Zanjir is well known and lies on the direct line from Sar-i Mil to Felix Jones's position for Darna. The castle of Zalm and the village now known as Shahr-i Hewraman are respectively high up on the western and eastern sides of the Hewraman sector of the *chaîne magistrale* north-east of Halabja. Up to the end of the Ottoman régime the name Qizilja (which we have already met as that of a river) was applied to the nahiya which in our time was renamed Pênjwin after the principal market village. Mihrban is the older Persian form of the Kurdish Mariwan. Chughan I have not identified; an old map compiled by Colonel Williams shows it about half-way between Pênjwin and Sulaimani, which must be wrong; it could only be somewhere on the frontier line between Pênjwin or the Shilêr wedge and Mariwan.

The Treaty (Vienna text) concludes:

Accordingly, pursuant to my full powers and positive authority, I have written down this egregious Treaty and sent it to His Majesty the Shah and to our august Padishah. So long as the Shah shall observe this Treaty as it ought to be observed according to the sacred text *Do not violate an agreement after ye have made it*, His Imperial Majesty our most magnificent Padishah also will act in obedience to the holy command *Fulfil your agreement for an agreement is obligatory.* This happy peace will last and be maintained, with God's permission, till the day of resurrection, and whoever shall alter it after having heard it, verily, this sin shall be upon those who have altered it.

In spite of the noble sentiments so eloquently expressed and the high authority of Holy Writ hostilities were constantly renewed whenever either side felt strong enough to take the

[1]But for his authority it would have been tempting to suggest that the reference was to the lands of the Zardoyi tribe who still occupy a group of villages south of the Sirwan between the Zimkan and Shaho.

initiative, and were only temporarily interrupted by fresh treaties concluded in 1727 (Hamadan), 1736 (Constantinople), 1746 (Mughan), and 1823 (Erzurum). The Treaty of 1746 specifically reaffirmed the frontier laid down in 'the Treaty (of 1639) concluded in the glorious reign of the puissant Emperor Sultan Murad IV, who is now enjoying the spring of Paradise' (the condition of poor Safi-ud-Din is not mentioned); and the Treaty of 1823 reaffirmed 'the stipulations of the Treaty of 1746 respecting the ancient boundaries of the two Empires'. A series of major incidents between 1833 and 1842 brought the two States once more to the brink of open war; in 1833 there was a Persian incursion as far as Bayezid; in 1835 the Kurds of Van raided Qutur, and Muhammad Pasha of Ruwandiz carried fire and sword into Mêrgasur in Persia; in 1837 the Pasha of Baghdad burnt Muhammara[1] and slaughtered the inhabitants; in 1840 a Persian expedition temporarily occupied Sulaimani; in 1842 a force from Sulaimani attacked the Wali of Ardelan[2]; and there were many other similar if less resounding affairs.

The modern history of the dispute begins with the acceptance by the two Governments of an offer of mediation from Great Britain, then represented at Constantinople by Sir Stratford Canning, and Russia. In 1843 a Commission composed of delegates of the Four Powers met at Erzurum: Mirza Taqi Khan for Persia, Enveri Efendi for Turkey, Colonel Fenwick Williams (later to achieve fame in the Crimean War as the defender of Kars) for Great Britain, and Colonel Dainese for Russia. The Hon. Robert Curzon, better known for his *Visits to the Monasteries in the Levant*, was associated with Williams for the first few months as Joint-commissioner and recorded his experiences in another book, *Armenia: A Year at Erzeroom and on the Frontiers of Russia, Turkey and Persia.*[3] The British interpreter was J. S. Redhouse, whose Turkish-English dictionary remained a standard work until the reform of the Turkish language under Mustafa Kemal.

Curzon does not describe the actual course of the negotiations, but it is clear from various references and anecdotes, as well as from the official minutes of the meetings, that the

[1] Modern Khurramshahr.

[2] This is no doubt the incident referred to in the poem of Shaikh Riza Talabani quoted on p. 58.

[3] London, 1854.

mediating Commissioners had a very trying time. The proceedings were almost wrecked at the outset by the news of a massacre of Shi'as at Kerbela in which 22,000 Persians were alleged to have lost their lives. 'The discussions were protracted by every conceivable difficulty which was thrown in the way of the Commissioners principally by the Turks', while the claim of the other side that the boundaries of the Empire had been well-known and established 'since the days of Afrasiyab' (the entirely mythical figure in the Iranian national epic) indicated a certain rigidity of approach. The activities of the Commissioners are described as perpetual 'struggles to keep the peace and explain the simplest transaction with our colleagues'. After three meetings in May it became apparent that the full powers of both the principals were such that no progress could be made, and negotiations were interrupted for five months pending the receipt of revised instructions. These, when they arrived, proved to be little better than the original instruments, each delegate 'being restricted to the demand of the unconditional surrender of the other's rights . . . but neither being provided with real power to negotiate'; the Persian Government, moreover, insisted that the whole settlement was to be made dependent on the payment of adequate compensation for 'the dreadful event of Kerbela'.

Nevertheless the Commission struggled on. During the summer Shaikh Thamir of the Arab tribe of Cha'b, who dwell on the banks of the Shatt-al-Arab, was brought to Erzurum by the Turks to give evidence on their behalf. Mirza Taqi objected to his being heard, claiming that 'since the time of Noah the tribe had been subject to and the slave of Persia and had never been attached to Turkey'. On the insistence of the Commissioners he was finally introduced to the eighth session, in December, but 'la répugnance du plénipotentiaire de Perse à voir le cheik et le secrétaire du tribunal de Bassorah, Abd-el-Kadir Efendi, jointe à la vivacité arabe de ces derniers, produisit quelque confusion; des demandes et des réponses entrecoupées s'ensuivirent; et au milieu de ces interruptions il ne fut possible de retenier que ce qui suit. . . .' On one occasion the local authorities actually instigated a fanatical Sunni mob of several thousand to attack the residence of the Persian representative, which was beseiged for several hours in spite of the

energetic action taken by Williams, at considerable risk to himself, to induce the Governor to call them off. On the same day, in another part of the town, Mirza Taqi's secretary was brutally murdered by a butcher.

With many interruptions and in spite of incidents such as these, which might well have precipitated the very war the Commission had been convened to forestall, the negotiations continued, in Erzurum and in Europe, until finally the second Treaty of Erzurum[1] was signed on the 31st May, 1847. The Articles referring to the boundary must be quoted in full.

Art. 2. The Persian Government undertakes to cede to the Ottoman Government all the lowlands—that is to say, the land in the western part—of the province of Zuhab; and the Ottoman Government undertakes to cede to the Persian Government the eastern—that is to say, all the mountainous—part of the said province, including the Karind valley. The Persian Government abandons all claim to the city and province of Sulaimani, and formally undertakes not to interfere with or infringe the sovereign rights of the Ottoman Government over the said province. The Ottoman Government formally recognizes the unrestricted sovereignty of the Persian Government over the city and port of Muhammara, the island of Khizr,[2] the anchorage, and the lands on the eastern bank—that is to say, the left bank—of the Shatt-al-Arab which are in the possession of tribes recognized as belonging to Persia. Further, Persian vessels shall have the right to navigate freely without let or hindrance on the Shatt-al-Arab from the mouth of the same to the point of contact of the frontier of the two Parties.

Art. 3. The two Contracting Parties, having by the present Treaty waived their other territorial claims, undertake forthwith to appoint Commissioners and engineers as their respective representatives for the purpose of determining the frontiers between the two States in conformity with the preceding article.

Art. 9. All points or articles of previous treaties, and especially of the Treaty concluded at Erzurum in 1238 (1823), which are not specifically amended or annulled by the present Treaty, are hereby reaffirmed in respect of any and all of their provisions, as if they were reproduced in their entirety in the present Treaty.

The two High Contracting Powers agree that, when the texts of

[1] To avoid confusion the first treaty signed at Erzurum in 1823 will be referred to by the date only. The English of the second treaty here given is that of the League of Nations, translated from the French 'traduction identique' made by Redhouse and his Russian colleague.

[2] Now well-known as Abadan island.

this Treaty have been exchanged, they will accept and sign the same and that the ratifications thereof shall be exchanged within the space of two months or earlier.

At the last moment the Ottoman Government refused to authorize their representative to sign without assurances regarding the exact meaning of certain stipulations. These were given in an 'Explanatory Note' addressed to the Porte by the British and Russian Ambassadors in Constantinople and, as far as the river boundary was concerned, made it clear that 'the anchorage of Muhammara' was that in the Karun River just above its confluence with the Shatt-al-Arab, and not in the Shatt itself. The note was not communicated to the Persians until some months later.

The question of sovereignty over the river was not raised during these negotiations, the alternative lines at issue being: the old channel of the Karun leading to Khaur Musa between thirty and forty miles farther east, a line bisecting Khizr island, and the 'actual boundary' along the left bank. A. H. Layard, who later himself became Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, describes in his autobiography[1] how, when still a young man but after the remarkable travels described in his *Early Adventures*,[2] he was employed by Sir Stratford Canning to prepare a special report on this sector of the frontier; he suggested, and Canning approved, the second of these alternatives as the line most consistent both with the history of past possession and with the claims of equity, but to their bitter annoyance Lord Aberdeen, anxious to placate the other mediating Power, gave in to Russian insistence and the third, the most advantageous for Persia, prevailed. There was one other modification of the line of 1639 favourable to Persia: Zuhab, instead of being left to Turkey in its entirety right up to Sar-i Mil, was now divided by a new line well to the west. But the mediating Powers were not out of the wood and, notwithstanding these substantial gains for his Government, it was only after further diplomatic pressure that the Persian Ambassador in Paris was instructed to proceed to Constantinople for the purpose, and that ratifications were finally exchanged on the 21st March 1848, ten months after the signature instead of the two stipulated in the text.

[1] Sir A. H. Layard: *Autobiography and Letters*, London, 1903.
[2] *Early Adventures in Persia, Susiana and Babylonia*, London, 1887.

The Delimitation Commission provided for in Article 3 consisted of Colonel Williams again for Great Britain, Mirza Ja'far Khan for Persia, Dervish Pasha for Turkey, and Colonel Chirikov for Russia. The following extract from Sir Stratford Canning's letter of instructions to Williams has a curiously modern ring:

> The operations . . . will also act upon the interests of a numerous population scattered over the vast mountain tracts and extensive plains through which the boundary is expected to run. It is reasonable to expect that they will lay the foundations of much social improvement, to be gradually developed among the wild inhabitants of those countries at the same time that they will contribute powerfully to the maintenance of peace.

The dispatch ends with unconscious irony:

> I leave the subject here, with a confident hope that the same success which ultimately crowned your negotiations at Erzeroon will, after an interval less protracted by unavoidable incidents, attend the performance of your present duties.

The work of the Commission was gravely compromised even before it had met. Dervish Pasha himself, while ostensibly on his way from Constantinople to join his colleagues at Mosul, made a detour to Qutur in Persia with an armed force, drove out the Persian authorities, established a Turkish garrison of regular troops, laid the foundations of barracks, and erected 'landmarks of masonry' up to within six or seven miles of the town of Khoi with inscriptions recording the annexation of the district to Turkey from that date. This was only the first of a series of 'improper and isolated proceedings' in which the Turkish Commissioner persisted throughout the several years of his mission.

The representatives assembled at Baghdad in June 1849, but did not attempt to start work at Muhammara until January 1950. Once more 'the spirit of chicane, dispute and encroachment' vitiated every attempt to get on, and Sir Stratford Canning calculated that of the first two years only three weeks were spent on actual operations of delimitation. The British, Russian and Persian delegations spent the summer of 1850 in the remote valleys of Mungarra in Luristan,[1] although

[1]They were joined for four months in Mungarra by Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh, the celebrated Irishman, later M.P. for County Carlow, who was born with no arms and no legs; see my article 'The Travels of Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh in Kurdistan and Luristan in 1850', *J.R.C.A.S.*, Vol. XXXVI, 1949.

many cooler and pleasanter places could have been found in the frontier zone itself, while Dervish Pasha isolated himself in the insalubrious district of Badra, on the boundary indeed, but in the plains. The British and Russian delegations moved on to Karind in April 1951, and then on to Senna for the summer. W. K. Loftus, the geologist attached to the British party, who spent the whole of the winter investigating sites on the Lower Euphrates and at Shush, describes in his book, *Travels and Researches in Chaldaea and Susiana*,[1] how Williams himself directed the excavations of the great mound of Shush for a whole month. The inability of the mediating Commissioners to obtain the agreement of both parties to any of their proposals led to a change of plans, and the Commission was required in the first place only to survey a belt of territory within which the boundary lay and not to fix the precise line; but in view of subsequent arguments it is interesting to note that at one stage the Persians accepted conditionally, but the Turks rejected, the line running just along the left bank of the Shatt-al-Arab upstream from the sea to just above the Karun confluence, thus leaving the whole of the river under Turkish sovereignty. Work was interrupted by the Crimean War (1854–6) and the Anglo-Persian War (1856–7). By a sad mischance Colonel Williams's own records and diaries were lost overboard in the Thames when he reached home.

After the wars, in 1857, the British and Russian surveyors met at Petersburg to compile maps from the materials collected in 1850–2. These were completed in 1865; but when the two sets were compared, it would seem for the first time, so many discrepancies were found that they were obliged to sit down again to eliminate them. Four more years passed before the new map, styled 'Carte Identique', was ready for communication to the parties. Persia agreed without reservation that the line should be fixed by arbitration within the zone mapped, but it was not until 1875 that Turkey gave conditional assent.

In the meantime further disputes had led the two principals to negotiate another Convention (3rd August 1869) providing that 'the *status quo* obtaining at the time of the investigations of the Commissioners of the four Powers' was to be observed. This Convention was no more effective than its predecessors; indeed

[1]London, 1857.

it 'introduced a new element of discord, the *status quo* therein prescribed being differently appreciated by either litigant'. In 1874 a purely Turkish-Persian Commission was convened at Constantinople. But deadlock was reached almost at once, the Persians relying on Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzurum to demand the restoration of the *status quo* of 1847 for all parts of the frontier not mentioned in Article 2, while the Turks invoked Article 9 (as indeed they did again and again until 1912) to claim the application of the Treaty of 1823 and so of Sultan Murad's line of 1639. Sir A. Kemball and Colonel Zelmoi joined the Commission as mediators. They confirmed an earlier ruling of 1850 in favour of the Persian contention that Article 3 applied to the frontier and that Article 9 was irrelevant, and after much frustration seemed to be making some progress when once again the outbreak of war, the Russo-Turkish War of 1876, brought all work to a close.

Throughout these years Persia was constantly appealing to the mediating Powers to put an end to the persistent violations of the Treaty. The continued Turkish occupation of Qutur in particular was a chronic stumbling block to any kind of understanding. A British officer, Major Frederic Millingen, author of *Wild Life among the Koords*,[1] was actually in command of the trespassing Turkish garrison in about 1867, and the map prefaced to his book shows a great eastward bulge of the boundary line almost as far as Khoi, evidently Dervish Pasha's line of 1849. Both the abortive Treaty of San Stefano and the Treaty of Berlin which replaced it (1878) contained articles requiring Turkey to evacuate Qutur, and in 1880 a mixed Anglo-Russian commission defined the exact frontier line in a protocol but did not actually demarcate it; the Turkish garrison however remained. It is curious that an even graver trespass by the other party received far less attention in all these diplomatic exchanges: the Persians, despite the specific provisions of the Treaty of 1823 requiring its retrocession and despite the compromise of Erzurum, continued unostentatiously to occupy the western half of Zuhab which Muhammad Ali Mirza, Prince-Governor of Kirmanshah, after declaring war without the permission of his father Fath Ali Shah, had seized in 1821, so that for many years the *de-facto* frontier was the Sirwan River itself.

[1]London, 1870.

The next landmark is the 'Tehran Protocol' of the 21st December 1911 which was negotiated directly between the two parties and provided for a new Joint Delimitation Commission; its work was to be based on the clauses of 'the treaty known as the Treaty of Erzurum concluded in 1263 (1847)', and any points of disagreement were to be submitted to the Hague Court of Arbitration. Eighteen meetings were held at Constantinople from March to August 1912 with little result; and once more, beginning with a Russian note giving that Government's view of the correct line over much of its length, the Ambassadors of the mediating Powers intervened, emphasizing to the Turks in particular 'the necessity of putting into effect without delay the explicit stipulations of the Treaty of Erzurum which are tantamount to the restoration of the *status quo* of 1848'. In July 1913 Sir Edward Grey induced Haqqi Pasha, who was visiting London as a special representative of the Porte to discuss a number of outstanding questions, to agree to a line in the extreme south more favourable to Persia than any which his Government had hitherto been prepared to concede.

These quadripartite negotiations led to the signature, on the 4th November at Constantinople, by representatives of the four Governments, of yet another Protocol, in which the boundary line was described in considerable detail. For Qutur the Protocol of 1880 was reaffirmed. For one sector, the Hewraman country east of Halabja, there was a specific derogation from the *status quo* of 1848, and changes in the *de-facto* situation up to 1905 (all favourable to Persia) were to be accepted. In the south the Grey-Haqqi arrangements were confirmed. At Muhammara, notwithstanding the assurances given in the 'Explanatory Note', Persia was awarded the modern anchorage in the Shatt-al-Arab, which extends some distance above and below the Karun confluence, 'in conformity with the Treaty of Erzurum'. A Delimitation Commission composed of representatives of all four Governments was to be set up and, in addition to its duties of demarcation, would be charged with the task of establishing the *status quo* of 1848 for those parts of the frontier not precisely defined in the Protocol.[1] The British

[1]For this purpose the Commission, in addition to local inquiries, frequently had recourse to the diaries of Chirikov, Dervish Pasha, and the latter's secretary, Khurshid Efendi; no evidence from the British side was available for the melancholy reason already given.

and Russian Commissioners were to be vested with arbitral powers to decide all disputes; and as soon as any sector had been demarcated that part was to be considered as definitely and unalterably fixed.

It is the story of this Commission that Hubbard tells in his book.[1] Work started in January 1914 on the Shatt-al-Arab and was completed at Ararat in October, a few weeks after the outbreak of the First World War. The minutes of the Commission, in addition to describing the alignment in great detail, give the geographical co-ordinates and a description of every pillar; in many places, especially where they had been made the basis of an unsuccessful territorial claim, grazing and water rights are defined. In general it was found that Turkish encroachments had taken place in the north and Persian encroachments in the south; the enforcement of the new line could therefore be described as favourable to Persia in the north and to Turkey (and eventually to the successor State, Iraq) in the south. At Qutur the Turkish delegate dug in his toes so firmly that, in view of the mounting tension in Europe, the Commission postponed to a more favourable moment the actual construction of pillars in this small sector.

From 1915 onwards, as the British armies advanced northwards from Basra, the Occupation authorities took over responsibility for administration up to newly demarcated line. On the other hand, after the war, the new Turkish Republic showed itself no more accommodating than its Ottoman predecessor, and met Persian demands for its observance with the blunt declaration that the Protocol of 1913 'could not be regarded as a valid political instrument since it was neither approved by the Chamber of Deputies nor ratified by the Sultan'. Faced by the prospect of being left with the worst of both worlds the Persian Government decided to reverse its traditional attitude towards the agreed settlements and to follow the Turkish example.

Hubbard, commenting on what he thought was, with the

[1]The British Commissioner, A. C. Wratislaw, a senior member of my own, the Levant Consular, Service fell ill during the course of the work and was succeeded by his Deputy, A. T. Wilson; he gives no account of the Commission in his book *A Consul in the East* (London, 1924). The Russian Commissioner was V. Minorsky of the Imperial Russian Diplomatic Service, whose name occurs so frequently in these pages.

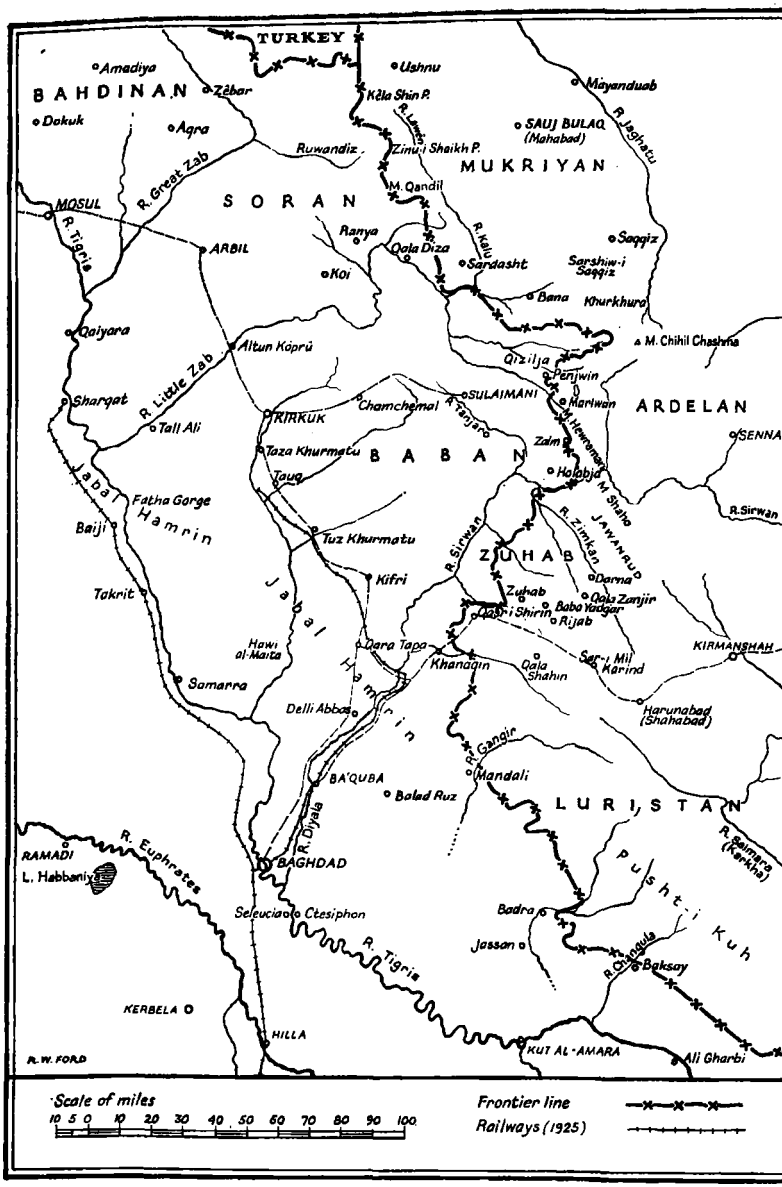
erection of pillar no. CXXXVII on the col between Great and Little Ararat, the culminating act of seventy years of diplomatic pourparlers, international conferences and special commissions, calls the whole story 'a phenomenon of procrastination unparalleled in the chronicles of oriental diplomacy'. He little guessed that before twenty years were out the whole settlement would have been denounced by both the original parties and that, in spite of references to the League of Nations, two more treaties and several commissions, the centenary of the second Treaty of Erzurum would come and go with 880 of 920 miles of boundary between Iraq and Persia still undemarcated.

XI JAF AND HEWRAMAN

THE qaza of Halabja measures over sixty miles from north to south and varies in width between thirty-five miles in the latitude of Halabja town and eight near Pênjwin. It is bounded on the north and east by no less than 170 miles of Persian frontier; on the west and south it adjoins the qazas of Shar Bazhêr, Sulaimani Headquarters, Chamchemal and Khanaqin. It is divided into four nahiyas: Pênjwin, Khurmal, Halabja Headquarters and Warmawa.

Pênjwin (pop. 22,000)[1] comprises that part of the Qala Chuwalan basin that lies between the Larhê-Tariyar ridge and the frontier. Khurmal (pop. 19,500) is the part of the Shahrizur Plain that lies north of the Tanjaro and its affluent, the Zalm Water, so named after the famous castle mentioned in the Treaty of Zuhab. Halabja Headquarters (pop. 23,000) includes the lands situated south of the Zalm and east of the Tanjaro, and also the triangular enclave of Shamiran enclosed on the north by the Sirwan, on the east by the frontier and on the west by the Khanaqin boundary. Warmawa (pop. 7,000) is the rest of the Shahrizur Plain in the loop formed by the Tanjaro, south of Khurmal and west of Halabja Headquarters, plus the estate of Diziyayish, a narrow 'leg' stretching down the right bank of the

[1]By 1947 when the census was taken the nomadic Jaf had dwindled to about 600 families; I do not know in which administrative unit they were registered.



Part of the Iraqi-Persian boundary and the Kurdish Principalities

Sirwan so as to cut off the eastern end of the Qara Dagh valley, and the nahiya of that name, from the river.[1]

Halabja is the domain of the Jaf *par excellence*; nine-tenths or more of the land of the qaza must be owned in *tapu*[2] by various members of the ruling family, and at least three-quarters of the population must be Jaf clansmen. The Jaf, in their turn, are the Kurds *par excellence*, and are without doubt the most important tribe of Southern Kurdistan; they are frequently referred to as 'Kurd' with a specialized, restricted meaning to distinguish them from other tribesmen and from non-tribal villagers. They can claim a respectable antiquity as Kurdish tribes go and by the beginning of the seventeenth century, as we have already seen, were a subject of dispute between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. At that time the majority of the Jaf seems to have occupied the district of Jawanrud in Persia, about half-way between Kirmanshah and Halabja and south-west of Senna. Today they are divided into three principal groups according to their geographical location: the first and largest in Iraq west of the Sirwan, and called Muradi; the second still called 'of Jawanrud'; and the third, 'of Kirmanshah', consisting of seven small clans which broke away from the second in the middle of the nineteenth century and, in spite of the difference of religion, attached themselves to the Goran confederation.[3]

The history of the Muradi Jaf, as preserved today in local memory, begins with the migration or flight of a certain Zahir Beg with about a hundred tents from Jawanrud to Ban-i Khêlan, situated on the west bank of the Sirwan just where the Qara Dagh range drops down to the river, and so in Baban

[1]In 1922 this 'leg' stretched still further down the right bank so as to include also the eastern end of Sangaw, south of the Qara Dagh range; the unwieldy shape of the nahiya is another good example of the influence of tribal considerations on the early organization of the administration—the villages affected were the property of the heirs of Mahmud Pasha Jaf, who lived in Halabja, and their administrative subordination was arranged to suit the convenience of the owners.

[2]Under the Ottoman Land Code, apart from a small category called *mulk* or absolute property, all land belongs to the State and is called *miri*. *Miri* land is of two principal kinds: 'alienated in *tapu*' and unalienated or 'absolute *miri*'. Alienated *miri* which is not properly exploited may in theory revert to the State but for all practical purposes it is freehold; it is bought and sold and is inherited according to rules more liberal than the *shar'* rules governing *mulk*. In popular parlance alienated *miri* is referred to simply as *tapu* and unalienated *miri* as just *miri*.

[3]The popular attribution of Persian nationality to all members of the second and third groups is really a survival from the time (1821–1914) when the Sirwan was the *de-facto* but not the legal boundary; the demarcation of 1914 placed some elements of both groups on the Iraqi side in the Khanaqin qaza.

territory. Various dates for this event have been given by various authorities, and indeed my own principal informant, Kerim Beg of the ruling family, gave me different dates on different occasions. Some writers, seeking to explain the name, say that they came to the Ottoman dominions in the reign of Sultan Murad IV (1623–40), but the most precise, and I believe the most probable, of the dates given to me is 1772 (A.H. 1186),[1] when Ahmad Pasha was ruling in Qala Chuwalan. Zahir Beg was kindly received; but some time after his arrival the Pasha, rightly or wrongly holding him responsible for the depredations of a band of forty brigands operating in that neighbourhood, detained him as a hostage for their surrender. His son, Qadir Beg, duly captured and killed the disturbers of the peace, but too late to save his father, who had already been put to death by the impatient Baban; the place of the massacre of the forty thieves near Ban-i Khêlan is called Gorh-i Kurh-agel, Ladsbury, to this day. Zahir Beg's tomb is still to be seen near by in the district of Diziyayish, which was granted to Qadir Beg in compensation for the miscarriage of justice; his descendants constitute the ruling family of the Jaf Muradi and are known as Begzada. Encouraged by the Pasha's bounty more and more tents continued to come across, until the Muradi became a power in the land; 10,000 tents is the figure generally quoted.

Before the coming of Zahir Beg Shahrizur was occupied by some dozen tribes, most of whom we have already met or shall meet again later: Gelali, Shaikh Isma'ili, Bêsari, Chuchani, Qawilayi, Isma'il Uzairi, Shinki, Kafroshi, Bilbas, Kalhur, Tilako, Galbaghi and Mandumi; the first four are said to have been Jaf who had come over in an earlier migration about fifty years before. The shepherd sections among these tribes were accustomed to spend the winter south of the Qara Dagh in Gil

[1]This late date is not inconsistent with the existence of the dispute in and before 1639, for the frontier imposed by Murad IV was far to the east of the limit of effective Turkish administration at most subsequent times. The Kurdish historian Amin Zaki in his *Tariyx y Slêmaniy w Wulhaty* (Baghdad, 1939), also quoting Kerim Beg as his authority, has preferred 1737 (A.H. 1150), when Khalid Pasha would have been the Baban ruler. Another explanation of the name sometimes heard is that the Jaf were originally Arabs who hived off from the Muradi tribe in Syria; this is an example of a widespread tendency in Kurdistan to attribute an Arab origin, not only to the ruling families who so often claim to be Saiyids, but also to the rank and file of the tribe, and is no doubt due to the prestige of the Arabs either as conquerors in the Middle Ages or as the race which gave birth to the Prophet Muhammad; it does not fit in with anything else that is known about the Jaf.

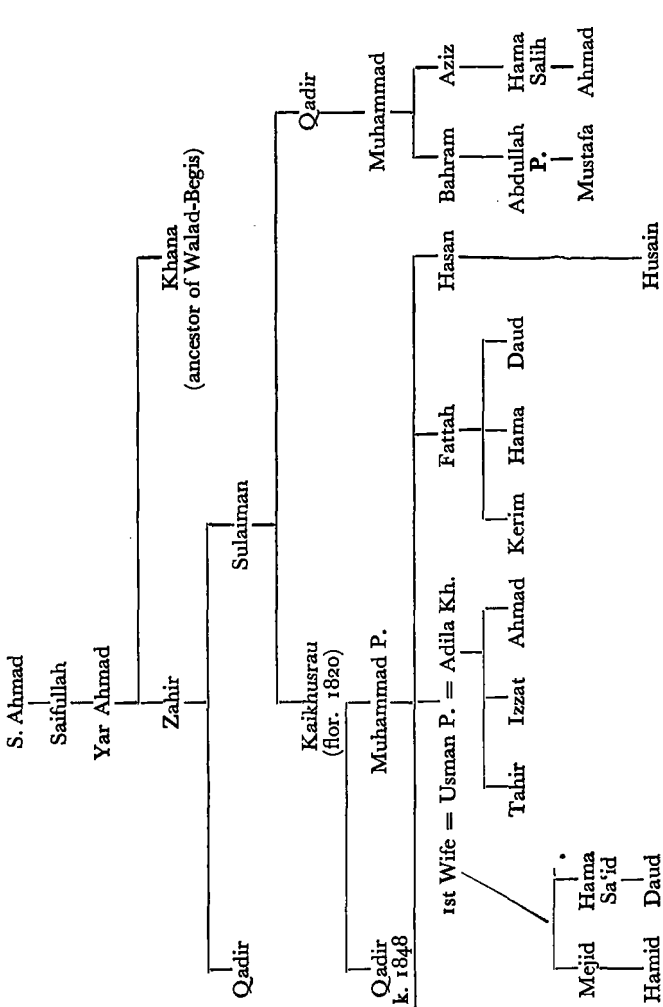
and Sangaw and to summer in the Persian highlands between Senna and Saqqiz.

As the size of their flocks increased the newcomers began to follow their predecessors northwards on the summer migration, but at a respectful distance and only as far as Pênjwin, moving down again well ahead of them in the autumn. Qadir Beg, chafing under this implication of inferiority, sought an occasion of quarrel and proclaimed far and wide that he had given his dog the name of 'Shêra' after Shêr Agha, chief of the Gelali. The Gelali retaliated by cutting off the tail of a dog belonging to a relation of Qadir Beg. While the murder of a man leads automatically to a blood-feud to be satisfied in due course, both among the Kurds and the Arabs the premeditated killing or mutilation of a domestic animal often seems to be taken as such a serious insult that it can only be wiped out by immediate and open war. Furnished thus with the pretext he needed Qadir Beg attacked the Shahrizuris at Hasan Shehid (Shehidan) near the head of the Shilêr valley, killing 400 and scattering the remainder.

Of the defeated coalition the Gelali submitted and joined up with the Muradi as the fourth largest clan; but they still have their own ruling family, the members of which bear the title 'Agha' and were always treated by the Begzadas with a consideration not accorded to ordinary sectional headmen. The Shaikh Isma'ili[1] settled in six villages up against the hills on the northern edge of Shahrizur and continued to migrate to Persia in summer with the Jaf. The locations and habits of the Bêsari, Chuchani and Qawilayi have already been described in Chapter VIII. The Isma'il Uzairi moved farther west to Sarchinar, Surdash, Bazyan and Qala Sêwka. The Shinki and Kafroshi went to Bazyan, where they remain as clients of the Hamawand. The Bilbas scattered to villages as far apart as Qara Tapa near the Jabal Hamrin and Qaynêja in northern Khurmal. Some of the Kalhur may have fled to the main body of that tribe now located south of the Khanaqin–Kirmanshah road in Persia, but 150 tents joined the Tarkhani section of the Jaf. Of the Tilako some went to settle in Khurkhura south-east of Saqqiz, but others were absorbed by the Mika'ili and Roghzadi sections of the Jaf. The Galbaghi and Mandumi similarly

[1]Clément comments on the extreme ugliness of the round faces of the Shaikh Isma'ili, whom he met near Tariyar, in contrast to the handsome oval faces of Upper Siwail.

FAMILY TREE OF THE JAF BEGZADAS



fled to the Senna-Saqqiz region, but a few Mandumi are still found in villages of Surdash and Bazyan.[1]

In subsequent years the Begzadas, by conquest, grant or purchase, became the owners in *tapu* of vast estates extending from Qizil Rubat beyond the Jabal Hamrin in the south to Pênjwin in the north. A great-grandson of Zahir Beg, another Qadir Beg, who was killed in 1848, is remembered as the leader who consolidated the Jaf position in the south by expelling from the Sar Qala and Shirwana districts east of Kifri the previous tribal occupants—Gêzh, Rozhbayani and Zand.

In the table on the opposite page I have tried to reconstruct, from my own notes and other not always consistent sources, a family tree showing the relationship of the principal Begzadas mentioned in this book. The ancestor always given me by the Begzadas as the founder of the family is Zahir Beg's great-grandfather S. Ahmad, who must have flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century and through whom, like so many other ruling families of Kurdish tribes, they claim descent from the Arabian Prophet himself. It is tempting to suppose that the Saiyid established himself among the Jaf as a Spiritual Guide and, by the familiar process, used his religious influence to oust an earlier lay ruling family. At the present time two collateral branches are distinguished in Iraq: Qadir, the victor of Hasan Shehid, seems to have left no offspring in the male line but his brother Sulaiman had two sons, Kaikhusrau and Qadir; one branch is known as the Kaikhusrau-Begi after the first, the other as Bahram-Begi after the senior grandson of the second.[2]

[1]The Bilbas is a large confederation of tribes (see pp. 220–1). I was once informed by Babakr Agha of the Pizhdar that the Bilbas of Shahrizur were Sinn and Ramk, the clans which supplied Nadir Shah (1737–47) with his most dashing cavalry, and that they were expelled by Selim Baban (1743–57). Rich (vol. i, p. 183) at Pênjwin recorded in his diary: 'The tents we now see in the neighbouring plain belong to the Ghellali, Kelhore, and some other *fragments* of tribes, who are now descending from the mountains, and not to the Jafs proper.'

[2]The popularity of the name Qadir is most confusing and even now I cannot be confident that I have got all the early relationships right. There is in Persia a third branch called Walad-Begi, said to be descended from Khana Beg, brother of Zahir Beg. Saiyid Abbas al-Azzawi, who was good enough to send me a copy of his book in Arabic entitled *The Kurdish Tribes of Iraq* (Baghdad, 1947), shows Saiyid Ahmad as a grandson of the celebrated Pir Khidhr of Shaho, who, it will be remembered (see p. 79 above), is said to have flourished in the reign of Shah Abbas the Great (1587–1629); there is nothing improbable about this; such a claim was never made to me by any of the Kaikhusrau-Begis, but I have heard it from the Babajani branch of the Walad-Begis and the small Yênakhi clan, mentioned on p. 197, the rank and file of which are said to be of Begzada origin.

At the time of our occupation the Jaf were still a typical Kurdish tribe of the classical type having an aristocratic ruling family on the one hand and on the other a number of ryot clans, each with its own subdivisions administered by headmen called Kökha (*köxa*, Pers. *kadkhudá*). Some of the clans had long been established on the land as serious agriculturalists. Others, the majority, were primarily nomadic. In recent years, however, more and more of the nomads had tended to settle, but with nothing irrevocable about such settlement: a man might lose his flocks by natural calamity, in tribal warfare, or as the result of governmental action, and so be reduced to maintaining himself by cultivating the soil; but when he had restored his fortunes, even if this took several years, he might decide to resume the nomadic life. The most potent factor in inducing settlement was administrative interference with ancient traditional habits.

Of the Muradi rank and file the following twelve clans were classed as nomadic (the figures in brackets show the numbers of tents still making the annual migration as roughly estimated in 1922): Mika'ili (1,100), Shatri (1,000), Gelali (1,000), Roghzadi (750), Tarkhani (500), Haruni (400), Kemalayi (200), Amala (150), Sadani (150), Badakhi (80), Yar Wais (70).[1] At this time the number of nomads was thought to be about equal to the numbers from the nomadic clans which had settled, so the total of 5,400 tents fits in well enough with the total of 10,000 families traditionally attributed to the nomadic Jaf Muradi.[2]

[1]Most of these clans were divided into recognized sections, some of which by reason of their size, were more important than the smaller clans and were mistaken for independent clans by several travellers; the following list shows the subsections of the six major clans.

Mika'ili; Hama-Ali-Waisi, Alibegi, Rashaburi, Shuwankara, minor settled sections.

Shatri: Mir-Waisi, Wurdashatri, Yusufjani, Brayim.

Gelali: Begzada, Bora, Khidhr-Waisi, Pizhdari, Sarkach, Karamawani.

Roghzadi: Hama-Jan, Isma'il, Roghzad, Shaikh-Ali-Waisi, Sarhadd.

Tarkhani: Aliq, Qadir-Hasan-Ali, Qachol.

Haruni: Selim, Nadirshayi, Qaraniani, Haruni.

[2]During the frontier demarcation of 1914 the prescriptive summer-grazing rights of the Jaf in Persia were not invoked to support any claim to territory, and no mention of them was in consequence made in the *Proceedings* of the Commission. In 1931 the Persian Government denied the right of the Jaf to cross the frontier at all, and from then on progressively obstructed and finally prevented the migration. The nomads were thus obliged to spend the summer in the Shahrizur plain. The consequent heavy mortality both of sheep and of children was a potent factor in speeding up settlement.



5(*a*) PERSIAN BOUNDARY AT BIYARA



5(*b*) JA'FAR SULTAN, LADY ADILA, AHMAD BEG



6(*a*) THRONE OF PRINCESS ZÈRINKEWSH



6(*b*) KAKAI SAIYIDS, SHOWING FAMILY TREE

Taking them from west to east and from north to south the winter camps of the six larger clans were generally to be found: Mika'ili in Sangaw from the Basira River to the Aw-a Spi; Roghzadi and Tarkhani in the tangle of broken country south-east of the Aw-a Spi; Haruni on the Sirwan about Pêwaz; Shatri south of Roghzadi and Haruni; Gelali east and south of Kifri.

The northward migration was made on a similar front. For the passage of the Qara Dagh there were the Sagirma and Paikuli passes and the Ban-i Khêlan gap on the Sirwan; for that of the Beranan range there were the Beranan Pass proper due south of Sulaimani, the Gawra Qala and Pasharhê Passes opposite Paikuli, and the Darband-i Khan Gap on the Sirwan. The Mika'ili marched by the Sagirma and Beranan Passes, Arbat in the Tanjaro valley, the Sarkal-i Pêchan Pass over the Azmir range, across Shar Bazhêr either by Harmêla west of Kurhakazhaw or Barzinja and Hajji Mamand east of it, and finally by the cols of Kani Dizan and Kotra Rhesh over the northern arm of the Shilêr wedge to their summer pastures just east of Bana in Persia. The others all converged on Kawlos situated at the point of a wedge of plain thrust up from Shahrizur east of the Serochik mountains towards Pênjwin: Roghzadi and Tarkhani by Paikuli, Gawra Qala and Muwan in Shahrizur; Gelali by Paikuli and Pasharhê and on by a route a little east of Roghzadi; Shatri half as Roghzadi and half as Haruni; Haruni by the Ban-i Khêlan and Darband-i Khan Gaps to the Tuwaqut bridge over the Tanjaro, seven or eight miles north-east of the Sirwan confluence, and thence northwards across Khurmal. From Kawlos they crossed the watershed by one of three passes, Kani Spika, Nalparêz or Taratawan into the Qizilja Plain, whence all (except the Haruni who passed the frontier near Pênjwin) marched up the Shilêr wedge to enter Persia by the Nawkhuwan Pass at its point. Of the minor clans Kemalayi accompanied Mika'ili, and Amala, Badakhi and Sadani accompanied Haruni. Once over the border the whole tribe fanned out again in an arc around the great massif of Chihil Chashma, Forty Springs (10,400 feet), the Mika'ili near Bana, the Roghzadi east of them in Khurkhara, and so on round to the Haruni in the mountains east of Mariwan.[1] Qara

[1]The Isma'il Uzairi camped north-west of the Mika'ili, that is nearest to Bana.

Tapa was about the southern limit of the Muradi winter camps (Gelali); the extreme range of their annual migration was thus about 140 miles each way.

The villages of the settled elements of the migratory clans were situated both near the winter camping grounds and astride their respective lines of march. The migrants were accustomed to leave their large winter tents and heavy impedimenta with their settled opposite numbers, taking only light tents for use on the road and in the mountains. Many of the more prosperous headmen acquired village property in Persia, by purchase or other means; the Gelali in particular seem to have preferred Persia to Iraq.

The wealth of the nomadic Jaf was, of course, in their flocks; I have preserved a detailed list of the Haruni count of 1922 showing a total of 10,000 sheep, and a note that the total for all the nomads was 125,000. The count did not include lambs under one year old, it was customary to exempt a proportion of those belonging to the headmen who were required to co-operate in the count, and the clansmen were of course experts in the art of concealing animals in the nooks and crannies of the broken south country; the true figure was thus appreciably higher than that shown in the official returns. In addition to sheep every family owned horses and oxen for riding and transport.

The two most important entirely sedentary clans were the Noroli (Dasht and Parcha sections) with 600 families in sixteen villages near Halabja itself, and the Yazdanbakhshi with eight villages in the Shamiran triangle;[1] both were originally Muradi nomads.

The last paramount chief to exercise real authority over the whole tribe was Muhammad Pasha. After his death one son, Mahmud Pasha (d. 1920), continued to move with the nomads while another, Usman Pasha (d. 1909), husband of the Lady Adila, lived at Halabja and held the Turkish appointment of Qaimmaqam of the qaza; the other four sons lived on their estates. The Begzadas blame Mahmud for alienating by his avarice not only his brothers and cousins but also the ryot clans,

[1]Other minor sedentary or semi-nomadic clans generally included in lists of the Muradi Jaf are: Pizhmala, formerly the immediate retainers of the paramount chief; Mas'udi in Pênjwin; 'Isayi among the Shatri. For another group of small tribes sometimes considered to be Jaf but not claimed as Muradi see p. 197 below.

and for having so destroyed the cohesion of the Jaf. Already by 1919 the Begzadas, though still influential as landlords and enjoying a certain respect for their aristocratic birth, had lost all authority over the still numerous nomads, except in so far as they might be employed as government officials.

Of the old travellers on my list Rich records that Kaikhusrau Beg, Chief of Jaf, was present in attendance on the Pasha at Sulaimani and that he later visited him at his summer camp in Mariwan, where three sons (unnamed) and a nephew, Muhammad Beg, son of his predecessor, Qadir, were also present; he places the fighting strength of the whole tribe at 2,000 horse- and 4,000 riflemen; later, near Bana, he heard bitter complaints about their depredations during their stay in that neighbourhood. Fraser mentions the Jaf in the unflattering story already related in connexion with the Hamawand. Felix Jones records that the road between Khanaqin and Qasr-i Shirin was 'infested with plundering parties of the Jaf and Hamawand tribes, rendering it unsafe to proceed without an escort', and that he and Rawlinson were accompanied for a few miles near Sar Pul-i Zuhab by a large party of Jaf horsemen 'under the chief of their tribe, Mahmud Beg' (? Muhammad). Hubbard says that 'they are the terror of the whole country as they pass through with their flocks, plundering and ravaging whenever they get the chance'.

Perhaps the most entertaining pages in Soane's delightful book are those describing his time at Halabja. On arrival, in accordance with the custom of the country, he had gone boldly to the house of Tahir Beg,[1] the Lady Adila's eldest son, and announced himself as a Persian scribe and merchant. By her order he was assigned an upper room in Tahir Beg's house, but later he moved across to a downstair room in the house of the Lady herself, to whom he gradually assumed the post of Persian secretary. Tahir was a poet of some repute, and I cannot forbear to quote in translation the following extract from the introduction to a small volume of his collected works, published at Sulaimani in 1936.

Tahir Beg, the well-known, celebrated, melodious and word-sweet poet, was the son of Usman Pasha, son of Muhammad Pasha,

[1]By a curious error Soane describes him as her stepson; there was a stepson, Mejid, but Tahir was the eldest of her own three sons.

Jaf. The stock and family of the Jaf Begzadas were accounted among the great and celebrated Kurdish Amirs. One hundred and fifty years ago they held the chieftainship of the Jaf tribe. Later, on the encouragement of the Baban Government, they came to Shahrizur, and from the time of the Baban Government until the formation of the Iraqi Government they continued to hold the leadership of the Jaf.

Tahir Beg came into this world in the year 1295 of the Hijra (1878), and departed from it in 1337 (1918). He died in Sulaimani; they brought his body to Halabja; he was buried in the village of Ababailê, so named after one of the Companions of the Prophet, one hour's ride up-hill from Halabja. Tahir Beg did not study in a big or high school, but only passed through a local village school. Nevertheless his understanding, general knowledge and sagacity did not correspond with the degree of his studies; they were ten times higher.

Tahir Beg composed poetry in four languages, Kurdish, Persian, Turkish and Arabic. He produced a vocabulary of these four languages in rhymed verse. We have expended great effort and trouble but unfortunately we have not been able to lay hands on that rare book. The fragments of his that we have been able to obtain we owe to his sister Nahida Khanum, who sent them to us. We request those who have any more of the works of this personage in their possession to send them to us for inclusion in the second edition.

The sagacity of Tahir Beg was on this wise. In the time of the Turkish Government, fifteen [*sic*] years before the Great War, the well-known Major Soane came on a journey to Kurdistan in Iraq. After spending several years in this manner he went to the house of Usman Pasha, the father of Tahir Beg. He became his servant and remained in his employment six or seven months. He called himself Ghulam Husain. This Ghulam Husain, who was Major Soane, worked very well at his duties as servant. Tahir Beg also, on account of his good service, treated him with the greatest respect and liked him. From certain peculiarities of the behaviour of this Ghulam Husain, Tahir Beg conceived some doubts; for he observed that his manners were not like those of other servants, so polite and conscientious was he.

One day Tahir Beg was looking at a French book. Ghulam Husain (Major Soane) said to him, 'Sir, I suppose that your Honour knows French?'

Tahir Beg replied, 'Yes, I know a little; and you, don't you know any?'

He said, 'Yes, some six or seven years ago in Persia I was servant to a Frenchman; from him I learnt a little.'

When Tahir Beg knew that, he always talked to him in French about any secret matter. One day when they were talking there slipped from the tongue of Ghulam Husain (Major Soane), instead of the word *na*, the word *new*—no. Tahir Beg was puzzled at this and concluded that this man named Ghulam Husain was English, because the word *new*—no—is the English for *na*.

Then Tahir Beg called to Ghulam Husain and said, 'What is your name?'

Ghulam Husain said, 'May I be thy sacrifice; what do you mean, what is my name? My name is what you called me by.'

T.B. 'No, you have changed your name; you are English.'

G.H. 'How do you know?'

T.B. 'It is obvious from your speech.'

G.H. 'You are right; I am English; my name is Major [*sic*] Soane; for some years now I have been travelling about Iraq, Iran and Turkey.'

When he knew this, Tahir Beg asked him not to stay there, lest he should fall foul of the Government. Major Soane went away and wrote a book of travel, in which he praises highly the sagacity and cleverness of Tahir Beg.

There is no mention in Soane's narrative of any discovery of his identity by Tahir Beg; so far from hurrying him away, he says that they, and in particular the Lady, who wished to keep him as Persian tutor for her two younger sons, put every obstacle in his path when the time came for him to go. But he was not entirely free from occasions for anxiety. The first cause of embarrassment was a certain Amin Efendi, a renegade of German origin, who had set up as medical adviser to the Lady. Rendered apprehensive by the presence of a traveller who, although a Persian, had by his own account spent several years in Europe and might expose his quackery, Amin Efendi set to work to sow suspicions in the mind of Tahir Beg; but these seem to have been directed to the business and motives of the stranger rather than to his race and religion. The second arose out of the arrival in the neighbourhood of a person styling himself Shaikh-ul-Islam of Senna who had met Soane at Constantinople in the character of an Englishman and whom he now rather rashly sought out at Biyara. The Shaikh, who at their earlier meeting had refused to believe that he was English, now professed himself unconvinced of his bona fides as a Muslim. Indeed, after Soane's return to Sulaimani, the Shaikh visited Halabja and

created a sensation at the Lady's daily reception by publicly denouncing him as a Christian. But according to the account brought by Soane's servant Hama, who was there, she and her son had stood up for him stoutly, quoting his Shirazi accent and the fact of his having been seen saying his prayers.

Soane says that the only person to whom he revealed his identity, at Kirkuk as he was leaving for Baghdad, was a Christian of Mosul who had befriended him in Sulaimani. I once asked Adila Khan if she had ever had doubts about Soane when he was staying in her house. 'Indeed,' she said, 'I remember that my son Tahir did come to me one day and say that he suspected that Ghulam Husain might be a European; but I replied that he was our guest and that we should not pry into what concerned us not.' She may, or may not, have been wise after the event. In any case this evidence from the Kurdish side confirms the merit of Soane's remarkable performance; even the champion of Tahir Beg's sagacity claims no more than that he penetrated the disguise after six or seven months of constant companionship.

The other tribe which plays an important part in the politics of Halabja is the Hewrami, or Hewramani (called officially in Persia Avromani), which occupies both sides of the *chaîne magistrale* and gives its name to this sector. It forms a Gorani-speaking wedge thrust up between the Kurdi-speaking populations of Sulaimani and Ardelan. It is divided into two main sections, Lahun and Takht, and the latter is further subdivided into Hasan-Sani,[1] Bahram-Begi, and Mustafa-Sani, so named after the eponymous ancestors of that branch of the ruling family.

The eighteen villages of Luhun proper are a compact group in the angle formed by the Hewraman range on the north-east and the Sirwan on the south. The international frontier drops down from the crest near the most northerly of these villages, Bidarwaz, and was drawn in a very irregular line by the Commission of 1914 so as to leave them all in Persia (this being the sector, it will be remembered, where changes which had occurred before 1905 in the *status quo* of 1848 were to be validated). For some years before 1914 relations between the Luhun and the

[1]San is short for Sultan, the title given to chiefs of a certain standing in the feudal organization of the Safawis.

Ottoman frontier garrisons had been particularly bitter and had culminated in the destruction by fire of Nosud, the principal village and the residence of the chief, Ja'far Sultan. The Luhunis had retaliated by redoubling their raids across the frontier. At the same time, owing to the Italian and Balkan wars and to other preoccupations, Turkish authority had so dwindled that the industrious and peace-loving folk of Tawêla, a large village situated, like its sister Biyara, right up against the boundary, had sought to purchase immunity from aggression by inviting Qadir Beg, a son of Ja'far Sultan, to come and live among them; the consequences might have been foreseen, for after a house he acquired a garden and then, by mouting improper pressure, the only public bath and more and more gardens. Other members of the family took advantage of the complete collapse of Ottoman authority during the war of 1914–18 to establish themselves in some sixteen more villages on the Iraqi side, most of which belonged in law to various Jaf Begzadas, though the language of the villagers is Gorani like that of Hewraman proper. Similarly in Persia at various times they took advantage of the weakness of their own Government to extend their sway over a number of villages in the district of Pawa to the south-east, some of which are also Gorani-speaking.

Immediately north of the Luhun villages on the Iraqi side come four villages occupied by the Bahram-Begis, and north of them eight occupied by the Hasan-Sanis. Over on the Persian side each of these two sections owns about fourteen villages, but there is no precise dividing line between them; the principal village of the former is Dizli and of the latter the Shahr-i Hewraman mentioned in the treaty of Zuhab. The Mustafa-Sanis, with fourteen original villages and headquarters at Razaw, come farther to the east and hold no property in Iraq. In the period of Persian weakness all three sections thrust out their tentacles eastwards, the Mustafa-Sanis claiming no fewer than forty villages in the Zhawaru district on the upper waters of the Sirwan south-west of Senna.

The Begzadas of the Hewraman trace their ancestry, not like so many other tribal ruling families in Kurdistan to the prophet Muhammad, but to a certain Tahmurath, a prince of the legendary Kayani dynasty of Persia, who, after the death of

Iskandar Beg (Alexander the Great), was appointed governor of Hewraman by Bahman son of Dara son of Isfandiyar [*sic*].[1] They claim that the governorship has remained in the family down to the present day with only one short interruption in the first half of the seventeenth century A.D.

A certain Kurdish chieftain of Ardelan named Wulo Khan, they relate, revolted against his sovereign, Shah Abbas the Great (reg. 1587–1629), and established himself in the district of Zhawaru on the Sirwan east of Hewraman. His son Khan Ahmad Khan, later surnamed the Khan of the Kurds, disapproved of his father's activities and took no part in them. Several military expeditions to Zhawaru having been unsuccessful the Shah negotiated with Khan Ahmad to procure his father's surrender, promising to reward him with the hand of his daughter, Princess Klhawzêr, Golden Cap, and to spare Wulo's life. Khan Ahmad therefore arrested his father by a stratagem and conveyed him to Isfahan. The Shah kept the letter of his second promise by gouging out Wulo's eyes instead of killing him, but with such brutality that he died soon afterwards. Distressed by the death of his father and, according to one account, exasperated by the Shah's refusal to honour the first promise of his daughter in marriage, Khan Ahmad in his turn rebelled and established himself in these mountains, spending the winter at Zalm and the summer at Hawarga-i Pir

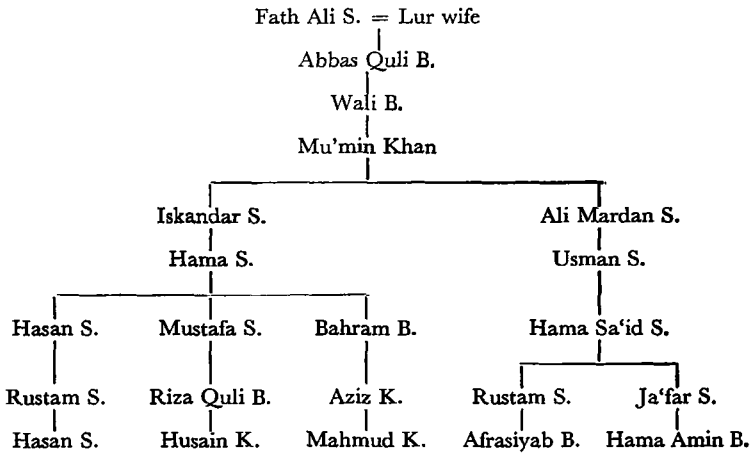
[1] The Begzadas invariably refer inquirers to a manuscript history of the Hewraman in the possession of Hasan Khan son of Husain Khan of Razaw, who, however, resolutely refuses to let it out of his sight. I have to thank Tahsin Beg, son of Hama Amin Beg of Luhun, now a student at the London School of Economics, for bringing back for me in 1955 a brief summary in Persian prepared by Hasan Beg's clerk. It is for the most part a disappointing jumble, written in an unpleasant *nim-shikasteh* hand which is in places illegible; but I have been able to extract several points of interest: the ancestry is carried back from Isfandiyar through the usual names to Gayumarth, the first king of the legendary Pishdadi dynasty which preceded the Kayani; the name of the Wali of Luristan who provided the lashkar is given as Shahverdi Khan; Kal Majnun is said to have been a champion in the Army of Sultan Murad (Murad IV reg. 1623–40); the date of Abbas Quli's appointment as governor is given as 1641 and that of his death as 1664.

The story as related in the text is based on verbal information recorded by me in 1942 and a short *History of the Hewraman and its Chiefs* written for me in Kurdish in the same year by Zuhrab Beg, son of Afrasiyab Beg of Luhun. The date of Wulo Khan's rebellion is given as 1606 and that of the massacre as 1615, but the name of the Shah, whenever it occurs, curiously as Husain (reg. 1694–1722).

The Shahverdi Khan referred to would not be the last of the Atabegs of the Little Lur who was deposed and put to death by Shah Abbas in 1597 but the son of Husain Beg, the ancestor of the modern Walis of Pusht-i Kuh; the probable dates for this Shahverdi's governorship of Luristan would be about 1630–60 (See my article 'A Noble Persian Author', *J.R.C.A.S.*, vol. XVI, 1929, p. 350).

Rustam north of Shahr-i Hewraman. Notwithstanding the profession of loyalty and support of the ruling chieftain Khan Ahmad took an early opportunity of inviting him with all the male members of the family to a banquet and massacring first the guests and then the now defenceless children in their homes.

But the wife of one of the family happened to be pregnant and absent on a visit to her father the Wali of Luristan. The child, Abbas Quli, was born there and brought up by his maternal uncle. In the meantime, Khan Ahmad Khan had become insane and died. Soon after reaching man's estate Abbas Quli rendered a notable service to the Government by leading a *lashkar* from Luristan to round up a formidable rebel named Kal Majnun and, as a reward, was reinstalled in the place of his fathers.



The table shows the origin of the principal branches of the ruling family. Recent generations of the family have been most prolific. I have a family tree, compiled in 1942, which I know to be incomplete, showing seventy-one males, all descended in male lines only, in the seventh generation and 119 in the eighth; Ja'far Sultan alone had nineteen sons.

Since 1915 the name Avroman has been familiar to European scholars by reason of the discovery there of three manuscripts of great historical interest, two in Greek and one in Parthian. I shall be returning to them in a later chapter.

I have already referred[1] to the Naqshbandi Shaikhs of

[1] See p. 78.

Hewraman. In 1921 the two principal practising Murshids were Shaikh Usman's two grandsons, Shaikh Ali Husam-ud-Din of Tawêla and Shaikh Ala-ud-Din of Biyara. They did not, of course, dominate the scene like the two great tribes I have just described, but they did nevertheless play a not entirely minor role in local politics. For the former I conceived a great respect, for his moral authority was invariably exercised actively in the interests of law and order, and he steadily refused to accept from Government any kind of material reward for his services. His cousin, in contrast, was a restless and grasping old man who, while careful to maintain an appearance of co-operation, lost no opportunity of using his pull with the administration in attempts to establish formal title to lands which had been in the possession of unsophisticated villagers for generations; he received a small salary and was quite shameless in his persistent demands for a rise.[1]

Finally, the district of Hewraman-i Luhun with the adjacent parts of Shahrizur has the distinction of being the birth-place of a faith which a brilliant French orientalist,[2] writing nearly a hundred years ago, went so far as to describe as 'la religion vraiment importante de la Perse, et par ses dogmes, et par le chiffre de ses adhérents, et par leur qualité'. However that may be, the Kakai sect is of such outstanding interest that it will deserve a chapter to itself.

XII LIFE AT HALABJA

THE diary covering the few weeks I was at Halabja in the early spring of 1922 having been lost I must reconstruct the story of my doings from memory, refreshed by notes made on subsequent visits to the qaza.[3]

The dominant local personality was, of course, still the Lady

[1] In the Reshid-Ali rebellion of 1941 Shaikh Ala-ud-Din further disgraced himself by signing a *fatwá* approving the treason.

[2] Comte A. de Gobineau, see p. 183 below.

[3] The text of an interesting and amusing lecture entitled 'Two Years in Kurdistan' by G. M. Lees, the first A.P.O. Halabja, who was there from March 1919 to January 1921, was published in the *J.R.C.A.S.*, Vol. XV of 1928, p. 253. Contributions to the discussion by Noel and Air-Marshal Higgins add to the interest of the paper.

Adila. Her influence was exercised through her son Ahmad Beg, who was nominally the Qaimmaqam; but the Mudirs were ordinary civil servants and received their orders direct from the A.P.O., who also took all important decisions at headquarters. Daud Beg, representing another branch of the Kaikhusrau-Begi family, held the post of Mayor. After the death of Mahmud Pasha in 1920 a son, Ali Beg, had been appointed 'Chief' of the nomadic Jaf; but he had been dismissed for incompetence by my predecessor and replaced, with the diminished status of 'Agent', by Kerim Beg, son of a younger brother of Mahmud and Usman Pashas, who lived at Kelar far away in the south, near the Sirwan east of Kifri. The Lady and the Begzadas at Halabja had taken very hardly the transfer of this plum among appointments to a junior branch of the family, and it had become a grievance.

The efficiency of the Chief or Agent was subjected to a severe test every spring, when a count of the sheep belonging to the twelve nomadic clans of the Jaf was followed by the collection of the tax, then eight annas a head. It would be difficult to imagine a terrain more favourable for the concealment of even large flocks than the broken country south of the Qara Dagh; and the ryot headmen, impatient at all times of authority in any form and particularly in the form of the tax-collector, tended to become recklessly truculent if payment could be postponed, by one device or another, until the time for the migration across the frontier to temporary immunity from that particular menace. It was owing to his dismal failure in the previous year that Ali Beg had been dismissed, and my predecessor reported that so far Kerim Beg had not done too well either. The A.P.O. was responsible for the Jaf even when they were camped outside the limits of the Sulaimani Division in Kirkuk territory. I decided that I must visit Kerim Beg at Kelar as soon as possible and then see something of the clans in their winter quarters.

I left Halabja one morning with a small escort. Some three miles out we came to a lovely little upland plain, about two miles long and one across, with the village of Guna in the middle and other Noroi villages nestling up against the surrounding hills; I named it at once 'Happy Valley' for, though there are many places in Kurdistan far more beautiful and majestic, this,

with its trim fields and meadows and blackberry hedges and even occasional stiles, was more like home than any other place I had seen in the Middle East since I had first come out ten years before. Making fast time we crossed a low col and, in just three hours from Halabja, reached the village of Shaq Maidan at the confluence of the Tanjaro and the Sirwan. The water was being diverted to flood the meadowland in the valley bottom (*rhend*), and the place was boggy and hot. There was once a small settlement of Arab buffalo-keepers at this point, the only Arabs in the liwa; if it was still there in 1922 it disappeared soon afterwards.

I forget whether we were able to ford the Tanjaro or whether we had to cross by *kalak*. The track then followed the right bank of the Sirwan over unpleasant conglomerate until, some five miles from Shaq Maidan, we came to the double gorge of Darband-i Khan by which the river carves its way between Beranan and its continuation to the south-east, the Khoshik, the boundary between Khanaqin and Shamiran; here the path became narrow and difficult with several stairways of extremely slippery rock; the track on the far bank, which we could see plainly, looked equally precarious. It took us nearly an hour from the beginning of the first gorge until we emerged into the open plain of Diziyayish, the first estate acquired by the Jaf Begzadas in Baban territory. Just below the point where the river issues from the gorge and before it has widened out there stand the ruined piers of an ancient bridge, marking no doubt the point where the direct road from Sulaimani to Kirmanshah crossed the obstacle at some time when the two places owed allegiance to the same government. I spent the night in a little tea-shop built of mud and reeds at Ban-i Khêlan, where the Qara Dagh range dips to let the river pass without any constriction, and where there is a much-used ford.

That evening, after dark, I received an excited letter from Kerim Beg, reporting that the emissaries of the Lady were putting about among the Jaf a story that I was coming down to dismiss him, with disastrous effects on the discipline of these unruly tribesmen and their willingness to pay their taxes. I sent an appropriate answer back by the same messenger, with orders that he was to travel all night. The fact that I wrote the letter with my own hand in Persian, the language of the

literature which all Southern Kurds were brought up to appreciate, and not in Arabic or Turkish, created a favourable impression and was often referred to on my later travels among the Jaf.

One other trivial and ridiculous incident of my night at Ban-i Khêlan has remained in my mind. The owner of the tea-shop, having occasion to ask one of the other guests to pay his account but wishing to conceal the sordid message, I suppose from me, by speaking in riddles, whispered *'fulúseke götir'*, thereby performing the feat of using three different languages in two words: *fulús*, the colloquial Arabic for 'money',—*eke* the Kurdish definite-article suffix; and *götir*, the Turkish for 'bring'.

The broken country west of the Sirwan swirls up to a height of 3,600 feet at a point about twenty miles south-west of Ban-i Khêlan and thirteen from the river at its nearest bend. This central ganglion, called Dar-i Khila, throws out spurs in every direction, between which pebbly torrent beds fall south-eastwards to the Sirwan, south-westwards to the Narin (a small river which itself reaches the Sirwan near the Jabal Hamrin), and north-westwards to the Aw-a Spi. Our onward road was never far from the river. We crossed numerous wide belts of shingle where the torrents from Dar-i Khila broaden out on the flat. Near the mouths of many of them were the ruins of Turkish police-posts and, at Pêwaz and Bawa Nur, two larger barracks, recalling the time, up to 1914, when the river was the *de-facto* frontier. Sometimes the valley bottom was so wide that the track left the rough conglomerate to run over soft, springy turf between thickets of tamarisk and thorn. As I rode my eyes would constantly turn eastwards towards the hills on the Persian side with the magic names, Shaho and its glistening mantle of snow far away to the north-east, Bamo furrowed by enormous chasms behind Shaikhan, marbled Dalaho in the heart of the Goran country, and many another range behind, line upon line, to which my companions could put no name.

Kerim Beg and his brothers, together with a large number of Kökhas whom he had summoned from north, south and west, rode out several miles to my *istiqbál*, the ceremonial welcome still *de rigueur* on such occasions, and escorted me back to Kelar. His intention was, of course, the quite legitimate one of

restoring his authority by arranging for the clansmen to see with their own eyes the A.P.O. arriving as his guest, and perhaps to hear direct from a higher authority (as they did, in vigorous terms) something of what Government expected of them.

In spite of contacts with northern fashions in their summer quarters the costume of the Jaf men remained essentially southern, and even the humblest of them always wore the long *qewa* over their trousers or, more commonly, their calico drawers; some of the more prosperous or ambitious Kökhas affected ample turbans and costly silk *kewas* in the manner of the Begzadas, but these were the exception. Many wore beards trimmed to a round shape, and in some cases a patch seemed to have been shaved or clipped under each end of the lower lip, just where a young man's beard is thinnest.

My attention was particularly attracted by an oldish man of venerable appearance who was wearing over his silken *kewa* a longish jacket of Persian Cashmere shawl. He proved to be Shaikh Hasan, head of the Dol Pamu branch of the Barzinja family, who, though to all outward appearance an orthodox Sunni, was accepted as their Spiritual Guide by the unorthodox Qizilbash inhabitants of Tuz Khurmatu and other Turkoman villages near the high road in Kirkuk liwa, of whom I shall have something to say in a later chapter; thanks to the generous offerings of his superstitious followers he had grown so rich in flocks and herds that he had attached himself to the Shatri clan and had for many years migrated with them as one of themselves.

Kurdish nomads, like the Arab Bedouin, live in long tents made of strips of a rough cloth of woven goat-hair sewn together to make the width required. The sides and ends can be pegged down or lifted up to suit the weather and the direction of the wind. *Chiyghs* are used to form internal partitions, or to give privacy when the side flaps are up. The importance or wealth of the owner can generally be gauged by the size of the tent, the standard of measurement being the number of poles. As I have already mentioned, most Jaf families had two sets of tents, large for the winter camps only, lighter for the road and the summer pastures. The obligation of hospitality is as imperative among the nomads as among the settled population, and most tents are divided into two compartments by a *chiygh* so as to screen

off a guest-room (*diywexan*) from the rest of the tent, where the women can carry on their domestic duties undisturbed and bedding, cradles and winter stocks of wheat, rice and clarified butter (*rhon*) can be piled up and stored. In a very large tent a curtain may be hung from the sloping top so as to make a complete screen. There is no seclusion of women; sitting gossiping in the guest-room is not a social activity which they ordinarily share with men, but an old acquaintance will be received on the ladies' side without any fuss or false modesty.

After a day or two at Kelar I rode on with Kerim Beg to Chiman Köprü, twelve miles south of Kifri on the Qara Tappa road, where the Gelali were camped and where there are several streams of brackish water, which is supposed to be especially beneficial for sheep just before the beginning of the spring migration northwards. Kerim Beg, who was inclined to treat the ryot headmen with a show of haughty disdain, was far more forthcoming with the Gelali Aghas who rode out to meet us, exchanging kisses on the shoulder with them as they clasped hands after dismounting.

I noticed that Taufiq Agha, the senior member of the ruling family, was not in the *istiqbál* which conducted us to his guest tent, but he came in soon afterwards to make his excuses: his wife had given birth to a girl at the very moment when we were riding into the camp; would I, as the honoured guest, name the child in accordance with their custom? It so happened that Gladys was the girl's name uppermost in my mind at the time; as the anonymous Jaf poet had said:

> Hatim be bone y xalhit; tuwsh y daw y zilfit bum;
> Teyrek y nabeled bum; nem zaniy dane y dawe.
>
> I came in search of the grain on your cheek; I was caught in the toils of your hair;
> A guileless bird was I; I knew not the grain was bait for the trap.

So I suggested 'Guldasa' which is how the Kurds pronounce a Persian word for 'Posy'. There was no romantic sequel; if the heart of Guldasa in England had fluttered the merest trifle on the tennis courts the previous summer (and I had no real grounds to believe that it had), before I got home on leave again

it had, like mine, settled down once more to a normal rhythm; the Gelali Guldasa went the way of the majority in this land of appalling infant mortality, and when I asked after her two or three years later the father had some difficulty in recalling the birth of a daughter on that occasion at all.

After sunset I moved across to call on another Agha of some importance, Hama Riza. As we sat talking, on carpets spread on the ground of course, in the light of a couple of hurricane oil-lamps a small boy of about five years, with very dirty hands and face and a distended belly showing through the front slit of a very dirty shirt, was pushed into the *diywexan* by a pair of hands from behind the *chiygh* of the ladies' apartment. It has always been to me a source of never-ending astonishment that, among Kurds and Arabs alike, parents who are themselves scrupulously clean in their persons and their clothes, should so often allow their children to run about in a filthy condition, perhaps with their eyes and noses black with flies which no attempt is made to drive away. The father fondled the boy to his lap and began asking him questions calculated to encourage him to show off before the company. The precocious brat entered unabashed into the spirit of the performance, and before very long the mother and grandmother thrust head and shoulders over the partition to join in the chorus of amused and admiring comment. The older and bolder lady addressed me direct: 'Yes, O Excellency the Governor, he is indeed a very promising boy; why, by God's grace and under the shadow of the justice of the lofty British Government, he has already begun to do the round of the neighbours' tents after dark and to return with small objects he has pilfered undetected.' 'Please God,' I answered, falling back on a common and conveniently ambiguous formula of politeness, 'please God, he will grow up as good a man as his father.' Even among the Jaf the Gelali have a pre-eminent reputation as thieves (as indeed Rich had recorded just a hundred years before). The allusion was not lost on Kerim Beg, and I caught the twinkle of his eye in the uncertain light across the tent.

We returned to Kelar along the banks of the Sirwan by way of the village of Qara Bulaq and the mound of Shirwana.

At Qara Bulaq we were entertained by Shaikh Wahhab Talabani, a member of an influential family of Prayer-carpet



7(*a*) HAWAR



7(*b*) KAKAI VILLAGERS OF HAWAR



8(*a*) KHURMAL



8(*b*) MAMAND AGHA AKO

Shaikhs of the Qadiri brotherhood. He told me that although most of the Talabani properties were situated nearer Kirkuk his father, Shaikh Hamid, with a view to extending the family influence, had purchased property for him here and for another brother, Mustafa, on the other side of the river in Binqudra, where the Jaf Begzadas also had estates.

The mound of Shirwana stands close to the river two miles south of Kelar, a prominent landmark which is mentioned by Felix Jones, Chirikov and Maunsell. It is elliptical in shape, about 150 yards long at the base and about 100 yards wide. I noticed many baked bricks of Babylonian type, about one foot square, lying about, and some of these had been used by Muhammad Pasha, Kerim Beg's grandfather, in the construction on the summit of a two-storied, octagonal hunting-lodge, now ruinous. Chirikov calls the place Anushirwana, which may well indicate the correct derivation. The similarity of the names of the mound and the river has given rise to some confusion, and several travellers have mistakenly called the river 'Shirwan'.

I was sitting with Kerim Beg and his brothers one morning when, quite unannounced, a figure that might have stepped straight out of 'Hajji Baba'[1] entered the guest-room. He was wearing a long pleated coat of Cossack or Georgian type with silver-topped dickey cartridges disposed fanwise in little breast-pockets on either side, trousers thrust into Russian top-boots, and a tall lamb-skin cap; a long, crinkly beard was shining with a fresh application of blueish-black dye. He took his place in the company rather more than half-way down one wall as they made the motions of preparing to stand up without actually doing so, and then exchanged salutations with the other guests in a rapid series of salaams round the circle. No questions were asked, and it was not until the general conversation had continued for some minutes and two or three rounds of tea had been served that Kerim Beg, still without asking any specific question, made the opening which the stranger understood to be an invitation to explain his presence. Interlarding his story, told in the most beautiful Persian, with verses from the Koran, trite proverbs and *clichés* from Sa'di and other moralists enjoining generosity and hospitality to the stranger and the unfortunate,

[1] *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Isfahan* by James Morier, London, 1824.

he embarked on a long rigmarole describing how he and his followers had been carried by the tide of war from their homes near Kirmanshah up to the Caucasus and had only now been able to make their way homewards; he asked Kerim Beg to have his party fed at once and me to give him a letter to the Mudir of Pênjwin instructing him to feed them on arrival, at the expense of the Municipality. This of course was in the wrong direction and made me suspicious; I told him that his nearest way home would be across the frontier twelve or thirteen miles away, but that if he wished to re-enter Persia by a more regular route I would write to the P.O. Khanaqin asking him to facilitate his passage. Outside the guest-house I noticed the stranger's horse tied up to a manger, a magnificent black stallion with a Cossack saddle, but my suspicions were confirmed when I saw his camp, if the miserable collection of ragged shelters could be so called; the inmates were unmistakably gipsies of the kind I had seen in Luristan, tatterdemalions of the lowest type, who were accustomed to wander from end to end of the Ottoman Empire, and to the Caucasus, Persia, and no doubt even farther afield. Some years later a report from Suq-ash-Shuyukh on the Lower Euphrates about a Persian tribe seeking to make its way home from the Caucasus stirred latent memories of this incident, and I caused the documents with which the party was said to be armed to be submitted to Baghdad for scrutiny; these proved to be three or four dozen certificates given them by tribal chiefs, mayors of small towns in Iraq, and others saying that they had fed and entertained the party for two or three days and recommending the deserving exiles to others to whom they might apply on their way home. Where they had been in the intervening years and how many times they had returned to Iraq I do not know, but on this occasion they had been fattening at public expense in the townships of the Euphrates for several weeks before a circular warning put an end to the imposture.

For the return journey to Halabja I followed a route through the broken country some miles west of the river, and chose the Paikuli Pass over the Qara Dagh in order to inspect the famous monument known by that name and marked on our maps as 'old fort'. The Butkhana, or Idol House, as the Kurds call it, stands out in the open on a natural hillock at the southern foot

of the pass, close to the track followed by the Jaf on their migrations. The original building has collapsed and all that remains is a core of stone, rubble and mortar, about twelve feet high on the northern, the highest, side. But the slope is littered with numerous blocks of dressed stone, most rectangular, some rounded, and some with mouldings; many of the rectangular and a few of the rounded blocks have inscriptions in Pahlavi characters. I noticed lying among the debris four head-and-shoulder figures, each with a large ballooning crown (recalling the shape of the enormous felt hats once affected by the Lurs), a long beard, and locks falling down on each side of the face. There are two of these busts on the west side, one on the north and one on the east; that on the east and one of those on the west measure about three feet from the top of the crown to the end of the beard; the one on the north is a very little shorter, while the second bust on the west is small and insignificant.[1]

The earliest mention of this monument which I have been able to trace is by J. B. Fraser in a paragraph dealing with Shahrizur under the 1st November 1834: 'A Shiekh told me of a *Bootkhaneh*, or image temple, being found somewhere else in the plain with a stone in it covered with characters which no one in the country could decipher.' Rawlinson, when visiting Shamiran in 1836, was told of the Butkhana, 'across the river at a distance of about three farsakhs', where there were 'sculptures and statues which would merit the attention of any future travellers in this country'. He himself visited the site eight years later, on the way back from the long trip recorded by Felix Jones, and brought home copies and drawings of thirty-two of the inscribed blocks; he published a short description of the site in the *J.R.A.S.* of 1868 as an appendix to a longer article by the Rev. Edward Thomas on the inscriptions.

The next European traveller to report on the ruin was the German archaeologist, Ernst Herzfeld, who, in two rather hurried visits made in 1911 and 1913, photographed and took squeezes of about a hundred inscribed blocks, and published his results, in English, with many photographs and drawings, in a monumental work, *Paikuli* (Berlin 1925). In the preface he tells a story which was also once told to me by Sir Thomas

[1]This description is based on the entry in my diary under the 16th October 1923, when I was there again: see also my note 'Two Ancient Monuments in Southern Kurdistan', in *G.J.*, Vol. LXV of 1925, p. 63.

Arnold[1] himself. Herzfeld had been particularly anxious to trace Rawlinson's original note-books in order to supplement his own material, and had searched the British Museum and other libraries without result. One day he had accompanied Arnold to the Royal Geographical Society's house in Kensington Gore on other business and, while glancing idly at the show cases in the entrance hall, suddenly came upon the book open at the copy of the very block he had most hoped to find, the place of which was in the very middle of an otherwise fairly completely reconstructed passage of the inscription; there was also the copy of another important block which had been intact in Rawlinson's time but had since been half destroyed.

In 1923, at the request of Miss Gertrude Bell, then in charge of the Department of Antiquities in Iraq which she had founded, I made arrangements with the Jaf for Herzfeld's escort and protection on another visit (Shaikh Mahmud then being in rebellion and in control of Sulaimani), and he reported in due course:

> The arrangements for my visit to Paikuli have been perfect and I could stay there with absolute ease—eight days really excavating the debris around the base of the ruined tower; so I discovered thirty more inscribed blocks and have now a hundred and thirty-three, all that remain; it makes the reconstruction of the inscriptions almost complete and much more reliable and interesting than it already has been.

These results were not incorporated in the book (which was on the point of publication when he came out), Herzfeld is now dead, and I cannot ascertain that they have ever been published. The world of scholarship is therefore dependent on only three-quarters of the material actually available.

According to Herzfeld's reconstruction the building was solid, with an outer casing of dressed stone on all four sides. In addition to the rectangular inscribed blocks he distinguished others which must have been part of battlements with pinnacles, loop-holes and cornices. He mentions a fourth large bust on the south side (which I evidently missed) and suggests that the second one on the west side was a first trial which the sculptor rejected as too small. The monument was thus not a fort or a

[1] See also *G.J.*, Vol. LXV, p. 273.

temple but a tower intended only to bear the inscription and the likeness of the king who erected it. The inscriptions occupied one short top line and seven or eight tiers of the dressed blocks along the whole length of each of the west and east sides, one in Pahlavi and one in Parthian. The busts may have been set so as to project above the short top lines of the inscriptions, and at the same height on the two uninscribed sides also; they are very weathered but the royal symbols of necklace and ear-rings can be distinguished. From the shape of the crown which, as is known from coins, was different for each of the Sasanian kings, as well as from the inscription itself, it appears that the monument was erected to celebrate his accession by Narseh (Narses), the seventh of the dynasty, who in A.D. 293, deposed his grand-nephew Bahram III. The list of independent rulers and tributary chieftains here given, as well as the texts themselves which are claimed to be the most important contemporary documents in both languages now extant, give the monument unique historical and philological importance.

Professor W. B. Henning, in a recently published paper[1] amplifying and correcting some of Herzfeld's conclusions, has thrown light on the reasons for the choice of such a remote and little-frequented site for the erection of this proud monument. The crown prince who ascended the throne as Bahram III was a minor when his father, Bahram II, died, and an influential party of great nobles and officers of state, preferring to see there a stronger personality, offered the crown to Narseh, then King of Great Armenia, the youngest and last surviving son of the great Shapur I (reg. A.D. 241–72). Narseh accordingly set out for Ctesiphon by way of Ganzaca in Azarbayjan and Shahrizur. The *istiqbál* of notables assembled in Binqudra, about 125 miles north of the capital, to await news of his approach and then rode forward another two days' march to meet him at the foot of the last mountain obstacle he would have to cross on his way to the plains. The monument of Paikuli was erected by Narseh's order to mark the spot where he was proclaimed King of Kings.

After Paikuli I crossed the Beranan by the Pasharhê Pass and, following a track some miles north of my outward route,

[1] 'A Farewell to the Khagan of Aq-agatäran,' *B.S.O.A.S.*, Vol. XIV, part 3 of 1952, p. 501.

crossed the Tanjaro at the Tuwaqut bridge. Just outside Halabja I was met by the Anglo-Indian telegraph clerk and a *posse* of police. He told me that in consequence of reports that I had been waylaid or ambushed by tribesmen a large party of police had been sent out from Sulaimani to look for me; he added melodramatically that he had telegraphed to say that 'come what might he would keep the old flag flying at Halabja', and I have little doubt that he would have been as good as his word, for he belonged to a very loyal, devoted and (contrary to a widely held belief) often very courageous class. The incident was symptomatic of the general atmosphere of 'jitters' then prevailing. My tour had been entirely peaceful and successful; the mere suggestion that the Jaf were not under proper control could only do harm; and I felt very annoyed.

Amongst my earliest visitors at Halabja had been two deputations of welcome from the Naqshbandi Shaikhs, Husam-ud-Din of Tawêla and Ala-ud-Din of Biyara. Each sent a small present consisting of a box of manna (the sweetmeat made in Kurdistan and other parts of Persia from a white powder excreted by an insect on certain mountain bushes), a pair of finely knitted socks, and a pair of *kelhash*, the parcel wrapped in a silk handkerchief also of local manufacture. I was particularly interested to find that one of Shaikh Husam-ud-Din's party was a tribesman of Amir Muqtadir, the principal Khan of Talish (the Persian district adjacent to Russian territory at the south-west corner of the Caspian Sea), with whom, while in Qazvin, I had maintained cordial relations as a counter to Kuchik Khan, the leader of the Bolshevik-inspired Jangali rebellion against the Persian Government; his presence indicated the extent of the influence of these pontiffs of the Naqshbandi order, and the distance of nearly 400 miles which this particular Murid had travelled for the privilege of kissing the hand of his Spiritual Guide was nothing out of the ordinary. The visits of the two deputations had of course to be returned.

The general pattern of the Luhun country on both sides of the frontier (which here, as I have already mentioned, follows an irregular conventional line) is one of great spurs running down from the crest of Hewraman in a general direction of south-west, with chines of varying size between them and between the subsidiary spurs. The larger chines hold villages of

some importance with extensive walnut-groves and orchards, but the smaller folds also have their springs and gardens and hamlets of perhaps as few as three or four houses. The hillsides are terraced with a skill that denotes long occupation, and an eminent irrigation engineer once told me that there was nothing he could teach the Hewramis about levelling for canal construction in mountainous country.

Tawêla is a good example of a large Hewraman village. I approached it through thick walnut groves and tangled orchards high above the valley bed. It was impossible to count the number of terraces (*telan*) but in places there must be at least twenty, some wide enough to take only one line of trees. Fast running irrigation channels are carried through at many levels, the water falling in cascades from one terrace to another where one runnel has to do duty for two or three terraces. The water is divided among the garden owners in hours per week; the rights of each are known *ab antiquo* and there is never any dispute. The village itself is situated at the junction of two chines about three miles from the crest at its highest point. The houses, of which there are between 800 and 900, are well built of stone, generally of two stories, and there are anything from ten to twenty superimposed tiers in different parts of the village. After dark, from my tent, as the lights appeared in the houses on the opposite side of the chine, I might have been looking across at one sky scraper from the middle story of another.

At the bottom of the village stands the rambling and picturesque *takya* of Shaikh Husam-ud-Din; but the old man had found the presence of a Hewrami squireen in the same place unpalatable and had moved out to a new village called Bakh-a Kon some way to the north, where I later found him laying out an ornamental garden. By the *takya* is a small family graveyard which on another occasion, in the month of May, I saw looking particularly beautiful with tall blue irises, but spoilt by the shoddy appearance of the tombs, some of which were built up with the rusty tin of flattened-out four-gallon paraffin cans.

Most of the people, in addition to owning gardens, are craftsmen. The *kelhashes* of Tawêla are famous, and I watched a cobbler at work: the soles are made of little bits of old cloth, the length cut approximately to the required width of the sole and

the width enough to allow it to be folded two or three times to the right thickness; the cobbler was using a small log about a foot high as an anvil; as he folded each bit of rag he gave it two or three bangs with a brass hammer shaped like a halma-man and then spitted it on a long skewer with a handle (*pêkene*) until the sole reached the required length; he then made four holes longitudinally with an instrument (*direwsh*) that looked more like a sharp screwdriver than a bradawl and drew four leather laces tightly through the holes; the ends were reinforced with a toe-piece called a 'nose' (*luwt*) and a heel-piece (*chek*) of leather or horn; the word *kelhash*, generally used to describe the whole shoe, properly means this particular kind of sole; the upper (*ser y kelhash*) is woven of cotton thread (*perg*). Other craftsmen I noticed were *kewsh*-makers, blacksmiths, carpenters and weavers; and there were also the shops and offices of ordinary grocers, haberdashers and middle-men for the Persian transit trade. One of the most important articles of commerce is gum (*bnêsht*) obtained by tapping the terebinth tree (*qezwan*) which grows wild; the best quality is the whitest and comes from the first incisions of the year; later the quality deteriorates and the colour becomes yellower and yellower. Many of the villagers make their livelihood by collecting this gum, and also by taking their walnuts and dried mulberries[1] to the plains to barter for grain.

The frontier line cuts across each of the two chines about a mile above the junction, and I rode up the more westerly of them to the end of the gardens near pillar no. LXXVI. At this point two cool streams issue from the mountainside and are carefully protected from contamination by an arched chamber of masonry. It is a favourite resort for the idle in warm weather. In the other chine the gardens of Tawêla are continuous with those of Dizawar on the Persian side, but the dividing line between the properties is well defined and the frontier, which follows it, gives rise to no special problem.

Biyara is just such another place as Tawêla, but here the frontier line is quite extraordinarily intricate. The village is built on both sides of a broad chine with three villages of Persian allegiance, Han-a Garmela, Kêmina and Bidarwaz,

[1]The mulberry season is ushered in with a day of merrymaking and mixed dancing called Gziydan, the Sweeping: the ground beneath the trees is swept clean before the children are sent up to shake down the fruit for the women to gather.

up-stream of it; the groves and orchards of all four villages are continuous; two high-level canals having their heads far up the chine follow the contours and irrigate gardens situated well below certain other gardens watered by two other canals taking off from the main stream nearer Biyara at lower levels. The members of the 1914 Commission found their inquiries much complicated by the fact that several owners had one wife at Biyara and another at Han-a Garmela and divided their time between the two homes, and that some undivided properties had joint-owners domiciled on different sides. In general the gardens irrigated from the high-level canals were adjudged to be in Persia and those watered from the low-level canals were placed in Turkey, so that for a considerable distance the international frontier was drawn along the margin of a channel hardly three feet wide in the middle of dense orchards, the stream being in Turkey but the path alongside in Persia. In practice, when the villagers were left to their own devices they could always agree on a satisfactory *modus vivendi*; but when zealous officials of both sides were present at the same time their intolerant insistence each on his Government's pound of flesh resulted in grave inconvenience to those most interested.

From Biyara I rode up through the walnut-groves to Han-a Garmela to spend a night as the guest of Afrasiyab Beg, a senior member of the Luhun family. I remember being struck by the sanitary arrangements which were far superior to anything I have seen in Iraq or Persia outside the Hewraman, before or since, and would have done credit to Vespasian himself: opposite the mosque, on the down-hill side, was a line of stone-built, covered closets each with a wooden door and, inside, water flowing through at two different levels, the upper within reach for the ablutions and the lower a rapid stream serving as the sewer.

The Hewraman must have remained far more completely isolated from European influence, whether direct or imparted by the activities of the reformed administrations of the second half of the nineteenth century, than almost any other part of the Turkish and Persian dominions. The following poem by a contemporary Kurdish poet, Mirza Abdullah Goran, even in my pedestrian literal translation, will convey better than any

description of mine an impression, idealized perhaps but nevertheless very faithful, of manners and a way of life that have survived from the feudal, Islamic society of an earlier age.

GESHT LE HEWRAMAN

A Tour in the Hewraman

I

Diymen y Rhêgaw Ban

Komelhe shaxêk, sext u gerdinkesh,
Asman y shiyny girtot e bawesh,
Serposh y luwtkey befr y zor spiy,
Be daristan rhesh nawdolh y kipy.
Coge y awekan têyda qetiys maw
Her erhon, naken pêch y shax tewaw.
Hawar u haje y kef, chirhiyn y chem
Bo tenyayi' shew laylaye y xem.
Tuwle rhê y bariyk tuwnawtuwn piskin
Rhêbwar exat e endêshe y bêbin;
Nawrhêga teqteq, larhê berd y zil
Ke hêshta gerduwn pêy nedawe til.
Ga serewjuwre, ga serewxware,
Talhiy w shiyriyniy' dinya y rhêbware.

View of the Open Road

A mountain mass, wild and defiant,
Has gathered blue heaven in its embrace;
The mantle of its peak very white snow,
Dark with forest its silent dales.
Waters imprisoned in their runnels
Flow on, nor cease their windings round the hills;
The roar and hiss of foam, the shrill song of the brook,
Lullabies for grief in the solitude of night.
The narrow footpath, feeling its way from tunnel to tunnel,
Throws the wayfarer into anxiety without end;
On the track rocky stairways, on the side great boulders
That heaven has not yet sent rolling down.
Now it is up hill, now it is down hill,
The bitter and sweet of the wayfarer's world.

2

Rhêga y Nawbax

Pêsh ewe y bigey be awat y dê
Ekshêt enaw bax tuwle mar y rhê.
Shine y sêber y dar y göz u tuw
Esrhê areq y rhêbwar y manduw.
Teskiyniy' rhêga y baxewbax y wêlh
'Manduw neby'—ye l'em kêlh bo ew kêlh.
'Selamu elêk, mame y bin dargöz'
Selam y manduw le piyr y bêhêz.
'Mer-heba, serchaw, bechke y kakolhqiyt,
Smore y ser dar, rhole y zring y ziyt'.
Erhoy, her erhoy telanewtelan,
Inca egeyt e berdem y malhan.

The Road through the Orchards

Before you reach the village of your desire
The snake-like path glides in among the orchards.
The soft breeze in the shade of walnut and mulberry
Dries the sweat from the weary traveller's brow.
'Be not weary!' The hail from this bower and that bower
Eases the tedious road from orchard to orchard.
'Peace be upon thee, uncle beneath the walnut-tree!'
The weary one's greeting to the feeble and old.
'Welcome, on my eyes, my curly-haired boy,[1]
My squirrel on the tree, my lively youngster'.
You march on and on, from terrace to terrace;
Then at last you reach the margin of the houses.

3

Dê

Kam berberhochkey zor basefaye
Cheshn y dilh y shad dêye, awaye.
Xanuw y begzade le sa y drexta
Aram y buwke le kosh y bexta.

[1]The young bloods of many parts of Persia and Kurdistan wear the hair 'bobbed' at the level of the neck and brushed up in a curl at the back from under the hat or turban; this is the *kakolh*.

Xanuw y ehaliy'sh, zoryan duw nihom,
Hendê qincu qiyt, hendê laru kom,
Yek leser yektir berew lutke y kêw
Bo asman echin wek pêpilke y dêw.
Le dêda kam cêt gewre ber chaw kewt
Malh y Aghaye w xaneqa w mizgewt.

Whatever sunny nook is very lovely,
Like a merry heart, there is a hamlet, a village.
The Begzada's mansion in the shade of trees
Is the repose of a bride in the lap of bliss.
The peasants' houses too, many two-storeyed,
Some straight and erect, some leaning and bulging,
Rising in tiers to the crest of the hill,
Lead up towards heaven like the demons' stair.
Any place in the village that stands out for size
Is the house of an Agha, the hospice or the mosque.

4

Jiyn y Diywexan

Ke geyishtyt eber derga y gewre
Her xizmetkare u lêt eda dewre.
Rhêt piyshan eden taku diywexan
Iytir diywane w mer-heba y miywan.
Deste y xizmetkar, fiyshekdan le mil,
Be chefte w mishkiy ser u teple zil,
Des leser xencer, chawerhê y firman
Chi bo serbirhiyn, chi bo nan da nan.
Hech kesê taze b'êt e diywexan
Kirnuwshêk eka be ser da newan.
Germe diywan y shew y Begzade,
Têkelh u pêkelh, babet u made.

Life in the Guest-Hall

When you reach the threshold of the great gateway,
There's a bustle of retainers, and folks gather round,
They guide you through to the hall,
Then all is hospitality and welcome to the guest;
The corps of retainers, bandoliers slung on shoulders,

Heads and hats swollen with bright silken turbans,
Hands upon daggers, awaiting their orders,
Be they to chop off a head or bring in the dinner.
Each newcomer as he enters the hall
Makes a reverence, bowing his head.
The Begzada's evening gathering grows warm
With lively exchanges, ideas and facts.

5

Mela y Dê le Diywexan

Lejêr mêzera mela y nushtawe,
Rhiyshy bo sersing pirsh u bilhawe,
Qiyafet perhpuwt wek ktêb y kon,
Zimany shiyriyn, seruchawy mon,
Baz y rhoh y chesh be shyir y edeb
Belham shêwe y zuw y Ecem u Ereb.
Bo miywan bibê maye y tesella
Le korh y shewa melaye w mela;
To w mela w shyir u felsefe y Islam.
Gö rha girtin y tawtaw y ewam
Bê ziyadu kem d'ênêt epêsh chaw
Serinc y köran le name y nuwsraw.
Ke diywan cholh buw chuyt enaw êga
Des ekeyt emil xew y pash rhêga.

The Village Mulla at the Hall

Beneath a spreading turban see the bowed Mulla,
His beard unkempt scattered over his breast,
His face all wrinkled like an ancient tome,
His tongue full of sweetness, his aspect glum,
A hawk unhooded in verse and letters
Though in the old fashion of Persian and Arab.
If for the guest there be a source of consolation
In the evening circle it is the Mulla, the Mulla—
Thou and the Mulla and verse and doctrine of Islam.
The fitful attention of the common herd
Exactly demonstrates, neither more nor less,
The degree of the heed of the blind for the Scripture.
When the hall is cleared and you go to your chamber
You take in your arms the sleep that follows the long road.

6

Beyan

'Ellhahu Ekber!' Melabangane,
Tariyku lêlhiy' ber y beyane.
Mang y becê maw le sefer y shew
Zerde le tirs y qaspeqasp y kew.
Esterê y meghryb wek qetre y emel
Kizkiz etkêt enaw befr y serkel.
Le rhê y ewber y shax deng y zeng d'ê,
Le shön y rhawker teqe y tfeng d'ê.
Wa be tewawiy dinya rhuwnake,
Her husn y rhuwte sirusht êstake.
Le drext eda shine y ba y seher,
Cirmu cuwlhyety cheshn y sewda y ser.
Leser coge y ash qaz u mirawiy
Chawerhê y rhojin helh b'ênê chawy,
Belham ta xulhky neka chêshtengaw
Nayêt enaw dê pirshing y hetaw.

Morning

'God is most Great!' It is the call to morning prayer
In the dim twilight of early dawn.
The laggard moon on her nightly round
Is pale with fear of the partridge's call.
The evening star like a drop of hope
Grows dim and slips into the snow on the peak.
The sound of caravan-bells comes from the road behind the hill,
From the hunter's hide comes the crack of a rifle.
See, the world is now all bright,
Nature is beauty unadorned.
The soft breeze of morning stirs the trees,
Their shimmering like the tingle of headache.
On the mill-race geese and ducks
Wait for the day to open his eyes,
But not until breakfast-time invites them
Will the sun's rays come into the village.

7

Mizgewt

Binchiyne y mizgewt nyshtot enaw chem,
Rhuw berew qyble, pisht le cehenem.

Mizgewt y kat y chêshtengaw y chol
Wek mirduw kifn y bêdengiy le kolh.
Suwre chinar y liqu pop drêj,
Sêber eka bo xew y berdenöj.
Carcar Imam y tenya y goshe y hewz
Sersing mach eka rhiyshy be wenewz.
Kesê bang eda, eshlheqênê gom,
Imam helh esê, dar be des, pisht kom.
Ta tewaw ebê 'Ellhahu Ekber!'
Peng exwatewe lafaw y nöjker.
Nöj betalh ebê, cemaet bilhaw,
Chend piyrêk ebin be xilhte y lafaw,
Suwchêk germ eken be rhaz y cwaniy,
Ax be ba eden bo dinya y faniy.

The Mosque

The mosque's foundations sink into the stream,
Its face towards Mecca, its back turned on hell,
The empty mosque of breakfast time
Like a corpse wrapped in the shroud of silence.
A plane with spreading bough and branch
Casts its shade for a nap on the smooth prayer-flags.
Now and then the Imam, alone at the corner of the cistern,
Nods for his beard to kiss his breast.
Somebody calls and sets the pool a-rippling.
The Imam stands up, staff in hand and shoulders bent.
'God is most Great!' The call is hardly finished
Before the spate of worshippers banks up to overflowing.
And now the prayer is over, the congregation scatters,
A few old men, the sediment of the flood,
Warm up a corner with the secrets of youth,
And heave sighs over this transitory world.

8

Kaniy' Jinan

Serchawe y awê kelhekê le ser—
Jinê têy echê, jinê d'êt e der.
Emeysh le dêda kaniy' jinane
Qyble y dilhdariy' herzekarane.

Êwaran polpol law y kakolhluwl
Sererhê egrin, sergerm u ecuwl.
Herchend harhey d'ê heyase y cwanêk
Le hêlane y dem efrhê 'Aman' -êk.

The Women's Spring

A spring walled about with stone—
A girl goes in, a girl comes out.
In the village this is the women's spring,
Passion's Mecca for lusty swains.
At evening, group after group, the curly-haired lads
Block the road, hot-headed and impatient.
As oft as is heard the tinkle of a maiden's girdle
From the nest of their mouths flies out 'Mercy on us!'

9

Jin

Jin y Hewraman sertapay xishilh;
Serchawe y bon y mêxek u similh;
Ta bilhêy terhposh; alhuwalha cil;
Bejnu balha cwan; leshy nerm u shil;
Niywnygay xende y estêre y emel;
Neghme y dwany wek criywe y mel;
Jiyny behar y eshq u cwaniy;
Cylwega y husny rhê y bax u kaniy.

The Girls

Girl of Hewraman, bejewelled from head to foot;
Fragrant with cloves[1] and balm;
Elegant beyond words; arrayed in bright colours;
Graceful of figure; soft and yielding of body;
Her side-long glance a smile from the star of hope;
The lilt of her speech the song of birds;
Her life the springtime of love and youth;
The parade for her beauty the orchard pathway to the spring!

[1]A piece of jewellery commonly worn by Kurdish women is the *mêxekbend*, a perforated locket containing cloves.

10

Goraniy

Eshq y êwarê y sererhê y kaniy
Ber edat e chem gilhpe y goraniy.
Rhoj awa ebê, chem tariyk da yêt.
Deng y 'Kina Leyl' her dwayi' nayêt.
Mang helh d'ê, be triyfey shax ebê keyl;
Hêshta her germe nalhe y 'Kina Leyl'.
'Siyachemane! Siyachemane!'
Behesht y eshqe em Hewramane
Ewande y daru berd y Hewraman
Shabash le jin y bejnu balha cwan.
'Siyachemane! Siychemane!'
Hewraman cêga y siyachemane.

Song

Courting at evening on the spring road
Lets loose across the valley a blaze of song.
The sun goes down, darkness descends on the valley.
The music of 'Kina Leyl'[1] goes on unending.
The moon comes up, the crag is bewitched by her beams;
And still persists the plaint of 'Kina Leyl'.
Dark eyes! Dark eyes!
A paradise for courtship, this Hewraman.
Every stick and stone of Hewraman
A tribute is to its graceful girls.
Dark eyes! Dark eyes!
Hewraman is the home of dark-eyed beauties.

[1]The title of a song; the meaning in the Hewrami dialect is 'Maiden Beloved'.

Noel arrived to take over Halabja before a reply had been received from the Foreign Office to the High Commissioner's telegrams about my return to my parent service, and it was arranged that I should go on to Ranya to take temporary charge there. Before I left we made two short trips together which have remained in my memory.

The first was a ride across Shahrizur from Halabja to Muwan, the limit beyond which cars from Sulaimani could not safely go at that time of year, in order to confer with Goldsmith

about the political situation; and back by another route nearer the Tanjaro. The short spring season is perhaps at its best in Shahrizur about the third week in April; many of the wild flowers are not yet out, it is true, but the green of the grass and the young crops is still tender, the light is soft, the hillsides have a filmy, mottled sheen as the fitful shadows of floating wisps of cloud pass across them, and whole fields of scarlet ranunculus and anemones (*gulhe-niysan*, the April flower) of mauve, blue and white, splash the landscape with great patches of brilliant colour. We had to cover about fifty miles there and back during the day so we had to travel fast, and I can remember few rides more exhilarating than this, as we cantered over the soft turf past numerous ancient mounds of which the truncated cone of Bakrawa near Halabja, the huge square mound of Yasin Tapa down on the Tanjaro, and the conical mound of Bingird at Muwan itself were the most prominent.[1] As the result of our deliberations we decided to submit to Sir Percy Cox our unanimous opinion that some immediate political antidote was required for the mounting unrest, that it was no longer possible to await the conclusion of peace with Turkey before adopting a definite policy and that for any scheme of indirect rule of two not very satisfactory candidates Saiyid Taha of Shamdinan seemed likely to make a better agent than Shaikh Mahmud; Saiyid Taha was then understood to be in Persian territory near Urmiya, and we added a suggestion that I should be instructed to get in touch with him from Ranya as soon as possible after my arrival.

The other expedition was on the 23rd April to the village of Yalanpê, high up on the flanks of Hewraman, to interview Mahmud Khan of Dizli, chief of the Bahram-Begi family, who, it will be remembered, had been released from internment in India; he had again been giving trouble until a series of successful air operations in March against his group of villages on the Iraqi side of the boundary had led him to apply for pardon. I can recall sitting in a ring of wide-hatted tribesmen, each gripping his rifle and festooned with bandoliers, the open *heywan* giving a magnificent view down the oak-grown mountainside

[1] I think all scholars now agree that Yasin Tapa is the site of the capital of the mediaeval Kurdish kingdom of Shahrizur; according to Speiser (op. cit.) it measures 660 × 600 feet and is 60 feet high. Speiser also identifies Bakrawa and Bingird with Atlila and Arakdi of Ashurnasirpal's expeditions against Zamua.

into the broad expanse of Shahrizur that stretched away westwards, between its flanking ranges, as far as the eye could see. I have forgotten the details of our parleys. Presumably they were successful, or at least paved the way to success, for the High Commissioner's official report on the Administration of Iraq for 1922–3 records that 'terms were arranged with Dizh in May', and he was not involved in operations against the Hewrami tribes by a Levy Column under General Nightingale in May and June.

As I look back, this visit to Yalanpê suggests certain reflections on the question: 'In a country where every male from the age of adolescence carries a rifle and where human life is held as cheap as it is held in Kurdistan, how far is a political officer justified in putting himself in the power or at the mercy of a tribesman who has misbehaved or has reason to believe that he is in the bad books of the Government?' I am not implying at this late date that there was anything risky about what we did; we were neither of us novices and we knew that we were quite safe. I have already explained that the High Commissioner was trying to rule Kurdistan with quite inadequate resources and that political officers had to live largely on their wits. Unless the administration was to break down completely they could do no other than ride about their districts with an appearance of nonchalance and with quite small escorts. On the other hand, quite apart from other regrettable aspects of such an occurrence, the gravest political mistake a political officer can make is to allow himself to be murdered: the moment this happens the administration will break down, on the principle of 'as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb' the whole district or the whole tribe concerned will rise in rebellion, many lives will be lost, and much destruction will be wrought before the situation can be restored. I think the answer is that the political officer must have a flair for gauging two factors: first the state of mind of the tribesman concerned, whether (as the Lurs over-simplify it) he is *umídvár* hope-ful, or *ma'yús* hope-less, desperate; second, and more important, the degree of the prestige of the Government in general and of himself in particular at the moment. There are occasions when he quite definitely ought to insist on an *acte de présence* at administrative headquarters (though he may hesitate to do this if he cannot count on the backing of adequate force

in case of refusal); there are others, especially if the man concerned is likely to do something silly more out of fear of the unknown than from wickedness, when a well-timed visit will nip incipient rebellion in the bud. But, when all is said and done, it must be admitted that luck counts every bit as much as good judgement; and generally, when in doubt, political officers can only choose the bolder course and hope for the best.

XIII THE KAKAIS

In Iraqi Southern Kurdistan the name Kakai is used to denote the religious sect which is generally known in Western Persia as Ali-Allahi, Ali-Ilahi or Aliyullahi, and has been so described by the majority of European travellers and writers. The adepts like to call themselves Ahl-i Haqiqat or Ahl-i Haqq, People of the Divine Reason or the Divine Truth, that is to say 'of the Logos', or, indeed, 'of God'. Neither of these names is really satisfactory, for there are other mystical sects and orders which both describe themselves as Ahl-i Haqiqat (Haqq) and also accord to Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, a far more prominent place in their hagiology than the Kakais. The name Kakai, on the other hand, derives directly from the legend concerning the foundation of this particular sect and leaves no room for misunderstanding.

There are brief references to these 'Ali Ilahis' of Western Persia in J. Macdonald Kinneir's *Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire* (1813) and G. Keppel's *Personal Narrative of a Journey from India to England* (1817), but the earliest detailed account of them by a European traveller seems to be that given by Rawlinson in the famous paper to which I have already referred so often, 'Notes on a March from Zohab to Khuzistan' (*J.R.G.S.*, 1839). Rawlinson, it will be remembered, spent a considerable time in command of a regiment of the Persian army recruited principally from the 'Ali-Ilahis' of the Goran tribe. But in spite of his interest and exceptional opportunities he did not succeed in penetrating very deeply beneath the surface of their reserve; and the credit of being the first to get on to the

track of the real facts must go to the Comte A. de Gobineau, who went to Persia in 1855 as First Secretary of Napoleon III's diplomatic mission to the Qajar Court and described his experiences in a most interesting and still readable book, *Trois Ans en Asie*.[1] References to the sect are found in the narratives of many subsequent travellers, but the only really full and authoritative accounts of it known to me are those by V. Minorsky in his *Notes sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*[2] and his two articles in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* under 'Ahl-i Ḥaḳḳ' and 'Sultan Isḥaḳ'.

Minorsky's information, like nearly all the information published hitherto in Europe, was collected in Persia. The account given in the following pages, except where it is otherwise specifically stated, is based on material supplied or statements made to me at first hand by votaries, most of whom were resident in Iraq but one or two in villages on the Persian side near the boundary. It will be found to corroborate Minorsky over much of the ground and, I think, to throw new light on many points that had hitherto remained obscure. In some respects my facts and conclusions differ from his, but I take this opportunity of acknowledging my great debt to his researches, for without the preliminary knowledge so obtained I could hardly have got very far with my own.

In this book I propose not to go at all deeply into the esoteric beliefs or the ceremonies of the Kakais, but rather to concentrate on their history, organization, geographical distribution, and place in the social scheme of Southern Kurdistan. I will however say at once that there is in my mind no doubt whatever that the stories of mixed nocturnal orgies after the extinguishing of lights and similar tales which have at all times been told about secret religious communities, not excluding the early Christians,[3] are, as far as the Kakais are concerned, absolutely false.

My authorities are: (1) A small pamphlet, or *Taẕkara*, written specially for me in old Turkish by an educated and intelligent Kakai who had formerly served in the Ottoman

[1] Paris, 1859.

[2] *Revue du Monde Musulman*, Vols. XL and XLV, 1920–1 and republished as a book in Paris by Ernest Leroux, 1922. Minorsky's earlier publications in Russian are unfortunately a closed book to me. Since this chapter was written *The Truth-worshippers of Kurdistan* has been published by W. Ivanov in Bombay; it contains much interesting material, mostly from Persian Atesh-Begi sources.

[3] See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, Chap. XVI.

Civil Service;[1] (2) Several poems in the Gorani dialect; and (3) Careful and detailed records preserved in my diaries of many conversations with a dozen or more adepts.

The story of the foundation of the sect will best be told in the words of the *Tazkara* itself:

The Master and Founder of this esoteric religion (*Mazhab-i Bátiní*) is Saiyid Ishaq, the youngest son of Shaikh Isê[2] Barzinji and Goráni. This Shaikh Isê, who in the genealogical tree is called the 'Most Great Pole' (*Qutb al-A'zam*), left Hamadan and founded the village of Barzinja to the east of Sulaimani in the vicinity of the Hewraman. Shaikh Musê, brother of Shaikh Isê, who was with him, had no children. Shaikh Isê, who was the son of Baba Ali Hamadani . . ., married as his first wife a woman of the Kazhawi tribe[3] and had three sons named Shaikh Abdus Sattar, Saiyid Abdul Kerim and Saiyid Abdul Qadir.

One day, when he was an old man, three dervishes who were saints (*erenler*) came to Shaikh Isê and urged him to marry again. The Shaikh sought to excuse himself on account of his advanced age; but he finally allowed himself to be persuaded and intimated his desire to marry the daughter of Mir Muhammad, chief of the Jaf, by name Dayirak,[4] who was renowned for her good character and her piety. Mir Muhammad, who was a proud man and uninitiated (*záhhirí*), conveyed his refusal by ordering his men to tear the three go-betweens to pieces. The dervishes had no sooner been killed than they came to life again. This process was repeated a second and a third time. It having thus become clear beyond doubt that the dervishes were endowed with the gift of miracles (*ṣaḥib karáma*) Mir Muhammad, with the approval of the assembled grey-beards of the tribe, thinking to rid himself of the importunate messengers, agreed to their suit on condition that within three days they should carpet the whole length of the road from Shaikh Isê's oratory to his own door with costly rugs, and should bring a thousand mule-loads of gold, ten thousand head of camels, and an equal number of mares, horses and sheep. The dervishes departed in the evening, and by morning, that is to say in the space of a single night, all the tasks were completed. Mir Muhammad, having no further excuse, gave his daughter in marriage to Shaikh Isê. After about a year, in 671 of the Hijra (1272–3), Dayirak Khatun gave birth to Saiyid Ishaq.

[1] The *Tazkara* is written in pencil and in a very small hand; I have for the most part used a more legible Kurdish translation that accompanied it, referring, however, to the Turkish when any point seemed to require checking.

[2] The Kakais always pronounce the names Isê and Musê or Isí and Musí.

[3] That is, from the village of Kazhaw near Barzinja.

[4] So the *Tazkara*; my oral informants generally called her Dayira.

Years passed. Saiyid Ishaq grew up. Saiyid Isê's old oratory needed repair, but when the new main beam for the roof was hoisted on to the walls it proved to be too short to span the space between them. When Ishaq saw his father's distress he immediately climbed on to the wall, seized one end of the beam and called to his father, or to his elder brother: '*Kake, bikêshe!*' (Brother, pull!) So they pulled the beam that was too short, made it longer, and placed it in position.[1]

His brothers, filled with jealousy of the favour and respect shown to the young and pleasing Ishaq by his father and by the people who had witnessed the miracle, spread it abroad that the story of the marriage of his father when old and impotent was an invention of the dervishes, and ascribed the real paternity to them. In consequence of this story, and of the hatred of which he had become the object, Saiyid Ishaq left his brothers and went to the Hewraman, where he built a conventicle (*niyazxane*)[2] instead of an ordinary oratory. This esoteric religion which he founded . . . was founded in this place about the year of the Hijra 716 (1316–17).

Saiyid, or to give him the title by which he was henceforth known, Sultan Ishaq made his headquarters at Pird-i War on the right bank of the Sirwan near the modern village of Shaikhan in Hewraman-i Luhun and two miles up-stream of the point where the frontier drops down to the river. The years of his ministry are known as 'the age of Pird-i War'.

Associated with Sultan Ishaq at Pird-i War were three groups of Seven Persons generally called the Haft Tan, the Haftawana,[3] and the Haft Khalifa, as well as other groups of which I need mention here only the Haftad-u-du Pir, the Seventy-two Elders.

The Haft Tan were the Seven Companions of the Sultan at Pird-i War and were named: Daud, Benyamin, Mustafa-i Daudani, Pir Musê, Pir Razbar, Yar Zardaban, and Êwat. Any discussion of the nature and functions of these Companions would lead me on to the field of the esoteric beliefs and ceremonies of the Kakais, and so over the boundary which I have set myself. I mention them because it was the first two names

[1] The main beam of the mosque at Barzinja is claimed to be the identical beam of the miracle.

[2] The word *niyaz* generally means 'supplication' in Persian and 'intention' in Kurdish. Among the Kakais the word has the specialized meaning of a votive offering of fruit or vegetables (as opposed to *nazr*, a meat offering).

[3] The *Tazkara* however calls the first group Haft-Tan-i Jáwidán, the Seven Eternal Persons, and the second Haft Tan-i Nájiyán, the Seven Persons who escaped from Sin.

which struck the imagination of some of the early travellers and persuaded them, quite wrongly, that there was here some connexion with Judaism, and because of the association of the third of the Heptads, the Haft Khalifa, with Daud of the Haft Tan.

The Haftawana (or Haft Tan-i Nájiyán) were the seven sons of Sultan Ishaq: S. Ahmad Mir-a Sur, S. Mustafa Safidposh, S. Muhammad, S. Abdul Wefa, S. Bawa[1] Isê Alamdar, S. Shihab-ud-Din and S. Habib Shah. Of these the last two left no posterity in the male line. The other five founded families known respectively as Miri or Mirasuri, Mustafai, Ibrahimi (after S. Muhammad's grandson Shah Ibrahim whose tomb is in Baghdad), Khamushi (after Abdul Wefa's son Khamush), and Bawisêyi. These are the five principal 'Saiyid' families to whose role in Kakai society I shall return in a moment.

The Haft Khalifa, the Seven Vicars, were selected by Sultan Ishaq from among the Seventy-two Elders to be the Dalils or Guides, under the superintendence of Daud of the Haft Tan, of all members of the community, not excepting the Saiyids themselves. The *Tazkara* gives the names as Pir Mokhi, Pir Nariman, Pir Abdul Aziz, Khalifa Muhammad, Khalifa Shihab-ud-Din, Khalifa Bapir and Khalifa Jabbar.[2] The seven Dalils are today represented by seven families not all of which are directly descended from the original Khalifas.

Every Kakai, including the members of the Saiyid and Dalil families, must be affiliated to a Saiyid as his Pir and to a Dalil. At Pird-i War the Haftawana paired off as Pirs to each other as follows: S. Ahmad Mir-a Sur with S. Mustafa, S. Shihab-ud-Din with S. Abdul Wefa, S. Habib Shah with S. Bawa Isê; S. Muhammad 'who was the greatest, first and most developed' of the seven took S. Ahmad as his Pir but did not himself become a Pir to any of his brothers.[3] Pirs and Dalils have certain duties towards, and receive certain perquisites from, the individuals affiliated to them; they have also certain ceremonial functions in the congregation. They are, however, not necessarily experts in Kakai theology, and the task of preaching and

[1] Bawa is the Kurdish form of Persian Baba.

[2] Another list given me by one of my best-informed oral informants substitutes Amir and Jahani for the first two.

[3] Since two of the seven left no male progeny a rearrangement became necessary and the present affiliations appear to be as follows: Mirasuris with Mustafais mutually as before; Ibrahimis with Khamushis mutually; Bawisêyis to Mirasuris (but not vice-versa).

teaching is entrusted to persons called Kalamkhwan, who may be drawn from any of the three estates. In theory every Kakai (except perhaps the Saiyids) is free to choose his own Pir and Dalil; but in practice he will probably follow his father, and, on the death of the Pir or Dalil, accept any testamentary division of the Murids among the sons. Intermarriage between persons standing in the relationship of Pir, Dalil or Murid to each other is forbidden.

In course of time, whether for geographical or other reasons, there came to be associated with the original five Haftawana families five other families named after, but not necessarily descended from, five personages whose saintly life and miraculous gifts had placed them almost on an equality with the descendants of the Founder himself. The *Tazkara* (in order to challenge their claim to equality of status) mentions only two, Bawa Haidar and Shaikh Hayas, but most of my oral informants gave both of these names and three more: Bawa Yadgar, Mir Hamza and Atesh Beg.[1] All five families remain affiliated to the Saiyids of four of the five original Haftawana families: Haidar to Mustafa, Hayas to Khamush, Yadgar and Hamza to Ibrahim, and Atesh Beg to Mir-a Sur.

According to the *Tazkara* Bawa Haidar was originally a Dalil (the name of the original Khalifa ancestor is not given) and the members of his family now combine the functions of Pir and Dalil in relation to their Murids. All my authorities agree in attributing to them the gift of curing snake-bite, epilepsy and paralysis. One of my informants, who was himself a practising Dalil, divided this estate into two groups: the Bawa Haidar and Umar Mandan[2] families, members of which prefix the title Bawa to their names; and five others, Pir Mikho (?Mokhi), Pir

[1]The Bawa-Haidari 'Saiyids' are said to be descended from his two brothers Bawas Danyal and Khubyar, the Hayasis from the Shaikh's 'servant' (perhaps the guardian of his tomb) Dasawar, and the Yadgaris from two 'servants' named Khayal and Wasal; conversely Mir Hamza was a 'servant' of Ali Qalandar (a saint whose date and position remain obscure), so that the 'Saiyids' of this family are sometimes called Ali. Minorsky (*Notes*, p. 23) mentions that when in 1914 he visited the tomb of Bawa Yadgar in Zuhab he was shown a tomb bearing the name of Saiyid Wasal, said to be the adopted son of Yadgar who was flourishing in A.H. 1005 (1596–7).

[2]This name is interesting. There is near the direct road from Kirkuk to Taqtaq, not far from the Zab, a village called Uman Mandan. When passing near by, on several occasions, I was informed that the residents were Saiyids and had the gift of curing snakebite; there was no mention of their being Kakais. It would not surprise me to learn, however, that the Saiyids were Kakais of the Shaikh Hayas family.

Nariman, Pir Muhammad, Pir Ibrahim (these last two not to be confused with their namesakes of the Haftawana) and Yar Piroz, the members of which bear the title of Mam.

Most European writers have spoken of the Kakais as being divided into 'sections', quoting generally the names of one or more of the ten families from which the votaries must select their Pir. This description seems to me rather misleading since, as we have seen, each individual has in theory a wide freedom of choice so that affiliation can vary between the inhabitants of the same village or even between members of the same household. The Kakai traditions and beliefs are for the most part preserved in easily remembered rhymes in the Gorani dialect or in Turkish. Doctrinal differences seem likely not to follow the affiliations as such but rather to arise from geographical separation combined with innovations introduced by ambitious Saiyids or Dalils who are also qualified as Kalamkhwans; this has happened to the Atesh-Begis to an extent that may be considered to make them a separate 'section'. My impression is that the Kakai faith and traditions have been preserved in a more primitive and purer form on the Iraqi side of the frontier than on the Persian.

It will have been noticed that in this account of the Kakai organization there is no room for a Daudi 'section' as mentioned by Gobineau and others. I was once told by a Kirkukli official of great experience (who, however, was not himself a votary), that although the name Kakai was popularly used to denote all members of the sect, it was properly applicable to the Saiyids only and that the correct description of the other estates was Daudi. The explanation seems to me inherently quite probable, especially in view of the quality of Daud of the Haft Tan as a teacher and the patron of all the Dalils. But this was the only occasion on which I myself actually heard the name Daudi applied to the Kakais as a whole or to any group of them.

In Iraq the most important of the Kakai Saiyid dynasties is the Ibrahimi, the senior branch, and in my time was represented in the Tauq region by three cousins, the Saiyids Ali son of Rustam, Fattah son of Khalil, and Sulaiman son of Walad, and thus all grandsons of a certain S. Muhammad. In 1931 I was shown their family tree. It is set out on a roll about seven feet long and nine inches wide, headed by the doxology and a long

exordium, the first five lines in black followed by the gradual introduction of coloured lines until they develop into a regular sequence of black, blue, red, yellow and green in that order. It ends with the above mentioned S. Muhammad, is dated 1215 Rumi[1] (1799–1800), and bears the seal of various orthodox religious authorities including (it was said—I did not myself verify this at the time) Kak Ahmad himself, certifying it as correct.

S. Muhammad appears as the eighteenth in descent from S. Ishaq, which makes twenty-one generations from S. Isê Nurbakhsh to S. Ali and S. Fattah, whose dates of birth I would place between 1895 and 1900, giving the acceptable average for each generation of just 32 years. The names of the intervening generations may be of some importance in determining the historical origins of the sect and are given in the accompanying footnote.[2] It will be noticed that the name of S. Ishaq's son is quoted as Ziyad-ud-Din, not Muhammad; this need cause no difficulty, for it is a normal practice for dervish Murshids to take a formal name compounded with the word Din (meaning 'religion') in addition to the simple personal name.

The identity of S. Ishaq's mother calls for a word of comment. She is described as the daughter of Mir Muhammad Jaf in the *Tazkara* and of Hasan Beg Jaf by most of my oral informants. The name of Jaf does not appear in the *Sharafnáma* (1593), but we have seen that the tribe is specifically mentioned in the Treaty of Zuhab of 1639, less than fifty years later, when, one must suppose, it had been a long-standing source of friction between the two Empires. If the Jaf existed as a tribe as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century they were presumably resident in Jawanrud (the move of the Muradi group

[1]This was the solar financial year introduced by Sultan Selim III in 1789. It corresponded with the Old Style calendar except that the year began on the 12th March and the first year was numbered 1205, the number of the Hijra year which began on the 10th September 1790 N.S. By 1904 the Rumi year 1320 corresponded almost exactly with A.H. 1322, and the discrepancy between the two eras would have gone on increasing at the rate of about one year in thirty-three.

[2]The names in ascending order are the Saiyids: Muhammad, Ibrahim, Rustam, Ibrahim, Ali, Muhammad, Khalil, Ali Khan, Riza, Ibrahim, Mira, Shah Ali Khan, Chiragh, Ja'far Khan, Mira, Ibrahim Shah, Ziyad-ud-Din, Ishaq; going farther, corresponding with the orthodox Barzinja tree, there are eight more generations to the Imam Musa al-Kazim, six more to the Imam Ali, and finally forty-five more (with Abraham and Ishmael Nos. 27 and 28) to Adam 'the Father of Mankind'.

westwards across the Sirwan was not to take place for another four centuries), whence it would not have been too far for an influential religious teacher resident at Barzinja to seek a bride. Mir Muhammad (or Hasan Beg) would then have belonged to an earlier ruling family which, or the successor of which, must have been ousted, some time between the middle of the seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth, by an ancestor of the present Begzadas, perhaps the S. Ahmad with whom the accepted family tree begins.

In origin and organization, then, the Kakais are essentially a dervish brotherhood, sharing much of their esoteric creed with certain other Sufi orders, but differing from them in the person of the Founder and in certain beliefs and ceremonies peculiar to themselves based on a revelation of the Divine Reality (Haqiqat) which they claim to be more advanced than that vouchsafed to those still in the stage of the Tariqat (the Path) or, more elementary still, of the Shari'at, the literal and legalistic interpretation of Holy Writ. (There is another degree of revelation called Ma'rifat, Gnosis, but this seems to be considered as something special to which individuals of great and exceptional saintliness in any of the three stages can attain, so that the rank and file of an order can be called the People of the Path or the People of the Divine Reality but not People of Gnosis.) The Kakais offer a good example of the point I tried to make in the earlier chapter on *Shaikhs and Saiyids*: although they hold Ali, the original recipient of the secrets lying at the base of Islamic mysticism, together with his descendants the Imams, in the highest reverence and regard them as the victims of an unfortunate miscarriage of justice, they nevertheless consider that it is not for them to take part in a dispute regarding something which the Almighty in his wisdom has allowed to occur and, in Iraq at any rate (unlike their neighbours the Qizilbash) they have remained on the Sunni rather than the Shi'a side of the boundary, celebrate marriage according to the Hanafi rite (with a supplementary ceremony afterwards), take wives from the orthodox Sunni community, name their daughters A'isha without compunction and, in Ottoman times, enjoyed a considerable degree of favour from the administration.

The Kakai order appears to have developed out of an earlier

organization which had flourished in Luristan and was introduced into the Shahrizur-Hewraman region by a certain Mubarak Shah, Bawa Khoshên. He too had had his seven Companions (corresponding to the Seven Companions of Sultan Ishaq) their names being: Kaka Rida, Khwada, S. Falak-ud-Din, Ba Faqê, Fatima Lerhe, Baba-i Buzurg and Mirza Haman. The most interesting personage in this group is the fifth, Fatima Lerhe, Fatima the Slim, who is none other than the famous Bibi Fatima, sister and devoted companion of Baba Tahir[1] and therefore sister of the Baba Ali whom the orthodox Saiyids of Barzinja and the Kakai Saiyids alike claim as their ancestor. This seems to suggest that an order, which had its principal *foyer* in Luristan and of which Baba Tahir was a member, was introduced into the Hewraman district in the middle of the eleventh century and flourished for some 250 years until it was reformed by Sultan Ishaq, who made the headship hereditary in his own family.[2]

The rank and file of the order are by some divided into two classes, Goran or those descended from the original believers, and Shamshirawurda, meaning 'brought in by the sword', the later converts. This no doubt accounts for the at first sight strange description of Shaikh Isê in the *Tazkara* as 'Barzinji and Gorani', but the idea of conversion by the sword is quite foreign to everything else known about the Kakais. This distinction, coupled with the fact that the early religious texts are written in the Gorani language, seems to fit in well with the suggestion I made in an earlier chapter on the basis of other premises that Shahrizur and the adjoining districts were inhabited by a non-tribal Gorani-speaking people before the irruption of the rough Kurdi-speaking nomads of whom the Muradi Jaf were one of the later waves. Many of them were probably members of the brotherhood, and tombs and holy places bearing the names of the early figures are numerous.

The Goran tribe, whose habitat is a large group of villages on and to the north of the Khaniqin–Kirmanshah high road in the neighbourhood of, and including, Karind, is perhaps the

[1]Minorsky (*E.I.* art. 'Baba Tahir') says that Baba Tahir himself was the fourth of the Seven Companions of Bawa Khoshên, but his name does not appear in any of several lists given to me by different informants. The *Tazkara* does not mention the epoch of Bawa Khoshên at all.

[2]But see p. 72 above for a difficulty in connexion with the date of Baba Tahir.

best known of the Kakai communities in Persia,[1] and there are considerable colonies along this road farther east, notably at Kirmanshah itself, Sahna (not to be confused with Senna), and Hamadan. Farther south many of the Lakki-speaking tribes of Pish-i Kuh (that part of Luristan that lies between the Saimarra on the west and the Kashghan and Khurramabad rivers on the east), notably the Dilfan, are well known to be members of the sect. It is generally believed (and I have frequently been assured by people who claimed to have seen it) that when in a state of alcoholic intoxication and religious frenzy, particularly at the great festival of the winter solstice, the Dilfan practise fire-walking without coming to any harm. In January 1918, when marching from Khurramabad by way of Kuh-i Dasht to Kirmanshah with Nazar Ali Khan, Wali of Pish-i Kuh, whose force included a considerable Dilfan contingent, I expressed the wish to see such a performance. To my surprise he made no demur and only laid down the condition that I should not laugh as they took themselves very seriously. Unfortunately circumstances prevented my pursuing the matter further. With one doubtful exception referred to below I never heard of such practices among the Kakais of Iraq.

Rawlinson[2] mentions the tomb of Shahzada Ahmad in Bala Gariwa farther east as a shrine of great sanctity for the Ali Ilahis and says that this saint was a brother of Baba-i Buzurg (whom we have already met as the most important of the Seven Companions of Bawa Khoshên). The shrine is situated high up on the great dome-like mountain of Kus, about forty-five miles due north of Dizful, in the country of the Qalawand section of the Dairikwand tribe. The guardians, distinguished by their turbans of deep red, were frequently to be seen in the bazars of Dizful when I was there in 1917, and on one occasion, when I was travelling in Mungarra to the north, four of them attached themselves to my party for several days and so shared in the hospitality I was receiving. These guardians, who enjoyed the privileges and immunity from molestation generally accorded to Saiyids, were called Papi but seemed to have no connexion with the tribe of that name, which occupied the headwaters of

[1]The principal sections of the tribe are Goran with Tufangchi, Qalkhani, Qala Zanjiri. The Jaf clans mentioned on p. 141 as having attached themselves for tribal purposes to the Goran have remained orthodox Sunnis.

[2]Loc. cit., p. 95.

the Diz River north of the Qalawand and next to the Chaharlang Bakhtiyaris 'of Burujird'. The Qalawand and other Dairikwand, who held the place in great reverence, certainly were not 'Ali Ilahis'; but that has no significance since, in all Western Asia, many ancient places of pilgrimage are venerated simultaneously by the adherents of entirely different religions. It was never suggested to me that the Papi guardians were other than orthodox Shi'a Muslims, and it never occurred to my youthful inexperience that they might be anything else. It would have been particularly interesting to know whether they had any knowledge of the Pird-i War dispensation or whether they represented a survival of the earlier organization of Bawa Khoshên.

Before I leave Luristan there is one other point that is perhaps worth making. Baba Tahir is generally surnamed 'Hamadani' and there is no reason to doubt that it was in Hamadan, well outside Luristan, that he was established for most of his life. He is further said to have been a Lur and is also called 'Lurí', but in the earliest mentions of him this is spelt Lúrí with a long *u* whereas the word 'Lur' describing people of that race is written with a short *u* and generally without a final *í*.[1] Now the modern name of the plain between Dizful and the first range of mountains to the north is Sahra-i Lúr, with a long *u*, and not Lur as might have been expected, the plain being the winter camping ground of the Dairikwand and other Lur tribes.[2] Baba Tahir's surname may therefore have meant, not 'the Lur' but 'of Lúr', a district which, if the proximity of the shrine of Shahzada Ahmad is any guide, must have been an important centre of the brotherhood to which he belonged, and which happens to lie just within the boundaries of Luristan.

I have been frequently and credibly assured that most of the Sinjabi (affiliated to the Ibrahimis) and some of the Kalhur tribes established between the Goran and Luristan, are Kakais, but I never had any direct contact with them. The narratives of Gobineau, Minorsky and others show that the order founded in the Hewraman in the fourteenth century has spread far beyond its original home in the Zagros and that there are considerable communities in many parts of north-west Persia,

[1] Minorsky, *E.I.* art. 'Baba Tahir'.
[2] The Arab geographers also mention an ancient city of Lúr near Dizful.

especially in Azarbayjan but also in the provinces of Qazvin, Gilan and Mazandaran, as well as in Tehran itself.[1]

In Iraq at the present time the principal and best known Kakai settlement is in a group of some eighteen villages[2] in the headquarters nahiya of Tauq (Kirkuk liwa) to the west of the high road. It is comparatively recent, dating back only to the purchase of the lands by Saiyids Rustam, Khalil and Walad, and therefore in the second half of the nineteenth century; the new landlords collected their Murids from villages nearer the hills, on the other side of the high road,[3] in the nahiyas of Qara Hasan, Gil and Tauq, where some of their shrines are situated and where they still own property. Of the shrines that of Bawa Qatal, near the Talabani village of Kor Mor, is still a place of pilgrimage for sufferers from snake-bite.[4] The Kakais of this modern homogeneous settlement, under their influential and prosperous landlords, are now regarded for all practical purposes as one of the three tribes of Tauq nahiya, the others being Talabani and Dauda. The affiliation of most of the villagers is probably Ibrahimi.

Another important group lies astride the Iraqi–Persian frontier with ten or a dozen villages in each of the qaza of Khaniqin and the district of Qasr-i Shirin.[5] The affiliation of

[1]In the middle of the fifteenth century the whole of this region was included in the dominions of the Turkoman Qara-qoyunlu or Black Sheep dynasty. Jihan-shah, the second of the independent line, ruled in Tabriz and Baghdad from 1437 to 1467. Minorsky, in a recent paper *Jihan-shah Qara-qoyunlu and his Poetry* (*B.S.O.A.S.*, 1954, XVI/2) draws attention to the evidence for some connexion with the Ahl-i Haqq but, assuming a later date for the definitive formulation of the Path by Sultan Ishaq, concludes: 'Even if the Ahl-i Haqq doctrines were not a kind of state-religion under the Qara-qoyunlu, they may have developed in the favourable climate of unorthodoxy which prevailed under the Sultans of the Black Sheep'. The earlier date given in the *Tazkara*, 1316–17, disposes of any difficulty on the score of time and is moreover more consistent with the other evidence that these doctrines spread northwards from Luristan to Kurdistan and thence to Azarbayjan and not in the converse direction.

[2]The larger of these villages, with the approximate number of houses as estimated in 1922 shown in brackets are: Albu Sarraj (50), Ali Seray (60), Al Muhammad with Great Dalis (90), Arabkoi (100), Lasin with Topzawa (120), Matik (40). Other smaller villages are Banshakh, Little Dalis, Muhammad Khajik, Rubaida, Sêkaniyan, Suhail, Tarraba, Zangirh, Zughlawa. There are of course Kakais at Tauq itself. It is probable that not all the tenants of the Kakai landlords are themselves Kakais.

[3]The villages generally mentioned are Badawa, Hasar, Kulakani, Great and Little Tappalu, Chewrka Ziyarat, Shoraw, Sungur.

[4]Near this village there is also a tomb of Khalifa Bapir. I do not know if this is supposed to be the original Bapir of the Haft Khalifas; if so the Bawa Haidaris (see p. 187 above) may be his modern representatives.

[5]I never visited these villages but according to the lists given me by visitors from

the majority of the villagers on the Iraqi side is Ibrahimi but Miri and Bawisêyi have two villages each. My only note on affiliations on the Persian side is that the village of S. Daud is all Khamushi. I was once told that the people of Barika practise fire-walking; unfortunately I have no note of their affiliation.

On the banks of the Great Zab, near the confluence of the Khazir, there is a group of seven Kakai villages, three on the left bank and four on the right.[1] They are here popularly known as Sarli, but I do not know whether they themselves accept the name. I was once given, by a contemptuous orthodox Kurd, a derivation which could not be more inappropriate: the Turkish *sarilmaq*, to be wrapped up, after Ibn Muljam, the man who assassinated the Imam Ali in the mosque at Kufa and tried to escape detection by rolling himself up in one of the reed mats on the floor! The Sarli are quite distinct from the other group of unorthodox Kurds found in the Mosul liwa and known as Shabak, who are Kurdish Qizilbash.

At the predominantly Turkoman township of Tall Afar, some forty miles west of Mosul, the family known as Taifa-i Wahhab Agha, one of the most influential families and the one from which in Ottoman times the Mayor was generally elected, are Kakai Saiyids of the Ibrahimi line. The number of Kakai families has been variously reported to me as 40 and 300; the truth, no doubt, lies somewhere between the two. The impression I received from a member of the family who frequently visited Baghdad was that he and his brother, the Mayor, were so anxious to consolidate their authority, temporal and spiritual, over the community that they were inclined to blur the distinction between the Kakais and the more numerous Qizilbash of the town under a common Shi'a veil. In addition to the Ibrahimis one would expect, there are some Atesh-Begis at Tall Afar.

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them the names are: In Iraq, Amin Bapir, Bawa Isma'il, Barika, Chamchaqal, Dar-a-Khurma, Gabya, Kani Shabaz, Mêkhas, Markaz Hudud, Qalama, Qarapula, Tapa Qaisar; In Persia, the estate of Nasratabad (comprising the hamlets of Saiyids Ahmad, Khalil, Zuhrab and Sherif), S. Asadullah, S. Daud, S. Lufta, Darbanjik, Garawa, Qala Sabzi, Mama Murad, Ya'qub, Tapa Qawirsan, and Tangaw. It is possible that some of the Persian villages have been mentioned twice, once by the topographical name and once by the name of the Saiyid.

[1]The names are: Left Bank—Sufaiya, Matrat (2); Right Bank—Tall al Liban, Gazakan, Wardak, Qarqasha.

Outside these more or less homogeneous village groups isolated families are naturally to be found in Baghdad itself and in the larger towns such as Mosul, Kirkuk, Khanaqin and Sulaimani. The leading family in Sulaimani is surnamed Kubilazada, and occupies a respected place in the upper strata of society there; they are Shamshirawurda in origin and Mustafai by affiliation. Colonies have also been reported at Badra and Zurbatiya, but these I have not investigated personally.

To conclude this chapter I think I cannot do better than to describe a short tour which I made, many years later (in 1941) to what is probably the most interesting settlement of all, the isolated village of Hawar, situated in a secluded valley eight miles east of Halabja and distant only five as the crow flies from Pird-i War itself. It is the last and only Kakai community left in what I may call their Holy Land where the Founder walked and talked, and the place may thus have housed the adepts continuously for over six centuries.

I left Halabja on the 18th May with a small police escort and a knowledgeable but garrulous civil messenger (who reminded me that he had ridden with me from Halabja to Kelar on my first tour among the Jaf nineteen years before), our general direction being south-east. After we had passed through the extremely dirty Jaf village of Bamok (where I noticed that the tobacco plants were still small, that brilliantly-coloured hollyhocks were growing in the wheat fields and that outside most of the houses, in order to escape the vermin, the owners had built themselves small sleeping platforms discreetly surrounded by *chiyghs*), at about two miles out of Halabja, the track began to rise into a region of bare hills with Balambo (5,200 feet) and Magirk (5,500 feet) on our right and Shindirwê (6,700 feet) on our left. After another two miles we crossed a low col called Mil-a Humalê and at once found ourselves in the tangle of spurs thrown out by the Hewraman down to the Sirwan west of the point where the river has cut its way through the *chaîne magistrale*. The hillsides were dotted with stooks of a thistle called *kingirdirhk* which, when young and tender, is eaten by the Kurds and, when fully grown, is cut and left out to dry until July, to be stored for winter cattle fodder.

It still wanted an hour to noon when, after a leisurely march in perfect travelling weather, we halted for the day near a

police post on the hillside above the villages of Sazan and Kosawa, about a mile and a half from the Sirwan and four miles east of Mordin, a village mentioned in the early literature of the Kakais,[1] on the other side of Magirk.

The post was manned by one uniformed sergeant and half a dozen 'irregular' constables, who looked mobile and business-like with their ample claret-coloured trousers tucked into natural wool stockings of local make to look like plus-fours and the light rag-soled *kelhashes* which are ideal for movement in rocky country when the weather is dry. The sergeant was typical of a class which has always lived by government service (*nokeriy*) and has a tradition of a most remarkable devotion to duty that seems to be proof against solitude, poor pay and the complete indifference to their welfare shown only too often by their superiors. He had lost three brothers killed on various operations and, as a private in the old Sulaimani Levy, had himself received a severe wound in the neck at the Ranicol disaster of 1922.[2] The irregulars too were not entirely untrained, for most of them had served in the Levy and retained a lively affection for Daniels, Fitzgibbon, Makant and their other British officers.

On my journeys in Kurdistan I was constantly being surprised by the comparatively recent date of many of the villages in the more inaccessible parts of the country. The people of Sazan claimed to be Saiyids descended from a certain Shaikh Mu'min (I had passed his tomb on the road) who had come here from the Goran country in Persia and, finding the water to his liking (*sazan*), had decided to stay. Kosawa similarly had been founded only some fifty years before by immigrants from the Hewrami village of Teshar[3] who now formed half the population, the other half being Yênakhi, one of eight small tribes, sometimes classed as Jaf, occupying villages on both banks of the Sirwan in this region and to some distance from it on the southern or Persian side.[4] The Yênakhi have their own

[1] Minorsky, *Notes*, p. 25. The village now belongs to the Kokoyi tribe.

[2] See Chapter XVI below.

[3] This village also is mentioned in early Kakai literature (Minorsky, *Notes*, p. 24).

[4] The following list shows those represented in Iraq or in both countries; the numbers in brackets indicate the number of villages in each country, those in Iraq being given first: Imami (1 and 4), Kokoyi (3 and 0), Yênakhi (4 and 12), Zardoyi (4 and 6). The following have villages on the Persian side only: Bayingani, Mirawli, Satyari, Kelhashi.

ruling family of Begzadas, but the villagers also claim the same descent from the famous Saiyid, Pir Khidhr of Shaho.

Immediately below Sazan and Kosawa there is a broad flat suitable for rice cultivation, and from the site of an old Turkish police post on the edge I could see four piers of a ruined bridge below the Yênakhi village of Lanewan on the Persian bank. Close by I was shown a remarkable stone, evidently shaped by human hands, perhaps to serve as an altar, the pedestal of a statue or, as the local legend would have it, a throne. The story is that Princess Zêrinkewsh, Golden Slippers, the wife of a great pre-Islamic noble named Mir Abdullah Khan, was accustomed to come to this point of vantage to sit and admire her favourite view out over the winding river below and away to the peaks and ridges of the Juwanrud highlands[1] from which, perhaps, she had come.

I was in the saddle soon after six the following morning, for I knew that we had a hard day in front of us. Our general direction was now east, as we followed the contours of the southern spurs of Shindirwê with the blue-green thread of the Sirwan twisting through the gorges deep down on our right and the snowy 10,000-feet peaks of Shaho looming up through the haze in front of us, perhaps twenty miles away. We approached the Kokoyi village of Boyin by a rocky stair, where we were held up for a quarter of an hour extricating a police horse which had got its hoof stuck fast in a small crevice. The villagers were already out in their summer camps on Shindirwê and we pushed on, leading the animals, up a very steep track called Dalharhê, the Eagle's Road, from the eagles supposed to nest here, to a col called Mil-a Chalan at about 5,000 feet. It was a most exhausting climb; a burning thirst and frequent halts to regain my wind reminded me forcibly that I was now twenty years older than when Halabja was my own District.

From Mil-a Chalan we looked down 2,500 feet on to a deep gully and the small village of Giryana, which was said to have been founded by immigrants from Jawanrud, also fifty years earlier. I started down on foot intending to inspect the police post, but the guide lost his way on the mountain-side. After wasting some time I decided to content myself with the view

[1]The names of many of the mountains of this region begin with the syllable Má-: Magazan, Masan, Makuwan, Magarh, etc., *Má* in the dialect of Juwanrud is said to denote a perpendicular cliff-face.

from above and to rejoin the track, taking with us a strapping young man from Hawar named Bahram, whom we met picking up a partridge which he had just shot with a rifle.

Half an hour after noon we reached the small hamlet of Hawar-a Kon, Old Hawar, where there are shrines sacred to Mir Ahmad-a Sur of the Haftawana and Ahmad-i Hawari, an important personage who was frequently mentioned but whose exact place in the hagiology I was unable to determine. The two or three families normally resident here were, like so many others, away in their camps on the higher slopes of Shindirwê, but nothing could have been more delightful for the parched and weary traveller than the village spring of icy water gushing out into a crystal-clear tank lined with flags of smooth grey stone. We drank our fill, watered the horses and mules lower down, and then rested for half an hour in the shade of a spreading mulberry tree before mounting again, reluctantly, for the last two miles, still along the hill side, high above the Giryana gully. We had been riding for about half an hour when, breasting a low rise, we suddenly looked down on a village of some fifty houses, most of them double-storeyed and solidly built of dressed stone, pleasantly situated in a ring of groves and orchards.

We pitched our tents on a delightful little terrace overlooking the village and about a quarter of a mile away. There was an open-air tea shop close by, and we were soon joined by the headman, Kaikhusrau, a former Ottoman soldier named Hamad Amin (who during the first Great War had deserted to join the Sherif Husain's Arab revolt and had served as Ja'far Pasha's coffee-man), an old man who went on making a *kelhash* as we talked, and a venerable-looking Sofi with a long, crinkly, white beard, named Reshid. They said that their principal sources of livelihood were the sale of gum collected from the terebinth tree and caravanning; wheat and barley they obtained from the low country (*germiyan*) of Kifri and Arbil, exchanging load for load with dried mulberries, the transport both ways being on them.

Hawar is situated at an altitude of about 3,500 feet on the western side of a valley enclosed by two great spurs flung out by the main ridge of Hewraman near its highest point (9,800 feet) and running first south-westwards and then south-east so

as to form, as it were, two parallel chevrons set on end. The lower arm of the westerly chevron, the shoulder of which I crossed at Mil-a Chalan, is Shindirwê, and that of the easterly chevron, which marks the frontier, is Qalaga. Tawêla lies higher up this same valley, and it is the Tawêla stream which, after receiving near Hawar a small tributary from Balkha, enters the narrow gully of Giryana to find its way to the Sirwan. Immediately behind Hawar a great corrie runs deep into Shindirwê and is commanded on the south by its principal peak (6,700 feet) and on the north-west by a secondary peak (6,100 feet) called Bafr-i Miri, Prince's Snows, which marks the angle of the chevron.

Shindirwê must always have been, as it is today, a favourite summer resort for the villagers of these parts, and my new Kakai friends took evident delight in pointing out the positions of several of their holy places: Wezyar, the *chadirgá* or camp-site of Sultan Ishaq himself; Sêqalatan, the *nazargá* or place of vows sacred to the Haftawana as a group; Kani Piroza, the Spring of Happiness dedicated to Benyamin; and a Holy of Holies at Qamar-i Kalam. The *nazargá* of Shah Khoshên (as they called him), they said, was up a small valley on the outer side of the northern arm of the corrie, and that of Pir Musê just outside the village on the Tawêla road; Pira Magrun was one of the Seventy-two Elders; there was a second *nazargá* of Mir-a Sur in Shahrizur north-west of Khurmal. The affiliations of most of the people of Hawar were Mirasuri as to the Pir and Narimani as to the Dalil.

The next morning we rode down through the village (which was exceedingly dirty) and the surrounding orchards to the main stream and crossed by a bridge near the recently repaired tomb of Pir Iskandar, the son of S. Khamush, and that of Pir Isma'il, one of the Seventy-two Elders, from whom Sofi Reshid had claimed to be descended in the eighteenth generation. Ascending gradually on the far side, after about an hour we reached the walnut-groves of Daratuwê[1] and the *nazargá* of S. Bawa Isê of the Haftawana. Continuing to climb we passed a neat little garden, newly terraced by Hamad Amin my deserter friend of the previous day, and an abandoned, once terraced, site called Kani Harmêla, Little-Pear Spring (where

[1]Or Daratifê in the Gorani dialect: *tuw, tif* means mulberry.

we had a delicious drink); we finally reached the crest of the Qalaga spur, at a point (5,000 feet) called Mil-a Gakuzhê, Kill-Ox Col, on the line of the frontier itself.

The slopes at my feet on each side were covered with vineyards and to the east long dark lines of terraced orchards and walnut groves marked the position of the principal villages of Luhun in what seemed to be three parallel valleys of Shoshmê, Nosud and Wazli, nestling under the huge barrier beyond. On the hill-side, to the north of the river, like an ugly scar, the new Persian military motor road from Pawa to Nosud was clearly visible. Nearer still, just below us, the village of Shaikhan was hidden by an accident of the ground, but I could see five piers of the Pird-i Kurhan, the Young Men's Bridge,[1] as Pird-i War is now called.

With Shindirwê behind and Pird-i War in front I was now indeed in the heart of the Holy Land of the Kakais.[2] The Kurdish rising that followed the Anglo-Russian occupation of August 1941 had destroyed all vestige of Persian authority in the frontier region, and I was sorely tempted to complete my pilgrimage by going down to visit the tomb of the Founder. But my official position was such that I could not risk any charge of political indiscretion and, with many turns in the saddle, I rode on along the boundary line as far as I could before dropping down into the cool shade of the walnut groves of Tawêla.

XIV TANJARO, SARCHINAR AND SURDASH

BEFORE going on from Halabja to Ranya I spent a few days at Sulaimani, and this will perhaps be a convenient moment for me to pause and say something about the central districts which I have not yet described, although to do so I shall have to interrupt the chronological order of my narrative.

[1] This bridge is no doubt the pendant to the Pird-i Kinachan, the Maidens Bridge, a few miles down-stream.

[2] Minorsky, who visited Pird-i War in 1914, was shown the nearby shrines of Pir Razbar and Mustafa Daudami.

The Sulaimani valley between Azmir–Qarasird on the north-east and Beranan–Binzird on the south-west is divided into three nahiyas: Tanjaro (pop. 10,100) from the Halabja boundary (beyond which the valley broadens out to form the Shahrizur Plain) to the outskirts of Sulaimani town; Sarchinar (pop. 41,100) from and including the town north-westwards to a line running across the valley so as to pass through the peak of Pira Magrun; and Surdash (pop. 12,100) from that line to the Zab.[1]

About eleven miles north-west of Sulaimani a low watershed crosses the nahiya of Sarchinar, separating the Tanjaro basin from the water-courses that drain north-westwards to the Zab. These latter collect in two principal streams: the Tabin from the north of Pira Magrun is joined by the Charmaga from the south; the combined waters, encountering the barrier of Sarsird which has here broadened out to constrict the valley, cut into it westwards for six miles and then, turning northwards for seven, find their way through a deep, winding gorge called Surqawshan[2] to the river, six miles down-stream of Dukan.

In Surdash the valley narrows steadily as it runs north-westwards, the scenery becomes more rugged, and the mountain-sides are wooded with oak. The Azmir Chain (here called Charmaban), as it emerges from behind the north-western spurs of Pira Magrun, throws up a double line of gaunt limestone saw-edges and approaches the Zab in a series of jagged peaks and clefts; goat-tracks lead up through the clefts behind the villages of Qamchugha and Jasana to a narrow up-land of vineyards called Shaikh Bakh. About eight miles from the river the saw-edges disappear,[3] and the range pushes a great, broad snout up against the river, the lower jaw dropping to it but the upper terminating in the precipitous side of a deep and

[1]Under the Turks Tanjaro was called Sarchinar East and the other Sarchinar West; these two nahiyas have always been subordinate directly to the Mutasarrif or to the Headquarters Qaimmaqam. Surdash was at one time attached to the qaza of Marga, but it had been transferred to Sulaimani Headquarters many years before 1918. A fourth nahiya, Qara Dagh, was, and again is, subordinate to Headquarters; but since for much of the period covered by this book it was combined with Sangaw to form an independent qaza, a description is deferred to a later chapter.

[2]Turkish names are not rare in this vicinity, although the population is purely Kurdish. Surqawshan was probably Suqawshan, 'Waters-meet, corresponding to the Kurdish Duwawan, 'Two-waters', the name of the first 6-mile reach.

[3]From above Qamchugha it seemed to me that the two saw-edges enclosing Shaikh Bakh swing round and come to an end in the side of the mountain facing the main Surdash valley, so that, while the Jasana Gap is a cleft in one of them, that of Qamchugha is formed by the exposed ends of both.

picturesque gorge. It is to this northern jaw that the name of Qarasird properly applies; its continuation on the far bank is the ridge of Kosrat in the Ranya district. Deep down between Charmaban and Pira Magrun, at the watershed which on that side is much farther up than in the main valley and in line with the peak, lies Mêrgapan, Broad Meadow, where there is a small glacier; the place was often recommended by the Kurds as a possible summer station, probably because it is in shadow nearly all day long, even at midsummer. Behind Shaikh Bakh and Qarasird is another long and narrow highland glen ending in the great gorge which Maunsell took to be the mouth of the Qala Chuwalan; it contains several hamlets and the important village of Sargelu; the ridge on the far side of the glen is the boundary between Surdash and the nahiya of Marga in Pizhdar.

Tanjaro and Sarchinar are well watered and, as is to be expected, a large proportion of the land is owned by Shaikh Mahmud, the Jaf Begzadas, and other leading families of the town. The principal notable of Surdash was Hajji Shaikh Arif of Sargelu; he and his relations were in possession, legally or as squires, of some sixteen villages down in the main valley or up in the more secluded glens, and their religious influence extended farther; they were adherents of the Naqshbandi order and were in general hostile to Shaikh Mahmud and the ambitions of the Nodê branch of the Barzinja family.

The villagers of the three nahiyas are for the most part non-tribal 'Goran' with some remnants of the early inhabitants of Shahrizur who were driven out by the coming of the Jaf in the eighteenth century,[1] but in Tanjaro, on the most westerly of their migration routes, Jaf of the Mika'ili, Roghzadi and Kemalayi sections had founded a dozen villages of their own (and have doubtless since founded more), and were also mixed with Goran in many others.

The Isma'il Uzairi, another of the pre-Jaf tribes of Shahrizur, had remained in their nomadic state and numbered about 600 tents. Of the four sections, the Miralai were generally to be found spending the winter in Surdash at the foot of Binzird or over that hill in Qala Sêwka, the Khêl Faiza (generally

[1]Shaikh Isma'ili, Mandumi, Galbaghi, Shinki. There are also seven villages of Gawani and one of Kalwi, tribes of little cohesion of which I have no other record; also one of Sofiwand (see p. 42 n.), and one of Jaf-a Rheshka (see p. 237).

referred to by the name of the whole tribe, Isma'il Uzairi) and the Gomayi in Sarchinar, and the Qarawaisi scattered in Bazyan, Sarchinar and Shar Bazhêr. Though driven out of their ancient winter quarters they had continued to migrate to their traditional summer pastures in Persia, making for the Shilêr valley either across Shar Bazhêr or by way of Shahrizur, thence over the frontier at Kani Dizan, and on to the region of the Kal-i Khan Pass, ten or twelve miles from Bana on the road to Saqqiz and thus to the north-west of the Mika'ili. They were a lawless lot with a reputation for thieving. Like the Jaf they were tending to settle on the land and already had three or four villages in Sarchinar.[1]

I mentioned in an earlier chapter that the Naqshbandis of Kurdistan (not the educated townsmen but villagers in the remoter villages) seem to be particularly prone to manifestations of eccentricity. I have no doubt that antinomian tendencies had long been endemic in the remote mountain villages on the borders of Surdash and Marga, cut off as they were from normal contacts with the outside world and seldom visited by the agents of Government, but it was not until many years later, in 1932, that they first came to my notice. A party of police had gone to serve a summons in the village of Haladin, the property of Shaikh Mahmud, four miles from Sargelu, and on their return reported that they had actually witnessed a mixed bathing party in progress in the mosque tank, and other queer goings-on. The liwa authorities were at first sceptical, until some staid tobacco merchants reported a similar scene at Sargelu itself, adding a complaint that they had been roughly handled when they tried to protest. Inquiries elicited a strange story: a certain Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Shadala near Sargelu, a relation of Hajji Shaikh Arif, had founded or revived a Tariqat known as Haqqa, based on a scripture called *Raqṣât-aṣ-Ṣûfîya*, the Dances of the Mystics, written by an ancestor, the Hajji himself, as the leading personality of the region with certain responsibilities *vis-à-vis* the Government, remaining discreetly in the background; there was a relaxation of most of the conventions of conduct; Sofis had been seen buried up to the neck in village dung-heaps as they recited the invocation of God; there was a sort of community of possessions, including women; small

[1] I am informed (1957) that the Isma'il Uzairi have since all settled.

parties of both sexes, the men wearing female clothes or jewellery, were accustomed to roam the hillsides after dark; at the mixed bathing parties in the mosques, which were a regular feature of the observances, dogs were often taken into the tanks with the humans (to the orthodox Muslim a wet dog is particularly impure), and bowls of urine were passed round from hand to hand. After an incident when a party of excited Sofis had raided the mosque at Sargelu and publicly burnt a copy of the Koran, the shaikhly Murshids were sent for to Sulaimani and questioned. They maintained that they themselves deprecated such irregularities but sought to excuse them by saying that, if the Murids in a state of ecstasy and for a limited period acted in a manner contrary to orthodox religion and morals, they were not to be blamed. I cannot of course vouch for the details but there was undoubtedly some substance in the reports. The most effective antidote would have been the establishment of schools; but measures of this kind were not within the competence of provincial officials, and for several years there were periodical alarms that the Haqqa creed was gaining converts and spreading deep into the neighbouring districts.

In August 1936, during a temporary lull in the Haqqa ferment, I spent a night as the guest of Shaikh Abdul Kerim at Shadala in the narrow valley of the upper Tabin between Charmaban and Pira Magrun. Prominent Shaikhs always seemed to have a flair for choosing either strategically commanding or pleasantly sited villages for their residence, and this was no exception. The *takya* stood on a large terrace built-up on the mountainside. At the western end of the terrace a line of poplars cast a grateful shade over the mosaic of rich Persian rugs spread for our reception, just above a large stone-lined tank continuously fed by a babbling runnel of icy mountain water. The spotless white of my host's turban and robes was set off by a long black beard, curled at the tip and at the whiskers and gleaming with a fresh application of dye. He spoke with a sanctimonious drawl, as if butter would not melt in his mouth, but there was a merry twinkle in his eyes and a large gap in the teeth of the upper jaw gave bafflingly different expressions to the two sides of his profile. His conversation was not without worldly wisdom, and, as we sat looking over the

vine-clad slopes across the valley to Pira Magrun, it was difficult to believe that this was the pontiff of the startling heresy that had been setting the administration by the ears only a few months before.

There was an embarrassing development in 1944, during the Second World War, when a very able but then young and impulsive Mutasarrif of Arbil, without reference to Baghdad or consultation with his colleagues of Sulaimani and Kirkuk in whose jurisdiction the bulk of the Haqqa were to be found, suddenly arrested Mama Riza, Abdul Kerim's successor, who lived at Kalkasumaq on the Arbil side of the river opposite Dukan, and packed him off to Amara on the lower Tigris for internment in a camp for political suspects. Several hundred of his followers with their women and children thereupon abandoned their villages and set out on a 500-mile trek to join their Murshid in his exile. They were halted with difficulty at Kirkuk and, in spite of their privations and sufferings which were already severe, nothing would induce them to return until Mama Riza had been brought back to honourable detention in the more comprehending atmosphere of Sulaimani, within easy reach for an occasional pilgrimage to kiss the holy hand. I saw him there after his return, a gentle old man who, however theologically reprehensible his teaching, could never have been a danger to the State.

Ancient mounds are numerous in the three nahiyas as elsewhere. In 1927 Dr. E. A. Speiser made soundings at Arbat, Bistansur and Yasin Tappa but none, as far as I know, have been systematically excavated. On the other hand several caves have attracted attention at various times, either for their prehistoric interest or for their present-day value as shelters from air attack. One group, high up on the flank of Beranan above the villages of Jaishana and Hazar Mêrd south-west of Sulaimani, is plainly visible from the town in the form of dark arched niches; another famous cave near Abdalan in north-west Surdash is reputed to go so deep into the mountainside that nobody has ever penetrated to the end; the first of these was examined by, among others, Miss Dorothy Garrod, the authority on prehistory, who found palaeolithic implements but none of the statues, reliefs and other marvels of popular legend. Other

large and well-known caves are situated in the sides of the great clefts above Jasana and Qamchugha already mentioned.

In the summer of 1931, when, in addition to my substantive duties in Baghdad, I held for a few months inexpert administrative charge of the Iraqi Department of Antiquities, Ahmad Beg-i Taufiq Beg, the first Iraqi Mutasarrif of Sulaimani, reported that he had discovered in the nahiya of Surdash a rock carving which he believed to be ancient Persian. The news was surprising. From 1918 to 1922, when the liwa was under direct administration, many political and military officers had scoured the district on duty or in search of sport; since 1924, after the restoration of government authority, visitors had not been rare; I myself had been in the vicinity two or three times but I had never heard any whisper of the existence of such a monument. I made up my mind to visit the place myself as soon as possible; but for three years a perverse fate kept me fully occupied elsewhere, and it was not until April 1934 that the fortunate conjunction of the Muslim Id-al-Adhha holidays and Easter gave me my opportunity.

Ahmad Beg was still Mutasarrif. We motored out from Sulaimani as far as Mughagh where, after a short halt for tea in a black tent pitched outside the village, we mounted. About two miles farther on we crossed the Tabin at its junction with the Charmaga, and continued westwards along the right bank of the Duwawan, as this stretch of the combined waters is called, for four miles to the village of Zarzi. Sarsird is here named Gêchil and presents to the south a steep wall of rock honeycombed with natural caverns and crannies. The Ishkewt-i Qizqapan, the Cave of the Ravisher, is behind the village, cut in the face of the rock about twenty-five feet from the ground, the intervening space having been shaved quite perpendicular so as to render it inaccessible. We reached it with the help of ropes and two rickety ladders prepared for us in advance by Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Abdalan, son and successor of a Qadiri Murshid of some repute named Husam-ud-Din, who in the earlier troubles had been a staunch supporter of Shaikh Mahmud; I was glad of the ropes, especially for the descent, since the top rung was still three feet below the ledge.

When I had climbed on to the ledge I found myself in a shallow, open, outer cave fashioned to represent the façade and

eaves of a palace, with a low door giving access to an inner chamber. This outer cave is twenty-three feet long, nine and a half wide, and thirteen and a half high. The back wall, the palace façade, is divided into three sectors by two engaged columns standing out from the wall about two-thirds of their diameter. The base of the column consists of a plinth and torus; the shaft is plain and is surmounted by a massive capital of Ionic type with a palmette ornament between the spirals; the abacus has the egg-and-tongue enrichment; three great beams project over each column and support one cross rafter up against the wall and two pairs of rafters forming the eaves. The base of the right-hand column is much damaged; the left spiral of the left-hand capital is broken away.

The space between the pillars from the base to the top of the shaft is divided into two equal parts by a transverse bar in low relief. The lower half is pierced by a low doorway giving access to a sepulchral chamber within; the rock is damaged, but at the left top corner the post and lintel appear in low relief.

The upper half is occupied by a panel showing in low relief a fire altar with a figure on either side facing inwards. The altar is formed of three steps, a shaft, and on it three slabs corresponding in reverse with the three steps; on the top slab the fire is represented by a semi-circle. The figures are four feet five inches tall, three-quarters life size; the right hand of each is stretched upwards and out towards the fire, the left holds the top of a bow[1] which fills the space between the leg and the altar; the head-dress is low and falls down over the hind half of the head, a band concealing the mouth and chin; the beard emerges below the band; the shoes have something that might be a strap and buckle over the instep. The costumes of the two figures differ. That on the right appears to be wearing a long shirt-like garment falling to the calves and the near (left) arm is visible from the shoulder; the knee has been badly damaged by a rifle bullet. The left-hand figure seems to have a stiff ankle-length cloak with embroidered borders thrown over the shoulders, the sleeve hanging down empty; the fore-arms and one leg protrude from under the cloak; the garment covering the arms and thigh might be of some thick quilted material;

[1] I have called the object a 'bow' for want of a better name; in the notes made at the time I called it a 'harp'; there are obvious difficulties in identifying it as either.

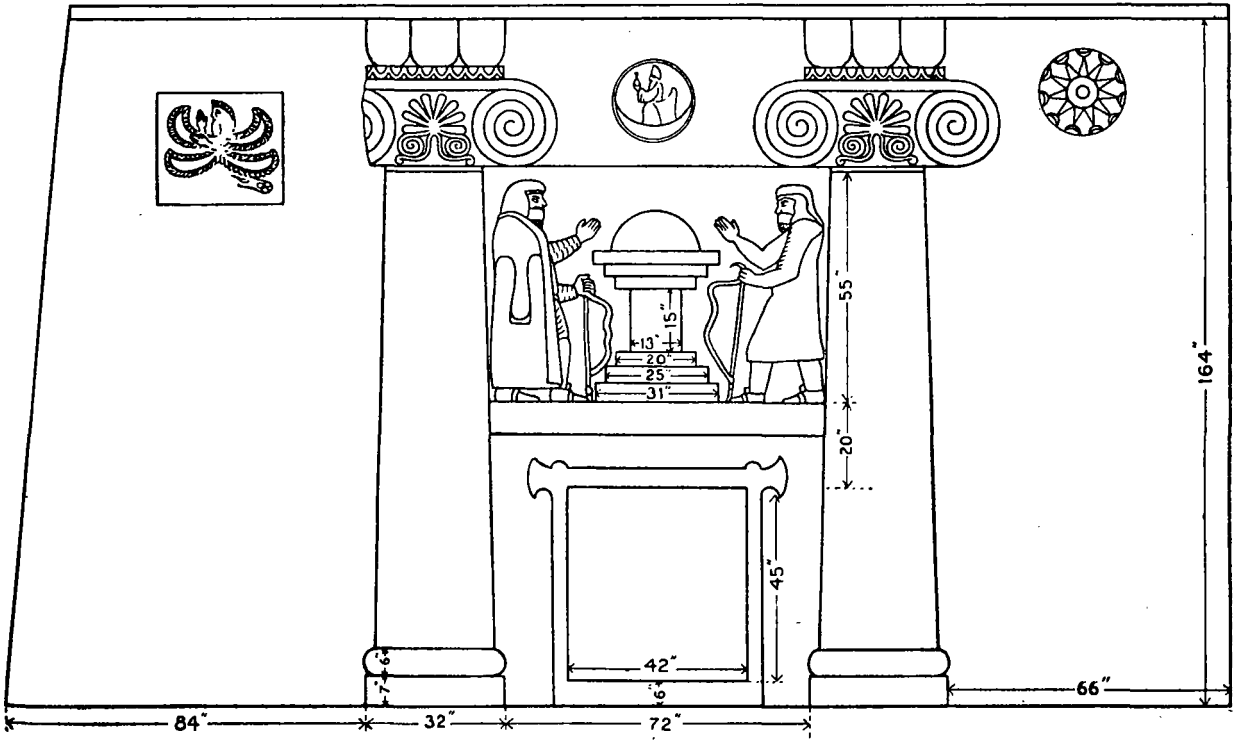


FIG. 2. Ishkewt-i Qizqapan. Elevation.

the shin is smooth and might be wearing top-boots or gaiters.

In the middle of the topmost panel, between the capitals and under the eaves, is a circular medallion, the outline thickened on the lower side to form a crescent. It is occupied by a small figure looking to the left, with low cap, beard, and hair brushed out and up behind in a *kakolh*; held up in his hand is an object which from its shape might be a truncheon or a drinking-cup; he appears to be wrapped in a cloak and seated.

The left-hand sector of the façade has for sole decoration a panel nearly ten feet from the floor, twenty-eight inches across and nearly square. It is occupied by a winged figure looking to the left that resembles the representations of Ahura Mazda at Bistun and in other Achaemenian sculptures, but differs in that the upper wings curve upwards to the top corners of the panel and the short lower wings only are horizontal, and that the head is large and has no bust. The panel is much damaged by weathering but the two upper wings, a hand held up between the left upper wing and the head, a hand along the middle of the left upper wing, the right lower wing with the fillet beneath it, and the tail are all distinct; the head was not easily distinguishable to the naked eye but is clearer in my photograph.

The right-hand sector of the façade has for sole ornament, at about the same level as the central medallion, three concentric circles, the outer one measuring eighteen inches in diameter; the inner disk and outer ring so formed are in relief as compared with the middle ring; on the outer ring in low relief are eleven spokes in shape like wine-glasses with conical stems; the inner disk appeared redder than the surrounding rock and might once have been coloured.

The sepulchre within is excavated ten and half feet back into the rock on the same level as the outer ledge, and is not quite seven feet high. It is divided laterally into three chambers each with a basin about two feet deep hollowed out in the floor, that in the middle chamber being well over six feet long and the others three or four inches under. Each basin has a rim some three inches deep and could have been closed with a slab flush with the floor. The low doorways giving access from the central chamber to the others have lintels and posts shown in low relief. A mortise in the rock to the left of the main door and a hole

through the short wall on the opposite side show that a bar ran across the entrance; another mortise in the front wall of the right-hand chamber suggests that there was some way of locking the free end of the bar; but if the bar held a door in place it is difficult to see how this could have been locked except by somebody inside.

The cave faces straight up the Duwawan valley and offers a perfect and impressive view of Pira Magrun.

We spent the night at the village of Kalabash as the guests of a brother of Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Abdalan, and the following morning went to inspect a second rock tomb, the Ishkewt-i Kurh u Kich, the Cave of the Boy and the Girl, behind the village of Shornakh, where the cliff of Binzird faces due east across the Charmaga to Pira Magrun. It can be reached on foot without the help of ladders, and this doubtless accounts for its condition. The outer ledge is almost as long as the other but is only six feet wide. The two columns had not been engaged but had stood two feet away from the façade; the base of one only, the left, remains with ten inches of the shaft. Two great rectangular beams, more massive than the triple beams of Qizqapan, project from the façade across the whole width of the roof and rest on the columns; the top of the right column still adheres to the beam. If there were ever any reliefs on the façade they have been destroyed without trace.

There is only a single inner chamber measuring seven feet by five and four feet high; it is reached by a low doorway and is divided almost exactly in half by the basin which occupies the right-hand side and is thus only five feet long. From here too there is a good view across the valley to Pira Magrun. Had the tomb been sited a few feet farther round the cliff the prospect would have been quite perfect with Pira Magrun squarely opposite, a magnificent vista right down the valley past Sulaimani to Shahrizur, and the long curtain of the Hewraman rising 7,000 feet above the level of the plain, eighty miles away.[1]

I found no sign of any inscription near either tomb. No date has yet been placed on them by the experts. The late Dr. Herzfeld informed me that he regarded two similar tombs in North-

[1]For a fuller description of the tombs with detailed measurements, plans and numerous photographs, see my article 'A Tomb in Kurdistan' published in *Iraq*, Vol. i, 1934.

west Persia with columns cut free out of the rock as Median, and another between Persepolis and Susa with engaged columns as Persian but pre-Achaemanian.[1] Dr. G. G. Cameron of the University of Chicago[2] considers that Kurh u Kich is to be attributed to the Medes and might be the tomb of Phraortes (son of Deioces and father of Cyaxares) who, according to Herodotus, was killed in an attack on Assyria and therefore not very far from Surdash; Qizqapan he places later.

The Kurds, as the names indicate, have attached to these caves the legend that is usually, indeed almost invariably, related in connexion with ancient ruined bridges in the Zagros region.[3] Here at the Kurh u Kich lived a prince; he loved a princess who lived at the Qizqapan beyond the Tabin stream, and visited her every night; the princess, thinking to ease his journey and have him arrive fresher and robuster, built him a bridge over the stream; the result was the reverse of what was intended; which when the princess perceived she had the bridge destroyed.

Our inspection finished we rode round the hill, below the cliffs, to Abdalan for lunch with Shaikh Abdul Kerim at his *takya*. Our hosts were most insistent that we should go on to see an ancient fort called Julindi which, to them, was a far greater marvel than the tombs. Although from my questioning I had formed, as it proved, a tolerably correct impression of what we were going to find, I was quite glad of an excuse to explore the Surqawshan down to a point where I had already crossed it five years earlier. We therefore rode past the village of Qoj Bulaq to a tributary gully called Cham-i Razan coming in from the south and up which the entrance to the famous cave of Abdalan was said to be. We crossed the gully at the confluence and continued to follow the left bank of the Surqawshan, which here turns from west to north. After about a mile the river makes three hairpin bends through deep gorges in quick succession, and forced us to cross two extremely steep ridges.

[1] See also Herzfeld, *Archaeological History of Iran*, London, 1931, pp. 30–22.

[2] *Early History of Iran*, University of Chicago Press, 1936, p. 182.

[3] Off-hand I can remember having had much the same tale told to me about the Tayit bridge on the Little Zab near the Qala Chuwalan confluence, the Pird-i Kinachan on the Sirwan south-east of Halabja, the Pul-i Kurh u Dukhtar on the Kashghan in Luristan, the mounds of Filaifila and Surud on opposite banks of the Tigris below Ali Gharbi, where the river is at its nearest to the mountains of Luristan; and there are others.

We saw two pigs high up on a ledge near the top of the sheer cliff; disturbed by a shot they raced along at great speed, almost as sure-footed as ibex. The mountainside was gay with tulips and apart from the universal gall-oak (*darberuw*) and many other trees and shrubs which I was not botanist enough to identify, I noted with their Kurdish names terebinth (*dareben* or *qezwan*), Christ's thorn (*ziy*) and hawthorn (*goyij*).

The castle of Julindi is situated on the right bank in the third of the bends. It is a natural hill fort, of the kind known in Luristan as *diz*, protected on three sides by sheer precipice falling to the stream and strengthened by artificial fortifications in stone and mortar; on the top, which is flat, there are numerous ruins of what one may suppose to have been tanks, barracks and stables. I could see no spring of any kind; my companions remarked sagely that all this mortar had required quantities of water to make and repeated a legend that it had been piped across from a spring on the far bank. They had no tradition whatever regarding the history of the place. Oskar Mann, who collected specimens of Mukri Kurdish[1] at Sauj Bulaq (Mahabad) in 1902–3, recorded a ballad entitled Julindi: Julindi, a pagan king, alarmed by the advance of the Muslims, allies himself with the Devil (who in one picturesque passage takes the form of a beautiful damsel and successfully seduces Ali, the Lion of God); he harries Medina and terrorizes the population until, after many vicissitudes, he is finally killed by Ali himself. Of course Kurdish piety may have been at work and attributed to the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law the prowess of some Kurdish hero, putting in a Hijazi setting a story of the Kurdish hills, so that the original name of the villain only has survived; but there is no internal geographical evidence to support any connexion with the fort of Julindi in Surdash.

The day was now far spent, and we decided to bivouac where we were instead of returning to Abdalan. The servants had found a clean, sandy patch down by the stream in a natural half-tunnel under the rock; but it was clearly not above high-water mark and, in view of the threatening weather, we moved to a higher but less salubrious ledge before turning in. The horses were sent back to Qoj Bulaq for the night. After dark the

[1] *Kurdisch-Persische Forschungen: Die Mundart der Mukri-Kurden*, Berlin, 1906, Teil i, pp. 228–46.

jangle of bells announced the arrival of a small caravan from Abdalan with bedding (*nön*) and food for our party, which had now swollen to a considerable size. We had an excellent meal in the glow of a crackling fire of oak branches and the fitful light of a nearly full moon as the clouds scudded across the sky. The shoe-smith of Abdalan proved to be a story-teller of almost professional attainments, and I must have just fallen asleep to the sound of 'the King's son' and 'the Wazir's daughter' and the lively oratio recta of the persons of the story when I was awakened by flashes of lightning and tremendous peals of thunder reverberating from side to side down the gorge. The deafening storm kept us awake for over an hour.

We were up betimes next morning and left on foot. Led by the burly form and jovial face of the headman of Shilakhan we followed a narrow goat-track, in places only a few inches wide, above the sheer precipice on the right bank. As we approached Zarzi the slope flattened out and, after passing Qizqapan with the now familiar pillars and eaves clearly distinguishable from below, we crossed the Tabin and pushed on to Mughagh, where we had an appetizing meal of hill-partridge (*kew*) and ibex (*bizn-e kêwiy*) flavoured with gundelia (*kingir*), an edible thistle much appreciated by the Kurds, before rejoining the cars. We had intended to visit the village of Qarachitan, where Ahmad Beg had reported the presence of stone steps hewn in the rock and what he thought might have been an altar. But the weather was so threatening that we decided, wisely as it turned out, to return at once, and had hardly reached Sulaimani when a thunderstorm came on with rain so heavy that the next day the main motor road to Kirkuk was impassable.

XV RANYA AND PIZHDAR

CAPTAIN W. R. (now Sir Rupert) Hay, the first A.P.O. to be appointed to Arbil, then subordinate to Mosul, has recorded in his book, *Two Years in Kurdistan*,[1] how in December 1918 he inaugurated the Occupation administration in the three qazas of Koi, Ranya and Pizhdar (of which, under

[1]London, 1921.

the Turks, the first two had belonged to the Kirkuk liwa and the third to Sulaimani), but within the framework of Shaikh Mahmud's principality; and how, after the Shaikh's rebellion, Koi was attached to the newly formed Arbil Division while the other two remained under Sulaimani as the Ranya District.[1]

The outstanding topographical features of these two qazas are: first, the lofty range marking the Persian frontier and rising from an altitude of 7,800 feet near the Zab Gorge to 11,800 in the north; second, the long ridge of Kurkur-Asos-Kêwarhesh which is the continuation of the Kurhakazhaw-Gojar-Kurkur chain of Shar Bazhêr; and third, the sharp hairpin bend of the Zab as, after entering Iraq, it flows north-westwards for some thirty miles and then, breaking through the ridge at the Darband-i Ramkan (which separates the Asos sector from Kêwarhesh) turns to run due south in a broad shingly bed until it narrows again at the Qarasird Gorge. The frontier range is covered with snow for most of the year, and of the glittering line of peaks called 'of Qandil' Kogiz, or Qandil proper (11,324 feet), though not the highest, stands out in lovely symmetry like a good friend signalling his position to the traveller in the labyrinth below. The Asos-Kêwarhesh ridge narrows as it disengages itself from the mountain mass about Kurkur, and separates the plain of Qala Diza on the north-east side from those of Marga and Bitwên on the south-west; it then loses itself again in the complex of mountains around Ruwandiz. On the Qala Diza side up to Darband the river runs close up under the ridge, leaving room for a narrow line of villages called Pashkêw; but on the right bank the plain is intersected by several torrent beds, and of these the Zharawa (which rises on the Persian side of a nineteen-mile length of frontier where the line of highest peaks of the *chaîne magistrale* does not coincide with the watershed) and the Garfên (which comes down from Qandil) are the most important. On the other side of the ridge the Zab on its southward course divides Marga from Bitwên and receives one right-bank tributary of consequence, the

[1]The District so formed was bounded: on the east by the Persian frontier; on the north (with one minor derogation) by the watershed between the two Zabs; on the north-west by an irregular line cutting across country to a point about five miles north of Koi; and on the south-west from this point to the Little Zab by a long even ridge called Haiba Sultan (3,500 feet), which is the north-westerly extension of Beranan-Binzird. On the south it adjoined Surdash and on the south-east Mawat.

Baselam.[1] The traditional boundary between the two qazas is the Zharawa from the frontier to its confluence with the Zab, and then the Zab itself down to the Qarasird Gorge.[2]

Ranya divides naturally into the three nahiyas of Nawdasht (pop. 8,650) between the Zharawa and Kêwarhesh, Ranya Headquarters (pop. 12,000) in the middle, and Chinaran (pop. 4,800) south of the Baselam; its general configuration can be compared to an irregularly shaped fan, the first two nahiyas consisting of a series of narrow ridges and valleys descending from the north-east, north and north-west to the plains of the Zab, with Chinaran forming the handle. Pizhdar consists of two nahiyas: Qala Diza, or Headquarters (pop. 22,500), almost an equilateral triangle tilted upwards from the Zharawa and the Zab to the frontier range; and Marga (pop. 13,100) enclosed by the Zab and the Surdash and Mawat boundaries, and divided unequally lengthwise by Asos. Each qaza has about thirty miles of international frontier.

Of the travellers in my list none of the earlier British pioneers came this way. Of the others Chirikov was of course here with the Frontier Commission in 1849–52, and I shall have occasion to refer to several points of interest in the papers of Clément (1856) and Brzezowsky (1869). Maunsell (1888) was the first Englishman to describe the region, and up to 1914 he had been followed only by Mark Sykes (1905). The Frontier Commission of 1914, when they reached this area, marched and had all their camps in Persia, and Hubbard only makes one or two passing references to the Turkish side.

The administrative arrangements I found in force in 1922 were rather different from those just described above: the A.P.O. was himself directly administering the nahiyas of Ranya, Marga, Chinaran and a truncated Nawdasht up to the Garfên torrent, the first two through civil-servant Mudirs, the third and fourth through 'bullet-proof' nominees with local tribal connexions; Qala Diza and the rest of Nawdasht, on the other

[1] I adopt this name from the maps. I found it generally referred to as the Aw-i Khidran, but it is convenient to retain the latter name for one of the several streams that go to form it.

[2] Under the Turks, therefore, this had been the liwa boundary between Sulaimani and Kirkuk, just as it subsequently became the boundary between Sulaimani and Arbil. Cuinet and the Turkish almanack already mentioned show Marga as the headquarters of the Pizhdar qaza with Qala Diza and Surdash as subordinate nahiyas.

hand, were being controlled indirectly through Babakr-i Selim Agha, chief of the great Pizhdar tribe, who held the official rank of Qaimmaqam of Qala Diza but acted also as the A.P.O.'s counsellor on matters affecting tribal politics across the frontier (where there was no Persian administration) or in other areas, such as Marga and Mawat, where Pizhdar influence was strong. Babakr, to whose wisdom and loyalty in those early days Hay left on record a handsome tribute ('a gentleman of the first water . . . the wisest and greatest of the many tribal chiefs I met during my two years in Kurdistan'), had originally been nominated by Shaikh Mahmud; but he had shown himself a staunch supporter of Government during the troubles of 1919 and had continued to hold the post after the rebellion had been suppressed.

When in an earlier chapter I described the Jaf as the most important tribe of Southern Kurdistan I was careful not to say 'the most powerful'. This distinction belonged, and probably still belongs, to the Pizhdar. The name means 'behind the gap' (*scilicet* of Darband-i Ramkan) for those looking from the west; the real name of the rank and file of the tribe is Nuruddini and the patronymic of the ruling family is Mirawdali. The Mirawdali Aghas had retained their authority and prestige in the tribe almost unimpaired; they were particularly prolific, and the years before 1918 had been a period of rapid expansion as they planted squireens or agents on an ever widening circle of villages to which they had no shadow of legal title whatever. They therefore deserve some study as a typical example of a large tribe at a certain stage of political and social evolution, past their heyday indeed, but not yet in the state of disintegration into which the Jaf had long fallen. Certain client clans appear in the picture, but the Nuruddini rank and file of the Pizhdar proper will hardly be mentioned; the story is the story of the ruling family.

The Mirawdalis claim to be descended from the same ancestor as the Babans, Faqê[1] Ahmad of Darishmana. The story, as related to me by Babakr Agha, is as follows. There once lived in the village of Marga two brothers, Kaka Mir and Kaka Shaikh. They were both murdered, and the widow of Kaka Mir,

[1]This is the Kurdish form of the Arabic *faqih*, meaning a student of Muslim jurisprudence. A longer and more elaborate version of the story was recorded by Rich at Sulaimani (op. cit. Vol. 1, pp. 292–6).

being pregnant, fled to Khidran in the modern nahiya of Chinaran, where her child Ahmad was born; later they moved to Darishmana, seven miles east of Qala Diza. Faqê Ahmad grew up both a scholar and a mighty man of valour. In the course of the wars of the Mushims against the infidels he vanquished in single combat Kêghan, the warrior-daughter of the Emperor of the Franks, who till then had overthrown every Muslim champion she had encountered. He was taking her home in triumph when he was mauled by a lion, and Kêghan was able to escape. After recovering from his injuries Faqê Ahmad sought her out again, and this time Kêghan, filled with passionate love and admiration for the only man ever to worst her in a trial of arms, accompanied him obediently home to Darishmana. In due course they had three sons: Baba Sulaiman, ancestor of the Babans; Khan Bedakh, ancestor of the Mirawdalis; and another from whom the ruling family of Mukri claimed descent. It is sometimes said that Kaka Mir was a descendant of the great Saladin, and that the family had come in the first place from Syria to Jezirat-ibn-Umar before settling in Marga.

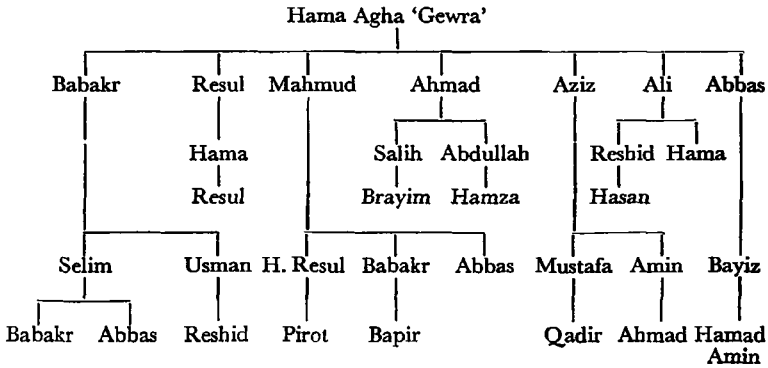
The next ancestor to be mentioned is Mir Awdal, the eponym of the family, one of three brothers descended from Khan Bedakh: Mir Awdal settled in the village of Nuruddin, four miles south-east of Qala Diza; Mir Zaindin went to Ishkaft Saqqa, eighteen miles east of Arbil, and became the ancestor of the ruling family of the Gerdi tribe of that liwa; and Mir Shamzin went north to Shamsdinan (or Shamdinan, as the Kurds generally call it), now in Turkey.

More recently still the common ancestor of all the Mirawdalis that count[1] is Hama Agha, surnamed 'Gewre', 'the Great', who lived probably between 1790 and 1850 and by seven wives left numerous sons; fourteen of these in their turn had male progeny. He was succeeded as head of Pizhdar by his eldest son Babakr Agha, of whom Clément,[2] who met him near the frontier between Persian Alan and Qala Diza in 1856, says that he was

[1]The only other branch members of which I have met in the flesh is that of Umar Agha, who occupy three villages near Qala Diza.

[2]Clément had travelled along the Surkêw sector of the frontier through Shiwakal, crossed the Zab into Persian Alan and just entered Qala Diza territory as far as Ganaw, 1½ miles from the frontier, before turning back through Mawat to Sulaimani. Of the tribe itself he says: 'En été la forte et redoutable tribu des Kourdes Nouradine campe dans ces parages; sa férocité est redoutée jusqu'à Keui-Sanjak'. Although he marched close to, and actually crossed the lower Qala Chuwalan at Qashan he does not appear to have recognized what it was.

then about thirty years old, had eighteen brothers and twenty sisters alive, and could mobilize over 2,000 armed men. The seven branches of the family founded by Hama Agha are known by the name of the eldest son of each of the seven wives, but the Aziz-Agha branch is generally referred to as Begzada, not, I was assured, because the ancestress was better born than the other wives, but in sarcastic allusion to her extreme ugliness and bad temper. The table below shows the relationship of the principal contemporary Aghas who appear in this story.



In the home nahiya of Qala Diza all the branches were represented with Ahmad-Agha, Babakr-Agha and Mahmud-Agha preponderating in that order. In Marga the Mahmud-Agha branch was particularly strong and also exercised influence over two important client tribes, the Shilana and the Jaf-a Rheshka cragsmen of the Surdash border. In Mawat the Babakr-Agha and Ali-Agha families had the advantage. The Begzadas were entrenched around the central massif of Kurkur and thus in all the three nahiyas of Qala Diza, Mawat and Marga. The Babakr-Agha branch was also probably the strongest over the border in Persia.

It will be seen from the family tree that quite apart from his outstanding personal merits Babakr-i Selim Agha, as the senior member of the senior branch, was clearly marked out to be the natural chief of Pizhdar, as indeed he was universally recognized to be. But Babakr the Elder had died comparatively young, the chieftainship had been held for a short time by a younger brother, Mahmud, and this Mahmud's youngest son

Abbas could never forget. His intrigues to undermine the position of Babakr Agha and the manoeuvres of the latter to maintain his position, together with the resulting permutations and combinations in the political groupings of the different members of the various branches of the family and in their alliances with neighbouring tribes, were a constant source of trouble vitiating the whole political atmosphere. There was, however, one peculiarity about these genuinely bitter internal rivalries and hatreds that distinguished the Mirawdalis from the majority of Kurdish tribes: strained relations never led to fratricidal bloodshed—the side that found itself out-manoeuvred over any issue would resign without waiting to be mated and then begin a new game with new hopes.

These may seem wearisome details, but some knowledge of the internal organization and politics of the most powerful tribe in Southern Kurdistan is essential for a proper understanding of the reasons for the collapse of the British administration and its withdrawal from the Sulaimani Division recorded in the following chapters. The other elements of the population can be dealt with more briefly.

The Bilbas confederation consists of five tribes: Mangur, Mamish, Piran, Sinn and Ramk. The highland Mangur are an important Persian tribe inhabiting the country to the east of the northern half of the Ranya section of the frontier on both sides of the Lawên (the name of the upper waters of the Zab on the Persian side); there are two sections of lowland Mangur living in Iraq, the Mangur Zudi who occupy twenty-six villages to the west of the Zharawa torrent and a small section called Mangur-a Ruta, the Naked Mangur, with four villages on the east bank of the Zharawa near its mouth; these lowlanders acknowledge the supremacy of the highland ruling family, and it was customary for the supreme chief to nominate annually a member of one or the other of two noble highland families not his own to be the chief of the lowlanders. The Mamish are another important Persian tribe having their habitat east of the Lawên and north of the Mangur; they too have a small section, called Mamish-a Rheshka, the Black Mamish,[1] who occupy

[1]Compare the name Jaf-a Rheshka, the Black Jaf, for the section which broke away from the main body of the Jaf Muradi.

four villages in Iraq on the Zharawa above the Naked Mangur. The Piran have a highland section in Persia north of the Mangur and west of the Lawên, and a lowland section established in a dozen villages of Bitwên, but in this case the lowlanders are entirely independent and acknowledge no inferiority to the highlanders; the lowland chief at this time was Suwar Agha, who had succeeded to the headship as a young man and commanded the loyalty of the tribe to a quite exceptional degree. The Sinn and Ramk, once the pride of Nadir Shah's cavalry corps, have fallen on evil days and occupy five poor villages each in Bitwên near the Zab; the Ramk are divided into two sections, the name of one of which, Kechel u Klhawspiy, 'Bald and White-Hat', is interesting (the other is Faqê Waisi).

Next for consideration come the Ako, a loose confederation of an unusual kind, occupying the outer edge of the middle folds of our fan. For convenience the sedentary tribes may first be grouped geographically into Nawdasht, Shawur and Ranya. The Nawdasht group consists of two principal tribes: Sharoshi (eight villages on the high slopes of Qandil) and Razhikeri; Razhikeri (the name is seldom heard) is made up of three principal clans, Bawobi (two villages above the Sharoshi and four at the head of the next glen to the west), Khaila (seven villages situated between Sharoshi and Bawobi), and Mandamara (nine villages to the south of Khaila and all but one on the edge of the plain to the south of the great mass of Zêrnako, which encloses the upper Nawdasht valley on the south). The Shawur group occupies fourteen villages in the upper glens of the valley of that name, and the Ranya group has eighteen on the lower reaches of the Shawur Water and down to Ranya itself. A peculiarity of the whole Ranya group and of the Mandamara clan is that nearly every village has an independent tribal as well as a topographical name. Two wholly nomadic tribes, Bolê and Babolê, numbering together about 150 tents, also belong to the confederation; they summer on both sides of the frontier east of Ruwandiz and spend the winter wherever they can hire grazing (*puwsh*) in Ranya, Koi or Arbil.

The senior patrician family of the Ako is surnamed Bashaghai; it seemed to be respected as *primus inter pares* (as indeed the

name suggests) and never, as far as I know, claimed any kind of authority over the confederation as a whole; but the senior member in my time was always referred to as Mamand Agha 'Ako'. They owned one village, Sarkabkan, four miles north-west of Ranya and two more, Zargeli and Bokriskan, in the extreme north of upper Nawdasht, over the Zab watershed.[1]

To complete the catalogue two other small tribes residing beyond the Kêwarhesh may be mentioned here: the Ujaq, sometimes classed as Bilbas, astride the frontier with eight villages on the Iraqi side above the Mangur Zudi; and the Khidhr Mamsênan with three villages on the lower Garfên.

The situation at Ranya was in many ways influenced more directly by conditions in the neighbouring liwa of Arbil than by events at Sulaimani; and something must be said about the Montagues and Capulets of Koi town, who always played an important role in the involved drama of Ranya politics. The two families are surnamed Ghafuri and Huwaizi and between them own a large proportion of the land not only in the qaza of Koi but also in the adjacent nahiya of Chinaran. Hay in his book gives a lively account of their animosities, intrigues and rivalries, and describes how he became involved in them before he had even dismounted on his first arrival at Koi; each family had its affiliations with the various Ranya tribes, or the factions within those tribes, and, indeed, the immediate cause of Hay's visit had been a series of armed attacks by Suwar Agha of the Piran, instigated by the Ghafuris, on Huwaizi property, attacks which had culminated in the invasion of the Huwaizi quarter of the town itself. Cutting across these affiliations the expansionist pressure of the Mirawdalis of Pizhdar from the one side and the Aghas of Koi from the other kept the Ranya tribes perpetually on the defensive, with the advantage inclining to Pizhdar when Ranya was subordinate to Sulaimani and to Koi when it was subordinate to Kirkuk or Arbil.

The totality or elements of all these tribes, Aghas and ryots alike, are accustomed to spend the summer with their flocks on both sides of the frontier: the Pizhdar between the Zab and the Zharawa; north of them the Ujaq; then Mangur Zudi; then the sedentary Ako about Qandil; then Piran; then the nomadic

[1]Two Bawobi villages, Lêwzha and Yandiza are also over the watershed.

Ako. The Aghas of Koi are so rich in flocks and herds that their shepherds are organized as a semi-nomadic tribe, the Shuwankara or shepherds, composed of four sections: Bab Raswa (drawn from Mangur), Binzêri (drawn from three Mandamara villages), Marwan (Ako from the village of Sila in upper Nawdasht) and Kurd (drawn from the Jaf-a Rheshka).[1]

The title 'Agha' is of Turkish origin and, placed after the name, is used to designate, like the title Beg (which is also Turkish and is affected particularly but not exclusively by the descendants of an ancestor who held the Ottoman title of Pasha), the members of many tribal ruling families. But the use of this style seems to be comparatively modern; I have not noticed it anywhere in the *Sharafnáma* (1596) where the commonest title is 'Beg' and the 'Khan' of Persia also occurs; it may have spread gradually in Southern Kurdistan after the conquest of Baghdad by Sultan Murad IV in 1637. However that may be I am inclined to suspect that the Agha families represent in fact a new aristocracy owing their privileged position to specific appointment by the various autonomous Kurdish princes, and that this may be the reason why the history of so many Kurdish tribes, which is normally the history of the ruling families, seems to go back no farther than the beginning of the eighteenth, or at most the second half of the seventeenth century. We have already seen how in quite recent times dervish Shaikhs have elevated themselves to the position of tribal chiefs, but with religious influence taking the place of appointment by a higher secular authority.

When the Turks took over power from the native princes the Aghas became indispensable to the ryots as their intermediaries with the foreign civil servants set over them, and the natural result was the consolidation of the position of the new aristocracy. The degree to which the despotic authority wielded by these Aghas was regarded as natural and proper is well illustrated by a story once told to me by Shaikh Muhammad Agha of Balik in the Ruwandiz qaza. His father, as a disciplinary measure, had cut off the hand of one of his ryots for theft and had put out the eyes of another for some more serious offence; the incident came to the ears of the Turkish Qaimmaqam, who

[1]This is a good example of the use of the description 'Kurd' with a restricted meaning referred to on p. 141 above.

summoned the victims to Ruwandiz to give evidence; in spite of every kind of pressure and suasion they resolutely denied that the Shaikh had had anything to do with their misfortunes; in recognition of their loyalty they and their descendants had ever since been excused from all the various dues and services commonly demanded by Aghas from their subjects and known as *aghatiy*.

The basic due claimed under this heading is *zakât*, tithe on the winter crop of wheat and barley. This is supplemented by: *merhane*, one in fifty head of sheep or the cash equivalent; *puwshane*, grazing tax; and an unspecified proportion, varying according to the circumstances, of almost every other kind of farm produce, the impost being dignified by the addition of the suffix *-ane* to the name of the commodity—*rhonane* on clarified butter, *hermêyane* on pears, *hêlkane* on eggs, and so on. All of this group, together with *micêwer*, a contribution to the salary of the Agha's house-steward, have a certain justification in the duty assigned by immemorial custom to the Agha or other squire of dispensing hospitality to travellers arriving in the village (and to not a few of the villagers themselves who happen to be present in the reception room at meal times); but of course the consumption of the household cannot well be distinguished from that of the guest house.

Less justifiable are the cash exactions: *ceriyme*, or farther north *draw*, meaning fines for misbehaviour or, less objectionable, a fee for settling a dispute; *suwrane*, the marriage fee taken from the parties or their parents, varying from a few shillings to ten pounds or more according to their wealth (in abduction cases an additional *ceriyme* is taken for services as honest broker in composing the feud); and *piytak*, the subscription which all ryots may be called upon to pay towards the expenses of a marriage in the Agha's family or of other ceremonial occasions.

Worst of all are *bêgar* and *herewez*, the names of various kinds of *corvée* which the Agha feels entitled to impose on each household; two or three days a year ploughing his land (*herewez y cuwt*), or reaping and threshing (*herewez y drew u gêre*); an occasional day cutting or collecting wood and leaves for firewood or winter fodder (*herewez y gelha w dar*), laying bricks for a new house, clearing a canal, or going on an errand to the market

town—all, of course, with the ryots own tools or animals.[1]

Where the Agha has no ancient tribal connexion with the ryots and does not depend on them for armed support *aghatiy* tends, as I have already said, to become most vexatious. In modern Iraq the rule, disliked by some of the Arab nationalists of Baghdad, that officials in the Kurdish areas must be Kurds or at least Kurdish-speaking, has done far more than is generally realized to undermine the position of the Agha and to strengthen that of the central Government, for the Agha is no longer required as an intermediary with a foreign and unapproachable civil service. With the spread of education and the improvement of communications it is inevitable that resentment over *aghatiy* should become more and more bitter and present the administration with many ticklish problems: the ordinary official, when appealed to, could hardly rule that such irregular claims should be enforced, and few Mudirs or Qaimmaqams could be expected to have the personality or prestige to arrange a common-sense *modus vivendi* which would not do excessively sudden violence to a social system sanctioned by ancient custom but out of harmony with the statute law of the land. I remember once discussing his agrarian troubles with Babakr's brother, Abbas-i Selim Agha, a delightful man to meet, and suggesting that he should take the long view, bow to the inevitable, and consolidate his legal position by selling his share of some villages and buying up the rest of others. He was horrified at my naïveté: if he bought up a whole village all the ryots would cease to have any attachment and would be free to go elsewhere as soon as they wished; the only way for him to live was to acquire in as many villages as possible just enough land for him to reside there as of right (or to put in a son or agent) and in this way to secure the 'services' of all the inhabitants.

Women of the Bilbas and Ako are reputed to be incurably romantic; abduction (*jin helh girtin*) and elopement (*rha duw kewtin*) are in consequence especially common among the tribes of these two confederations, and many spirited girls would never

[1]Farther north in Zêbar the corvée is euphemistically called *zibare*, 'help'; conversely in modern Kurdish journalism the word *herewez* is being used for 'co-operation'. In Barwari north of Amadiya the corvée is called bluntly *ta 'addi*, the Arabic word for 'oppression', or at least 'imposition'; *ceriyme* is, of course, the Arabic word *jarima* meaning 'fine', and *draw* is the Arabic *dirham*, 'money'.

dream of getting married otherwise. But, usual as it is, this is by no means a token gesture; and in the initial stages both bridegroom and bride run all the obvious risks attending such an adventure in a country where every father and brother sleeps with a rifle by his side, an elopement may violate the prior right to the girl's hand of her paternal first cousin or blast the father's hopes of a good bride-price, and human life is held cheap. Once clear of pursuit the couple will seek sanctuary with the young man's Agha, or perhaps with a neutral chieftain or a dervish Shaikh, and there complete the marriage contract in the manner prescribed by Muslim law. The Aghas of the parties, with the mediating Agha or Shaikh if necessary, will then negotiate a settlement, each of course receiving the appropriate *ceriyme* and, where applicable, the *suwrane* also. When all the formalities have been duly completed the couple can safely return to the bridegroom's home. In Sulaimani the ordinary word for bride-price is *shiyrbayi*, 'milk-price'; but among the tribes it is commonly called *xōn*, 'blood-money', the price to be paid for depriving another family of a member, whether it be by marriage or by murder.

I left Sulaimani for my new post at the beginning of May. As far as I remember Tin-Lizzie Fords took me to Dukan, where I crossed the Zab by *kalak* to join my waiting caravan and escort. On the far bank the track rose rapidly up the flanks of Kosrat, and from a point of vantage between the villages of Galnêri and Torba I got a first splendid view of my new District: immediately below the blue ribbon of the Zab winding through the Qarasird Gorge, on the far side the gloomy chasm of the Palko Cañon so long believed to be the mouth of the Qala Chuwalan, the green plains of Marga and Bitwên, the broad shingly river bed between them intersected by a criss-cross of narrow silvery lines of water already shallow, the long dark line of Kurkur-Asos dipping gently to the Darband Gap and rising again as the Kêwarhesh to lose itself in the heat-haze of the mountains to the north-west, above the gap and far away the great heights of Shawur and Nawdasht. As I was picking my way along the rough path on foot there came from the opposite direction a small boy of seven or eight dressed exactly like a grown man with ample peg-top trousers of local stuff, deep waistband and large turban of several kerchiefs. '*Manduw neby*,'

he said; 'may you not be weary'. I did not quite catch the words and stopped to ask what he had said. The poor child, terrified by my strange clothes and the crowd of horsemen who reined up alongside, shut his eyes, opened his mouth and burst into a dismal wail. I was much distressed to think that the little chap's charming and artless gesture should have had this sad sequel and hoped that the rupee I pressed into his hand would go some way to make amends.

The track now dropped down to the river and we passed through Mirza Rustam, the up-stream terminus of navigation, where expert raftsmen were busy contriving *kalaks* of fifty to a hundred skins for local produce, and rafts of poplar poles for building, to be floated down to Altun Köprü or even on to Baghdad. Two miles farther on we forded the Baselam near its mouth and passed through a line of apparently not very prosperous Sinn and Ramk villages. As we approached Darband, whither the District headquarters had been transferred by my predecessor, a large crowd of horsemen, led by Babakr Agha himself in his enormous trousers, deep waistband, and large turban of striped grey silk wound round a peaked and tasselled skull-cap of orange velvet, galloped out to my *istiqbál*. After the officials and tribal chiefs of the District had been introduced (I forget by whom, for my predecessor C—— had already left) they dispersed to their villages, and I was free to look around what was to be my home for the next few months.

I suppose that Darband had been chosen for District headquarters as being central for the two qazas and also because Ranya with its rice canals was extremely malarious. The Government buildings consisted of the A.P.O.'s bungalow of three rooms and a kitchen, a line of huts for the Kurdish officials, and 200 yards away down the slope towards the river, an office of four or five rooms with a guest house for Kurdish visitors, all constructed of poplar poles, rafters and mud, and of the most primitive local workmanship. None of these buildings was surrounded by a wall, and there was nothing to prevent a casual sniper anywhere on the slope of Kêwarhesh behind, or Asos across the river, from thoroughly enjoying himself. When I went down to inspect the office the first thing that greeted my eyes was an inscription on the central poplar pillar

in bold block capitals: 'THE BALLOON GOES UP ON MAY ?!'

XVI LIFE AT RANYA

An account of events in the neighbouring Arbil Division or in the Kurdish half of Mosul would be beyond the scope of this book. A detailed history of happenings there from the armistice to October 1920 will be found in Hay's book. The position, in so far as it affected me at Ranya, was that since the end of 1920 the administrative frontier had been withdrawn to the edge of the foothills so as to leave the qaza of Ruwandiz to my north and the nahiya of Shaqlawa, the habitat of the important Khoshnaw tribe, to my west in the air and wide open to the activities of Turkish agitators or even of small bodies of regular forces. Incidents, with counter-operations by Levies and aircraft, had been occurring continuously since the withdrawal, among them, as I have already mentioned, an incursion of troops in uniform against Shawur and Ranya village itself in August 1921. Koi, however, had remained staunch under the Qaimmaqam, Jemil Agha, a prominent member of the Huwaizi family, who had the advantage of having married a daughter of Hama Agha Ghafuri, Hay's 'Grand Old Man of Koi'.

One of the first communications I received after my arrival at Darband was a memorial signed by a large number of Mirawdali Aghas, the 'hostile Pizhdar' as they were called, stating that, owing to the concentration of governmental favours on the person of Babakr Agha and to the consistent unkindness and neglect they had experienced, they were unfortunately precluded from calling on me to pay their respects in person. This letter raised at once, and acutely, a familiar problem.

My predecessor, C——, did not return to Iraq after his leave and I never met him. He was evidently a man of considerable personality. In his own District he had ordinarily worn Kurdish clothing and had established very close personal relations with Aghas, village headmen or humbler individuals who had come to his notice in the course of his administrative duties. Circum-

stances at Darband were particularly propitious for the growth of such intimacy. There being no town or village, visitors from any distance would stay the night at the official guest-house, receiving a bed, food, and fodder for their horses; there was thus plenty of time for the discussion of their most trivial ambitions and troubles. But in a factious country like Kurdistan such familiarity, useful as it may be in many ways, is full of pitfalls for the young and inexperienced political officer: before he knows what is happening he will find himself identified with one of the factions which, as I have already explained, cut across the ties of tribe, village or even family; the result is that the adherents of the other faction will become aggrieved and show what seems to them their righteous indignation in ways that will blacken their record with the administration still further, until they become 'hope-less' and come out openly against the Government.

In saying this it is not my intention to criticize C——. Accidents or unwise policy may frequently push individuals into rebellion, but in the great majority of cases obedience or disobedience is a matter of temperament: the persons who gave us most trouble were generally those who had been in permanent rebellion against the Turks, and the Iraqi Government later on had, to their surprise, a similar experience after the transfer of power from us to them. The Shaikh Mahmud affair had split Southern Kurdistan from top to bottom; the party of Babakr Agha in Pizhdar, with the affiliated factions in the rest of the District, had remained on the whole friendly, while the Mahmud-Agha family with their adherents had supported the enemy. In such circumstances, after order has been restored, the 'faithful hearts' must be rewarded and the rebels punished. But it is not easy to persuade the faithful hearts that it is in their own long-term interests that the administration should revert as soon as possible to a position of impartiality, for the simple reason that no ordinary tribesman, least of all a Kurd, believes that virtue is its own reward, or that, as long as the division remains acute, defections from a tribal personage appointed to a position involving the collection of revenue and the arrest of malefactors are likely to be more numerous than the accessions to him. When Government is strong a wise and trusted administrator can achieve the return to neutrality without much

difficulty; but one reduced to governing on his wits (as nearly all political officers in the Sulaimani Division were) can hardly afford to risk losing his friends and supporters in a gamble of this kind. Successive A.P.O.'s at Ranya had maintained Government authority by supporting and being supported by Babakr Agha, so that 'pro-Babakr' and 'anti-Babakr' had become almost synonymous with 'pro-Government' and 'anti-Government'.

Turkish agents in Ruwandiz had thus found a fertile field for their propaganda in those members of the Mirawdali family, led by Abbas-i Mahmud Agha, who were hostile to Babakr, together with their allies and friends, and also, of course, among all the other elements which were finding the normal operations of civilized administration too irksome for their liking. With the simple Kurds the Caliphate was always a strong card to play, and even those who had unpleasant memories of the Ottoman régime were haunted by the fear that their former masters might return before very long. In May 1922, then, the whole District was seething with unrest; and it was not surprising that C—— should have felt that he was sitting on a volcano and should have been moved at the moment of departure to leave for his successor the unconventional message recorded at the end of the last chapter.

Casual British visitors from lower Iraq, particularly those who brought their fishing rods, used to think Darband a charming place; and it certainly looked picturesque enough down near the best pools, with the limpid, bluish water flowing over shining white boulders through the gap in the long black ridge, and the peaks of Qandil glittering with spotless snow far away in the background. But it was a terrible place to live in. Looking back I marvel (though I did not do so then) that any higher authority should have expected us, A.P.O. and Kurdish officials alike, to live in such squalor four years after the end of the war. There was not even a village as at Halabja, and the feeling of loneliness was, when I had time to think about it, more intense than I have known it anywhere else. I have mentioned that there were no compound walls. All water for washing or drinking had to be brought up from the river on mules, so there were no gardens, and tall thorns and thistles grew in profusion right up to the doors and windows; I made plans to instal a hydraulic

ram down in the gap but this never arrived. For lighting there were only hurricane lamps, and the quality of the oil was so bad that it was quite impossible to read by them for more than a few minutes. My principal pastime between supper and bed was hunting scorpions on the walls, and especially behind the curtains, in my three rooms; my record bag for one evening was thirty-three, followed by thirty-two the next. I was stung only once: the Persian *'abá* which I used as a counterpane and dressing-gown had fallen off my bed during the night (I was sleeping outside, in front of the house) and, as I threw it over my shoulders in the morning, I felt a red-hot needle jab into my thigh through my pyjamas; I slashed the place open with my razor, and on the advice of my orderly, a Kakai from Karind in Persia, inserted some sal-ammoniac which he fetched from a battery in the telegraph office; I was a little feverish during the morning, but by evening there was nothing but the tingle of the wound I myself had made to remind me of the incident.

For me in my solitude the pleasantest of all sounds was the hum of approaching aircraft. On the opposite bank of the river, near the village of Sarsiyan at the tip of the hairpin bend, we had a landing ground adequate for the Bristol fighters and D.H.9 bombers then in use. It was in charge of a dour old Agha named Resul, of a small tribe with five or six villages called Turk-a Rhesha, who was a devoted adherent of Babakr; his men had been trained to light smoky fires directly the sound of aircraft was heard, in order to indicate the direction of the wind. If I was expecting a visit I would then cross by a small *kalak* maintained by Resul (and on which he made a handsome profit from unofficial traffic, paying a small royalty to Government) to greet the crews and bring them back to the house for a cold beer.

My Kurdish staff at headquarters consisted of the chief clerk and translator (Jelal Sa'ib, a most intelligent young man who had acquired a remarkable knowledge of English), the revenue superintendent, accountant, telegraphist, customs official, and steward of the guest house (all former Ottoman civil servants), together with about twenty locally recruited mounted tribesmen who combined the duties of police and messengers. At Qala Diza Babakr had, in addition to the necessary civilian clerks, about thirty of his own retainers enrolled on the official

strength. In the nahiyas each Mudir had two clerks (one for revenue) and from five to ten police messengers. 'Bullet-proof' officials like Babakr were able, and were expected, to indent on their own resources for additional strength when necessary. It was also customary, in times of emergency, to call upon tribal chiefs of the District to mobilize contingents or *lashkars* to support the civil authority; they were not paid but received rations of rice or wheat from the revenue barns, clarified butter (*rhon*) for cooking, and fodder, shoes and nails for their horses. The value of a tribal *lashkar* at any place, like that of tribal officials, was the negative one that hostile elements would hesitate to attack and so saddle themselves with a blood feud; but in my experience the maximum period for which it was possible to keep a *lashkar* mobilized was about a fortnight, after which the urge to return to wives and fields would prove irresistible; the usefulness of the system was therefore very limited in any prolonged crisis.

Chief among the visitors to my guest-house was, of course, Babakr Agha himself. He always wore the silk square of his turban across one eye; the disability was never mentioned and to this day I do not know how he lost it. The other eye invariably had a sparkle of humour flashing from it even during the most serious discussions and, curiously enough, a mouth almost devoid of teeth (which made him look much older than he was) in no way impaired the charm of a most attractive smile. Whenever the political situation became particularly tense (as will be recorded in the next chapter) and there seemed a likelihood that Darband might be attacked, he would come in for a day or two in order to make sure that no Pizhdar at any rate would join in and so risk starting the internal blood-feud which the ruling family had always avoided. On these occasions I used to have my own meals down at the guest-house, and as we sat talking on the cushioned floor I found it extremely difficult to give satisfactory answers to his questions asking why the authorities in Baghdad were unwilling to take the most elementary precautions to protect their own position against the growing Turkish menace. The interests of Government were, in his not unnaturally rather parochial view, so closely identified with the maintenance of his own authority and prestige that he was often puzzled that even I, who was on the spot and under-

stood, could not meet certain of his desires, such, for instance, as permission to establish an agent in Kurago, the Ramk village nearest to Darband on the Ranya side, which belonged to a particularly unprepossessing Agha of that tribe and where he claimed to have acquired a right to a plot of land. But he never faltered in following faithfully the path which he had chosen.

He brought of course a small escort which generally included one or other of two devoted minor Aghas. One of these, Resul-i Pirot, a man of about forty with a large bristling red moustache, volunteered one day to guide aircraft on a reconnaissance, which involved dropping a message, over the mountains. We had some difficulty in persuading him that his turban, however tightly tied on, was sure to be blown away in the back seat of an open machine and that he ought to substitute a proper flying cap; the reason for his hesitation became evident when he eventually discovered a head as bald as a coot. Though he had never been in the air before he guided the craft unerringly to the pin-point.

Another good if not very influential friend was Hama Agha of Ranya village, a simple, straightforward, outspoken 'faithful heart', who never concealed his opinions in fair weather or foul. He had probably saved my predecessor's life on one occasion by throwing himself between him and an assailant, taking in his shoulder the dagger meant for C——; this had given C—— time to draw his revolver; the shot proved fatal and gave rise to the personal blood-feud which had made his early departure on leave so very desirable.

An occasional and interesting visitor was a very masterful lady known as Agha Zhin, Madam Agha, the wife of a certain Surk Agha who had two or three villages in Shawur. She was much younger than her husband who was a timid and rather stupid man, and used to come in herself on all business connected with the maintenance of the political balance of power in that remote valley. Sometimes she brought Surk with her, but she always took her place firmly above him and seldom let him get a word in edgeways for fear that he might make a mess of things. Poor old Surk was murdered during the troubles some months later, but Agha Zhin herself prosecuted the blood-feud with the greatest vigour until she had taken the full vengeance that tribal honour required.

There was another quaint character known by the man's name of Faqê Marif, really a young woman of about twenty-five, who from a child had always worn male clothes. She was a sort of professional jester who wandered from guest-house to guest-house mixing freely with the men during the day but retiring to the women's quarters at night, and taking as presents anything she was given from a horse to a pair of trousers. She had a little nag on which she would join any large party of horsemen riding out on some ceremonial occasion, carrying a rifle and bristling with ammunition. She would often come to Darband to see me, protesting that she was 'my man', that the hostile party were annoyed with her for her devotion to Government, and that she had made many enemies. I saw her first one day when visiting Babakr Agha at Qala Diza: I noticed a boy handing me my tea with unaccustomed grace while Babakr smirked at me quizzically across the room out of his solitary eye. 'Shall I tell?' he asked the boy, and then went on to me with a wave of the hand: 'This is not what it seems to be; it is a woman, yes a woman, and—er–nothing has ever happened to her.' I once asked her why she did not marry and she replied simply that it was not her nature to.

I found most of my visitors most attractive; sturdy, solid yeomen solemnly bent on representing their simple, rustic needs, unless perhaps I had happened to have had a meal or camped with them on my tours, when they would arrive wreathed in smiles to improve the acquaintance. But there were some of a more persistent and less desirable type who sought to curry favour and forward their own interests by informing against persons supposed to be in the hostile camp; these I did my best to keep at arm's length.

I was sufficiently experienced to appreciate the dangers of a situation such as that described at the beginning of this chapter, and I made up my mind that I must get to know every part of my District as well and as quickly as possible. I also decided that, while backing Babakr in all legitimate ways, I must take every opportunity of showing the others that pardon was pardon and that, given good behaviour, the past itself, if not its lessons, would be forgotten; I would make a special point of trying to win the confidence of Suwar Agha of the Piran who, I thought, could not be so popular with his tribe unless he had at any rate

some solid qualities. For the first six weeks after my arrival, accordingly, I was almost continuously on tour; but from June onwards the mounting political tension made it more and more difficult for me to absent myself from headquarters and the telegraph line. On my arrival in Baghdad from Qazvin in the previous May, in accordance with an arrangement that all privately-owned officers' chargers became the property of the Army Remounts Department, I had handed in 'No Trumps' for care and custody but had been unable to trace him on my return from leave. At Ranya, therefore, I took over two horses left by my predecessor, an extremely vicious grey stallion, named 'Simko' after the chief of the northern Shikak tribe who had been a lifelong rebel against his own (the Persian) Government, and a gentle cream gelding with a lovely mane and tail, named 'Qazi' after the mild, white-turbaned, white-bearded old gentleman who held that office at Qala Diza. On my travels I generally elected to ride Simko because, uncomfortable and indeed dangerous as he was in many ways, he was a very fast walker.

Chinaran, the handle of our fan, is a narrow nahiya enclosed on the north-east by the Zab and its tributary, the Baselam, and on the south-west by the Haiba Sultan ridge. It is divided in length by Kosrat, an isolated, wooded hog's back which rises at its highest point to just 5,000 feet. The legitimate interests of the Aghas of Koi, who owned much of the land in *tapu*, had been recognized by the appointment of one of their number as Mudir; Isma'il Agha was a single-hearted and devoted if not very brilliant official and was allowed to make his headquarters at his own village of Khidran, which we have already met in the story of Faqê Ahmad. I remember the village of Chinaran itself as a very charming place with copious streams running through tangled orchards up on the slopes of Kosrat, and giving a pleasant view over the broad bed of the Zab and the Marga Plain. Another place to which I paid more than one visit was Kani Aspan, a great 'arm-chair' up at 4,000 feet in Kosrat, where there were caves, two or three with interesting stalagmite and stalactite formations and another said to be so deep that nobody had ever penetrated to the end; it was only fifteen or sixteen miles from Darband and well placed for visual signalling, and I thought I might perhaps establish a summer camp

there. On one of these occasions I climbed on up a very steep goat-track, right over the top of Kosrat, and spent the night at the village of Shaikh Hajji on the other side. The water-courses in the narrow valley between Kosrat and Haiba Sultan were thickly grown with oleander, and I shall never forget one stream that was a solid mass of pink blossom for 200 yards or more. I rode round to Khidran along the narrow gorge by which these waters cut through Kosrat to join the Baselam and where there were several picturesque waterfalls, one of them with a drop of forty or fifty feet quite clear of the rock behind.

The nahiya of Ranya consists of a mountainous north, four of the ribs of the fan, and the Bitwên Plain on the south. In conformity with the withdrawal of the administrative boundary in Arbil we were making no attempt to administer the three westerly ribs which are occupied by the Pishtgeli, one of the three sections of the Khosnaw tribe (the other two being Mir-Yusufi and Mir-Mahmali). The name Shawur is properly applied to the upper glens of the next valley to the east; they are separated from Nawdasht farther to the east by the spine of Bêramga (8,250 feet) and Bardarhesh (8,000 feet), which is the continuation of Kêwarhesh. Shawur is celebrated for the excellence of its tobacco and gives its name to the best qualities grown in Iraq. The waters of the upper glens come together about ten miles north-west of Ranya and flow in a single stream down a narrow gully, with Ako villages (Ranya group) perched up on either slope, until they cut through the south-western wall and debouch into the plain.[1] The Bast-i Astrilan, as the stream is now called, divides the Bitwên plain from north to south, so as to separate the Piran villages on the west from the Sinn and Ramk villages on the east, before joining the rest of the streams from the west in the Baselam.

Ranya village itself, which was built partly on the side of an artificial mound about a mile from the base of the Kêwarhesh and partly out on the flat, had at that time about sixty houses and was not much of a place, though the little market square with half a dozen shops, the mosque, and a copious spring welling up into a large square masonry tank in the shade of spreading plane-trees made a pretty picture until the spring dried up

[1]Pressure of other responsibilities prevented me from fitting in a visit to Shawur at this time. In 1927 I marched from Ruwandiz to Ranya this way, the route taken by Sykes and, in reverse, by Maunsell.

at the end of summer. Water is very abundant all round and there are several government-owned canals, for the annual lease of which there was always keen competition, rice cultivation being especially lucrative; much of the Bitwên Plain was in consequence water-logged, hot and malarious. Only four miles to the north-west I found the Ako village of Sarkabkan, situated on the banks of the Shawur Water a little before it reaches the plain, quite reasonably cool in July and thought it would have made a far better site for the administrative headquarters than either Ranya or Darband.

The villages of the Marga Plain were divided fairly equally between the Turk-a Rhesha tribe to the north, the Shilana across the middle, and Mirawdalis of the Abbas-Agha family in the south. The Mahmud-Agha family occupied the villages of Pashkêw on the other side of Asos, had the Shilana of the plain as their obedient clients, and also wielded considerable influence with the Jaf-a Rheshka cragsmen in the high mountains to the south-east. Marga village itself was, I think, the finest in the whole District and, as I have mentioned, had been at one time the headquarters of the Pizhdar qaza. The houses were well built, up the sides of the slope, but among dense orchards and countless runnels of tumbling water. There were in all about eighty houses divided among four quarters, each boasting its own mosque. I always enjoyed my visits there, and I recall in particular one night when dervish-revivalist meetings were being held simultaneously in each mosque, and the chanting of the profession of faith 'There is no god but God' repeated over and over again (*zikr*) came up through the orchards in really melodious harmony. At this time an active missionary campaign was being conducted by the Qadiri Shaikhs in most parts of the Sulaimani liwa; it was quite common in any village after dark to hear the rapid padding of some convert racing about between the houses shouting the words of the *zikr* like one possessed, and several genuine cases came to my notice of hardened scoundrels who suddenly made declarations of repentance and turned into model citizens. The Mudir, Sa'id Efendi Ghafur, was a former Ottoman official of the best type, unassuming, straightforward, scrupulously honest, an expert in the estimation of standing crops and other branches of revenue administration and, in short, an excellent example of another

class which, in spite of poor rewards and lack of appreciation in high places, was not so rare as the customary animadversions on oriental venality would lead the distant Western reader to expect.

Local tradition still states that in ancient times the waters of the principal Ranya canal were carried across the Zab to the Marga Plain at Darband by means of an aqueduct, and the Kurds point out certain holes high up on the rock on the right bank as having held the chains suspending it. During my time there I never heard any mention of a carving or inscription at this point. My curiosity was therefore aroused some years later when I noticed in the map annexed to Sir Percy Sykes's larger *History of Persia*,[1] precisely at the tip of the Darband hairpin, a bold red cross to indicate a 'most important Assyrian rock relief', one of only two shown within the boundaries of Iraq, although there is in fact quite a number of important and well-known monuments of this kind in the country. I mentioned my puzzlement to Minorsky who was then teaching at the École des Langues Orientales in Paris and with whom I was conducting a lively correspondence on a variety of subjects of common interest for which I had coined the comprehensive term of 'Zagrology'; and he was good enough to refer me to the papers by the two continental travellers, Clément and Brzezowski, which I have already quoted so often.

Clément, who turned aside to inspect Darband on his way from Koi to Ruwandiz by the Pishtgeli country west of Shawur, devotes two pages to his visit but makes no mention of any ancient monument. Brzezowski's paper, however, gave me what I was looking for, in the description of the panorama he saw from the summit of Pira Magrun:

> Du sommet du Pir-Morgoroun on voit une suite non interrompue de monts considérables, formant comme une muraille droite courant du sud-est au nord-ouest; ce n'est que la continuation de la même chaîne de montagnes que nous connaissons déjà sous le nom d'Asmir-Dagh et de Goijeh-Dagh. On voit aussi qu'à l'est du Pir-Mogoroun s'étend une autre chaîne de montagnes qui, d'abord parallèle à celle de Pir-Mogoroun, la coupe ensuite en s'infléchissant dans la direction de l'ouest. Il est bien clair que les eaux enfermées dans l'angle formé par l'intersection de ces deux chaînes de montagnes,

[1]London, 1915.

ainsi que les eaux qui viennent du sud et contournent le massif de Pir-Mogoroun, comme les rivières de Tanjah, de Chaché, et de Bistan-Sou, doivent trouver une issue vers le Tigre. Cette issue se trouve à 35 kilomètres à vol d'oiseau du sommet du Pir-Mogoroun dans un défilé entre le mont Derbent et le mont Kollara. Ce défilé est dominé par des rochers à pic et couronné sur la rive droite du petit Zab par un fortin turc. Sur la même rive, à l'entrée du défilé, il y a, comme audessus du fleuve du Chien, près de Beyrouth, un rocher sculpté du même caractère. La sculpture, malgré la dureté de la pierre, est un peu détériorée, mais l'image d'un roi reste encore distincte; il n'y a aucune inscription. La zone de hautes montagnes qui s'étend entre la Mésopotamie et la Perse se trouvant ici la moins large et les montagnes elles-memes étant déchirées perpendiculairement à leur longueur, le défilé de Derbent devait servir de chemin le plus court entre Ninive et la Perse. Quel était le nom de ce passage dans l'antiquité?

I took every opportunity of cross-questioning officials and tribal visitors to Baghdad from Ranya, but their answers all confirmed that there was no local tradition whatever of the existence of any such monument at Darband. Now although Brzezowski observed correctly that the rivers of Shar Bazhêr find their way to the Zab up-stream of Darband, the rest of his description of the topography presents a number of difficulties, and in a paper contributed to the *Geographical Journal*[1] I hazarded the suggestion that Brzezowski, who as a forest officer employed by the Government presumably made other journeys besides those described in his article, might have seen a relief near Batas on the road from Shaqlawa to Ruwandiz and that his memory might have played him a trick when he came to write his story twenty years later.

My article immediately brought me, through Mr. Hinks, Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, a letter from Colonel Maunsell himself (then seventy years old):

As the quotation from Korab Brzezowski relates 'le défilé de Derbent devait servir de chemin le plus court entre Ninive et la Perse'. This must certainly have been the case as the route through the pass offers the easiest passage from Nineveh (Mosul) into Persia today. The ridge through which the river passes . . . runs north-west to south-east in a very sharply defined line, nearly perpendicular,

[1] 'A third Note on Rock Monuments in Southern Kurdistan', *G.J.*, Vol. LXXVII, No. 4, April 1931.

of very hard blackish rock for some miles separating the plain of Bitwên from that of Pizhdar next the frontier. The river defile is a short one, 400 or 500 yards. The road follows close to the right bank and there is little room between the stream and a perpendicular wall of rock for the road to pass, thus: (here follows a sketch). The rock is very hard and to prevent their chariots from side-slipping into the river the Assyrian warriors from Nineveh on their way to Persia cut a channel some two feet deep and eight feet wide for a couple of hundred yards in the defile to lessen this danger. When I noticed this I took it as a clear proof that the route was so used in ancient times, and certainly the modern Kurd would not have taken the trouble to cut such a channel in the hard rock. Then some forty feet above me on the face of the rock I noticed a cuneiform inscription cut in the rock in a space about four feet square where the rock had been smoothed for the purpose. I could not read this or copy it at such a height; I should have had to erect staging or ladders neither of which were procurable. Actually at the time an epidemic of cholera was raging in the district and the Kurds were dying in their tents; so to get any caravan through I had to hurry on. However I had time to notice the points I have referred to. I could see no actual relief, only the square tablet in the rock with inscriptions. If examined there may be one higher up, but it would show up on the hard rock and I do not think there is one.

The whole thing was getting 'curiouser and curiouser'. Clément apparently never saw or heard of a monument of any kind; Brzezowski saw a relief of a human figure but said categorically, 'il n'y a aucune inscription'; Maunsell saw a cuneiform inscription too high up on the rock to approach but saw no relief; I myself, with better opportunities than any of my three predecessors, had not seen, or even heard of, any kind of carving at Darband itself.[1] I renewed my inquiries and commissioned some of my old friends to make a systematic search at the point indicated by Maunsell. My persistence was rewarded in due course with a message from Hama Agha of Ranya, Mamand Agha Ako and Isma'il Agha of Khidran saying that the *antika* had been found. I made an opportunity in the autumn of the same year, 1931, to visit Darband. Guided by them, and in spite of a painful attack of lumbago, I managed to climb up

[1] I did hear stories of an inscription at Marga but, when I inspected the place seven years later, it proved to be nothing more than a series of fossil marks on a much-weathered boulder. I was once told that there is a carving at Qara Tilan behind the Khidhr-Mamsênan village of Zung, where the Garfên issues from the hills, but this story I never had time to follow up.

to the place, which was exactly as Maunsell had shown it in his sketch. There was a panel smoothed in the face of the rock, measuring about three feet long and two and a half feet high; in the left half, as one looked at it, there was a slight swelling (one could hardly call it more) which might once have been a human figure in relief, but there was no sign of any cuneiform inscription. It was not possible to photograph the panel from directly in front, but the accompanying picture of Mamand Agha shows the left end of it to the right of his head. When I returned to the road below, knowing where to look, I could see the end of the panel with the swelling quite distinctly.

But to return to 1922, perhaps the most interesting of the tours I made was one to Sulaimani and back through Mawat. East of Qala Diza the country is what must be called 'rolling', but on an Atlantic scale, and oaks begin to appear among the fields. The usual and easiest track goes through Persian Alan, an enclave cut off from the valley of the Kalu by a lofty ridge presenting a face of bare steep cliffs to the south called Baindirwê. The whole of Persian Alan was then occupied by Mirawdalis, most of them members of the Babakr-Agha family. Abbas-i Selim Agha, brother of Babakr, came out with a party of horsemen to meet me, and I spent the night as his guest at Garmawan. The village was a good example of something I had often noticed when travelling near the frontier: even where, as here, the boundary was little more than an academic line, crossed and recrossed without let or hindrance by members of the same tribe, there was generally something about the Persian side that suggested contact with a civilization superior to that of the Turkish side—more skilful stone-masons had built the houses, the gardeners knew their business better, there was more polish about the domestic arrangements, and so on.

The next morning we crossed the Zab back into Iraq at Taiyit, two miles above the Qala Chuwalan confluence, by a bridge with a brushwood flooring built by Abbas himself on old stone piers rising to a considerable height above the level of the stream. Near by are the piers of an older bridge about which my companions told me the usual story of the princely lovers. We were now in the magnificent, wooded, mountain country of Mawat, the majestic grandeur of which made such an impression on the early British travellers. After passing through the

village that gives its name to the nahiya the track drops down to the broad fields of Qashan. Here the Qala Chuwalan, flowing northwards, suddenly and without apparent rhyme or reason, abandons what seems to be the natural line of advance and cuts into the mountainside on the west; it then turns northwards again in a deep and narrow gully with perpendicular sides, just taking a slice out of the mountain without otherwise interrupting the slope to the fields it has just spurned. At Qashan I noted one bridge in good repair and the ruins of two or three others, one of which was said to have collapsed under a detachment of Nadir Shah's army as it retreated from Kirkuk after his unsuccessful siege of Baghdad. Soon after crossing to the left bank we came to a broad avenue of enormous oaks with their branches meeting high overhead which would have done credit to some ancient family seat in England. The road comes back to the river about four miles upstream of the Siwail confluence at a delectable spot called Kunamasi, Fish-hole, where there are some fine pools and where the open fields seemed particularly restful after the wild country we had just traversed. Not surprisingly the last twenty miles to Sulaimani by the Qayawan Pass seemed dull and tedious.

On the return journey I followed the same track in reverse for the first twenty-five miles and then, instead of crossing the Qala Chuwalan at the Qashan bridge, turned north-west to the Shinki[1] village of Qamish, where I was entertained by the squire, Amin Beg, the senior Mirawdali of the Begzada family. The following morning we led the horses and mules by an exceedingly steep track over the top of Kurkur, at about 8,000 feet. I remember fairly clearly a sort of crater at the summit, the inside looking like a sea of once-boiling mud that had congealed into the most fantastic shapes. The descent on the far side to the Begzada-occupied villages of Kani Tu (a lovely place where we all, men and animals, were glad to halt for the night) and Chinaran in the Marga nahiya was even steeper than the ascent, quite the steepest track, I think, that I have ever tackled in all my travels.

I made one hurried visit to Nawdasht. The usual route follows the Garfên up-stream to the two villages of Girtak and Shehidan (belonging, exceptionally, to the Binzêri Ako of

[1]These Shinki are said to have no connexion with the Shinki of Bazyan.

Ranya and not to any section of the Nawdasht group), and then enters the hills by a narrow defile; here I noticed extensive cemeteries and among the headstones one engraved with three circles and a cross. Several times the track climbs up high on one side and then descends to cross the stream and climb up the other. Finally, a little above the junction of the two glens of Nawdasht proper and Sharosh, it rises, first in a series of rock stairways and then by a precipitous path, to the top of a pass called Zinu-i Kurtak.

From Kurtak we looked down on the villages of Komtan (Mandamara) and Bayewan (Khaila) and a highland scene of idyllic beauty. We were hospitably received by the two simple headmen and, after a visit to Muhammad Agha of the Khaila at his village of Bolê (where, from an eminence, I was able to look over into the glen of Sharosh and to the frontier wall beyond), returned to one of them for the night. The villagers here were all very primitive, and I doubt whether the whole nahiya could have produced half a dozen men who could read, to say nothing of writing. My predecessor had had a good deal of trouble with the Bawobi (whose chief, Ghafur Khan, he had besieged in his fort at Lêwzha), and I had thought it advisable to appoint to the nahiya a 'bullet-proof' Mudir in the person of Bahlul Agha (nominally his eldest son, Ka Nabi), chief of the Mandamara, a fat, jovial, devoted old fellow who did not fail to justify his choice when the time came to put him to the test. Since neither he nor his son was literate I appointed Reshid Sidqi, brother of the Mudir of Marga, to be his assistant, and this was the beginning of a long and useful career in the wilder parts of Kurdistan.

As always I was on the look-out for antiquities. They told me that the ruins of two Christian monasteries were to be seen, one called Mazon behind Bolê and another called Salot near Pishtashan in Sharosh, but these I never found time to inspect. I also heard stories of a great bird of rock marking the position of buried treasure in the Mandamara country and decided to return that way. From Komtan we climbed by a goat-track straight up the Zêrnako, which forms the south-western wall of the Nawdasht valley. It was a glorious, cloudless day and looking back from the top of the col, at about 5,000 feet, I was rewarded with a truly magnificent view over great wooded

glens and spurs across to the peaks of Qandil.[1] I then came down by the long, gloomy gully of Dugoman. In the eastern cliff are numerous caves and over one, some height up, the rock takes the shape of an eagle, wings outstretched and head down. The formation, I think, is natural, but the lines are strong and the impression of swooping very striking; the head points to a small cave some way below the others and it is in this that the treasure is reputed to be buried. A large rectangular slab of stone is set up in the mouth. I climbed over this into the cave; it is quite small; I could not be sure whether part of the wall was natural conglomerate or the *sang-bandi* of shingle and mortar in which modern Persian masons are still expert. My plans to return to the site with explosives and picks were frustrated by events to be recorded in the next chapter.

XVII RANICOL

THE Ranicol disaster was of course a very trivial affair really and has long been forgotten; but as an incident in the life of a political officer governing on his wits, unusual in degree if not in kind, it is not without interest. I think I can best tell the story by first reproducing the relevant extract from the High Commissioner's report to the Colonial Office on the administration of Iraq for the year 1922–3, and then filling in the details. If at times I appear to be rather hard on G.H.Q. at Baghdad, it is not with any intention, at this late date, of seeking to apportion praise and blame for the affair; I tell the story, as far as possible in the actual words of notes I made at

[1]Here as elsewhere it is not always easy to disentangle the correct nomenclature of the various parts of the frontier range. The following is the result of my inquiries on a later occasion (when I climbed to the summit of Kogiz) for the sector between the 1914 frontier pillars nos. CXVII and CXVIII, as applied to the War Office map 1 : 100,000, dated July 1942: Peak 9337 (where the frontier coming up from the south turns west), Kotral; peak 10151, Gelala (correct); Mamarut (correct as shown); peak 10465 Sar-i Sawa; the peak about 2¼ miles to the north of the last Shaikh Sharo; peak 11324, Kogiz; peak 11807, Kuch Bash, not Hajji Ibrahim; frontier peak 2½ miles to north-east of last, Qandil-i Gichka (Little Qandil). The name Qandil is applied to the sector of the range from Sar-i Sawa to Qandil-i Gichka in general, and in particular to Kogiz, the most symmetrical and prominent of the peaks but not the highest. Peak 10304 in Persia to the north-east of Kuch Bash is properly named Sar-i Gabelhek, Piebald-Ox Hill, but the ridge from peak 10304 to peak 9240 is also called the hill of Hajji Ibrahim from a tomb in the valley below.

the time, only in order to convey a faithful picture of the events as they appeared to the limited vision of an actor down in the arena. The following, then, is the official record:

Since July 1921 Turkish military adventurers, with small bodies of regular forces under their command, have been engaged in active hostilities on the eastern frontier of Iraq, as well as in inciting the tribes to revolt, while warlike preparations have been carried on in the north with a similar accompaniment of propaganda among the tribes. . . . Doubt as to the future was grist to the mills of every frondist element in the country and deterred many of those who would regard the return of the Ottoman régime as a misfortune of the first magnitude from giving free expression to their opinions. . . .

On the 17th March, 1922, the Ankara government conferred upon one of their agents, a certain Ramzi Bey, the title and office of Qaimmaqam of Ruwandiz and dispatched him to the district. On his arrival towards the end of May he embarked immediately on an intensive campaign among the tribes coupled with assurances of the imminent arrival of large Turkish reinforcements, with the help of which Sulaimani, Kirkuk and Arbil were to be wrested from the British. He was followed in the middle of June by a certain Colonel Ali Shefiq, popularly known as Öz Demir who . . ., as a military adventurer, was to play the leading part in the agitation on the frontier. He gave out that his mission was the reconquest of the whole of the Mosul wilayat.

Towards the end of May Turkish incitement to lawlessness bore fruit. The chief of the Jabbari Kurds in the vicinity of Chamchemal attacked and wounded the Mudir and proceeded to call out his tribesmen. His defiance . . . gave the signal to the lawless elements of the Hamawand . . . led by a certain Kerim-i Fattah Beg, who had joined Shaikh Mahmud in the rebellion of 1919. After the dispatch of threatening letters to the A.P.O. he made a semblance of desiring to come to terms and invited Captain Bond, together with Captain Makant, who was in command of Levies, to meet him in conference near the Bazyan Pass on the 18th June. The two officers, though warned by friendly chiefs that treachery was intended, considered it their duty to refuse no opportunity for peaceful settlement and accepted the invitation. Their suspicions were disarmed by the cordial greeting given them by Kerim, and their followers shot them in the back while they rode by his side. Thereupon the Hamawand chief joined the Jabbari in armed insurrection.

For over a month the Levies, with the co-operation of the Air Force, chased them through the rocky hills. . . . At the end of July Kerim was reported to have gone north to seek refuge with the

Turks. The Levies in pursuit crossed the Zab into the Pizhdar district of Ranya, where they found Babakr hard pressed by the hostile section of his tribe who had retired across the Persian frontier and were being urged by the Turks to attack him. The presence of the Levies enabled him to re-establish the balance. . . .

It was imperative that the Levy column, exhausted by continuous exertions during the torrid heat of summer, should be allowed a period during which to rest and refit. The column was accordingly brought back to Sulaimani town on the 9th August. Not this retirement alone but a combination of circumstances led to an immediate deterioration of the situation. The advent of Kerim-i Fattah Beg gave the Kemalists additional reason to hope for tribal co-operation. Small parties of Turks moved south towards the Ranya border where they were joined by the hostile Pizhdar and, though Indian troops reached Ranya on the 21st August and were supplemented by such Levies as were available, they were powerless to stop the growing volume of the tribal slide, induced by fantastic reports of the coming of Turkish reinforcements. The British column retired from Ranya on the 1st September.

My intelligence from Ruwandiz was well organized and I was able to report, in each case very promptly after the event, the arrival first of Ramzi and then of a group of officers with a mountain gun and a considerable quantity of small arms ammunition for distribution. I also intercepted a number of letters from the Turkish 'Officer Commanding the Jezira Front' addressed to prominent personages in the District stressing that the Mosul wilayat was not to be a part of Iraq and inviting the recipients to join in the Holy War. I have preserved a note of the last paragraph of one of these communications:

> It is necessary that all our co-religionists should work to achieve the unity which the Ottoman Government has designed. . . . Let the true believers breathe again. Your deficiencies in munitions and other necessaries are receiving consideration. All will be provided shortly. May Allah grant victory to those fighters for the faith who, like you, shed their blood in His way. May the curse of the polytheists fall upon those who have sold their religion to the English and upon Faisal and upon his followers. Amen.

There was also a constant coming and going of emissaries between Ruwandiz and the Pizhdar, then in their summer camps just on the Persian side of the frontier.

It was not particularly difficult to counter these intrigues;

but the murder of Bond and Makant on the 18th June was a grave blow to the authority and prestige of the administration and constituted a new and unfavourable factor in an already involved situation. On the 20th I telegraphed:

In view of uncertainty of situation in Chamchemal area and a certain liveliness at Ruwandiz which I have not yet quite diagnosed, activities of the hostile Pizhdar have assumed greater importance and recent events may upset balance in this District. (Here follows an outline of the measures I proposed to take and a request for more secret service money.)

The arrival on the 23rd of Öz Demir with the title of 'Commandant of the National Rising' was the signal for a great intensification of enemy activity directed not only at Ranya but also at Koi and the Khoshnaw in Arbil. On the 2nd July I summed up the situation in a memorandum addressed to Goldsmith and to the High Commissioner:

About a fortnight ago the disgruntled Pizhdar Aghas sent a mission of four to Ruwandiz to press the Turks to assist them in their anti-British activities. About the 28th June three of these emissaries (who received a present of 500 rounds of S.A.A. each) returned with a letter on official paper headed 'Commandant of the Islamic Nation of Palestine and Syria' and signed 'Commandant of the Islamic Nation of Iraq and Kurdistan'. It stated that the services of the Pizhdar aghas were well known to Mustafa Kemal and Jaudat, who had hitherto been too fully occupied fighting on east and west to help them, but that, now their hands were free, they would shortly be sending Ahmad Taqi 'Delegate of Kurdistan' to Wazna (in Persia near pillar CXVI) with fifty soldiers to give active assistance. Babakr Agha opines that if and when he comes the disgruntled Aghas will have to do something to justify themselves and that the 'something' will take the form of an attack on Darband. The fifty soldiers are no doubt a myth, but the fact remains that the Turks are now in close communication with the hostile section of the Pizhdar, who will only require a little more encouragement to come out into the open. This would give the signal for other disaffected elements, now quiescent, to declare themselves. This district will remain unsettled as long as these Pizhdar remain unpunished. They are at present in the hills just across the border and if possible operations would best be undertaken against them in the autumn unless they oblige us to act before. Their power for evil however is greatest in the summer after the harvest, when all

disorderly elements are awaiting a favourable moment to break out. Thus the situation in Shawur, Nawdasht and Pizhdar all make the immediate presence of troops in this District of the highest importance.

During the next few days, as more information of Öz Demir's activities came in, I followed up my memorandum with requests for air action against Ruwandiz itself, demonstrations over the Pizhdar camps, and the early dispatch of ground troops to Darband; I urged that it was 'high time that we abandoned our present passive policy'. My colleague at Arbil, Captain W. A. Lyon, who was also feeling the draught, joined his warnings and recommendations to mine.[1] The High Commissioner was fully alive to the delicacy and danger of the situation, and I was being nobly supported by Goldsmith at Sulaimani and Bourdillon at the Residency. But the last word, where troop movements and air action were concerned, rested with G.H.Q., who were extremely difficult to move. Finally the G.O.C. agreed to bomb Ruwandiz but remained adamant in his refusal to send ground troops or to sanction even air demonstrations farther afield. The attacks were made on the 10th and 11th by what was then considered to be a large force of aircraft, perhaps two squadrons. In my ignorance of the limited efficacy of the air arm in mountainous country (at that time there were no such things as bomb-sights or, if there were, they had not yet been issued to the squadrons in Iraq) I pinned great faith on the operation against Ruwandiz and was bitterly disappointed as the first ground reports came in: most of the bombs had fallen wide, on the mountainside; there had been no fires; the mud walls of four houses had been damaged; one Turkish soldier had been wounded.

I continued to take such preventive action as was open to me locally while begging Baghdad in reply to their hesitations, the nature of which can be deduced from some of my answers, to take the situation more seriously:

Telegram: 16*th July*. I much regret decision not to send aeroplanes. Unless I felt they were absolutely necessary I would not ask for them. I am collecting tribal *lashkar* but am not confident of

[1] My communications though technically addressed to P. O. Sulaimani were being repeated direct to the High Commissioner, who generally dealt with them as if addressed to him.

preventing outbreak without some show of vigorous Government support. If aircraft will not fly over Sawan–Garmawan line (that is, over the Pizhdar summer camps just over the frontier) a demonstration over plain will help. There is no danger of tribes mistaking them for Turkish machines.

Telegram: 17th July. I respectfully submit that it is unwise to consider present trouble at Ranya as a side-show. . . . Öz Demir has come with specific mission of organizing a 'national rising' of tribes. How far he succeeds depends entirely on effectiveness of measures we take to counter his activities. Our weakest point . . . is Pizhdar who are already in right frame of mind and do not require conversion. My whole anxiety has been to prevent this weakest point from giving way and so letting through deluge. Once the first outbreak occurs there is no telling how far it will spread. I should be glad to know if it is the intention of higher authority to take all necessary steps to frustrate the mission of Öz Demir. If so . . . the best method is to discourage the tribes by timely show of adequate force before they have burnt their boats and thrown in their lot actively with the Turks.

I amplified my wire in a letter of the same date:

Memorandum: 17th July. The political situation is still obscure and it is still impossible to foresee how it will develop. . . . In any case it is intolerable that the hostile section of the Pizhdar should continue to be in a position to create situations like this with impunity. I recommend that a decision be taken at once to send a punitive column against them. The column should certainly not be less than that which operated along the Halabja border. If they do not precipitate the issue September would be the best time for the operation but we may be forced to deal with them sooner.

To a request for more detailed proposals I replied:

Telegram: 19th July. . . . I suggest concentration of not less than 600 rifles, more if possible, with machine-guns. To prevent resistance in mountain villages guns most desirable. We would then advance into Pizhdar. If they resist we could punish them severely; if they bolt across the frontier we would tour their villages confiscating movable property of Aghas. Friendly supporters of Babakr would co-operate. Effect on other tribes of punishment of biggest would be considerable. Provided we forestall outbreak before other elements have committed themselves this operation is comparatively simple. . . . Acts of lawlessness are beginning to occur and a party has entered Marga with declared intention of murdering Mudir; I am trying to round them up.

In response to my warnings and entreaties a single platoon of Levies was sent to Darband and the bombing of Ruwandiz was repeated once or twice without great effect; but I was unable to induce G.H.Q. to bomb Sawan, seven miles inside Persia, where a Turkish mission was holding a conference with tribal leaders from both sides of the border.

On the 23rd July Colonel E. C. T. Minet, commanding the Sulaimani Levies in the operations against the murderers of Bond and Makant, received a report (premature by about ten days as it turned out) that Kerim-i Fattah Beg had crossed the Zab near Dukan and was making for Ruwandiz. He followed hot-foot with the bulk of his force and reached Darband on the 27th. This development introduced two new and important factors into the situation. The arrival (if confirmed) of over a hundred of the toughest fighters in Kurdistan under a renowned and desperate leader would be a valuable accession of just the right kind to the resources of Öz Demir and would increase his chances of provoking an early tribal rising. On the other hand Minet's column provided that show of force for which I had been clamouring and, with some small reinforcement, might in due course undertake the indispensable punitive operation. Just about this time, also, I received word from Saiyid Taha, in reply to the message I had been instructed to send him soon after my transfer from Halabja to Ranya,[1] that he would meet me at Babakr's camp on the 10th August.

Minet, who had been a planter in civil life before the war, had come up encouragingly full of fight; and after consulting Babakr we sent a joint recommendation to our respective chiefs that the column should move forthwith to Qala Diza with the object of cowing the hostile leaders, keeping the situation under control by diplomatic and limited air action, and so avoiding ground operations, first until after I had met Saiyid Taha and then until the autumn, when the Pizhdar would be returning with their tents and livestock from the hills and would be more vulnerable. We pointed out, however, that our hands might be forced and asked for approval in principle for a punitive operation of the kind adumbrated in my earlier telegrams on the understanding that we would avoid undertaking it as long as we possibly could.

[1] See p. 180 above.

The move to Qala Diza (but not the rest of our plan) was approved, and we marched there on the 29th. On the same day I received reliable information that plans for a descent from Ruwandiz through both Shawur and Nawdasht were far advanced, and that seventy soldiers with machine-guns and a caravan of ammunition were on their way to reinforce the Turkish party at Sawan. I should have liked to bomb both Sawan and Kani Rhesh, 3,000 yards over the frontier, where two Turkish officers were camped, and telegraphed (unavailingly):

I submit that Persian frontier at this point is a purely academic line since Kani Rhesh region is by prescription summer camping-ground of cis-frontier Pizhdar and no Persian subjects or permanent villages are involved; further there is no trace of any Persian authority within seventy miles and the place is the focus of hostile activity against our Government.

The immediate effect of our move to Qala Diza was exactly what we had expected and I reported:

Telegram: 4th August. The presence of Minet's column has had a sedative effect in the whole region. The Turkish plans for a descent through Nawdasht and Shawur which seemed about to materialize have hung fire and the delay at Rayat of the party bound for Sawan must be ascribed to the same cause. . . . The Pizhdar having openly announced their intention of overthrowing Government there is presumably no question as to the necessity of punishing them. From every point of view autumn is the best time to do this really effectively. It was therefore agreed between O.C. Column, Babakr Agha and myself that Babakr should respond to the advances of the hostile section and take advantage of the presence of troops to endeavour to impose upon them some temporary arrangement, and so avoid immediate action.

6th August. Babakr returned to Qala Diza yesterday and reported that the hostile party had accepted his terms. They agreed to send away from Kani Rhesh the two Turkish officers (who proved to be our old friends Irfan and Hasan) and not to join in the Turkish activities centred in Ruwandiz. He persuaded them that the future of the British and Ottoman Empires would not be settled by internecine strife among the Pizhdar; if, as they said, they were determined to remain loyal to Turkey they could prove their loyalty if and when the Turks took Baghdad. Babakr believes that they will

abide by this family reconciliation for a few weeks unless there are unexpected developments elsewhere. This arrangement was only achieved by the show of force in the background. I avoided associating myself too closely with the negotiations in order that nothing I might say or do might be taken as an indication that Government had overlooked or pardoned their offence.

On the 8th August, a few hours before I was to have left for my tryst with Saiyid Taha, I received word from him that owing to an urgent summons from his friend Simko, who had been carrying all before him in a revolt against the Persian Government but was now menaced by a concentration of superior forces, he must ask to postpone our meeting.

In the meantime we had been assailed by an appalling heat-wave and the outbreak of a particularly virulent malaria epidemic; four-fifths of Minet's force went down, and there were several deaths including that of one British officer. Minet decided that he must return to Sulaimani to refit and recuperate, leaving a detachment of 100 rifles and four machine-guns at Darband; he was confident that he could return in reasonable strength at two days' notice. There was no disputing the necessity of his decision, and I could only hope that the temporary lull would continue. But any chance of this was immediately destroyed by the arrival at Ruwandiz (authentic this time) of Kerim-i Fattah with his Hamawand outlaws. By the 12th it was clear that we were back where we had been before Minet's arrival and that the crisis was upon us. Both Lyon and I represented that the situation was developing too rapidly for the cumbersome procedure whereby requests for air action had to go from the P.O. to the High Commissioner, who put the case to G.H.Q., who sent instructions to the squadrons at Mosul and Kirkuk; we asked that the Squadron-Leaders might be given discretion to attack targets indicated by us to them direct; I also asked for a pack wireless set. The following telegrams were exchanged on the 16th:

A.P.O. to P.O. and H.C., August 16th. Letters from Öz Demir have been distributed to all headmen of Nawdasht calling on them to join the invading force. This morning forty Turks with two machine-guns and 150 tribesmen reported Lêwzha. Request Mincol (Minet's column) leave for here as soon as possible and that Aviation Kirkuk be authorized to bomb on my information.

The same, later. Confirmation received of presence of Turks at Yandiza and Lêwzha; many tribesmen have joined them. Please bomb immediately. If necessary I can supply Kurdish observer but it is rather gusty for landing.

P.O. to A.P.O. As Levies are all exhausted do not ask for them except as a last resort, when probably four machine-guns and only 200 rifles could be sent. No doubt the bombing of Turks in Nawdasht will be sufficient to keep the movement from spreading.

A.P.O. to P.O. Now that after two months' preparation the Turks have at last moved it is rash to assume that Nawdasht attack is an isolated one. Invasion at other points must be expected almost at once and every man available should be sent this way without delay. Ranya and Darband must be held by us while Babkar holds Qala Diza. O.C. detachment considers it inadvisable to split up present small garrison.

The exchange of telegrams continued on the 17th:

H.C. to A.P.O. G.H.Q. will not agree to proposals regarding wireless set, direct air action in consultation with Kirkuk, or movement of Levies.

A.P.O. to P.O. and H.C. Forty-eight hours have elapsed since Turks invaded Nawdasht and absence of slightest sign of resentment from us has had deplorable effect on whole district. . . . Turks with tribal *lashkar* reported 400 strong entered Shawur yesterday by Nawkêwan Pass and are advancing on Ranya where I have small and wholly unreliable tribal *lashkar*. Essential they be broken up before reaching Ranya. Levy detachment will remain Darband to watch both fronts. Meanwhile you must bomb vigorously and continuously in Nawdasht and Shawur till troops can arrive if you wish to hold this District. . . . Telegraph line will probably be cut before morning and I must leave it to you to take all necessary measures without further pressure from me.

Late that evening I received a telegram informing me that G.H.Q. had ordered the concentration of a force to be called Ranicol and to consist of: Two companies and one machine-gun platoon 15th Sikhs; one section Ambala Pack Battery; two squadrons Levy cavalry; the remainder of the 4th Battalion Sulaimani Levy, together with the 100 rifles of that battalion and the Assyrian machine-gun platoon already at Darband. I was instructed to purchase certain supplies and in particular a

large number of male goats, the only meat, I believe, that Sikhs will eat.

But when no precautionary steps whatever have been taken the concentration of even the smallest regular force ready for battle requires time. Days passed with no sign of Ranicol. In Nawdasht faithful old Bahlul Agha had gallantly engaged the enemy but, after being bombed in error by the R.A.F. and suffering several casualties including his third son maimed for life, he was cut off near Qandil and was only extricated with difficulty through Persian territory by a friendly *lashkar* under Babakr himself. On the 26th a hostile force occupied Marga, the most important supply-centre for local purchases, and captured the Mudir. My *lashkar* of Bilbas and Ako tribesmen at Ranya had been mobilized too long to be reliable, Chinaran was out of control, and in Qala Diza Babakr's authority was being flouted right and left. Even the male goats had to be kept within half a mile of Darband, where the grazing was particularly poor, with guards over the goat-herds to keep them from absconding. The R.A.F. with the few machines available performed prodigies over impossible country, but it was now too late to stem the tide of rebellion by air action alone.

At last on the 27th Colonel H——, O.C. Ranicol, flew up to see me. I got the impression that he had been warned to be on his guard against the belligose proposals the A.P.O. was sure to put to him. He was however convinced that he could not afford to wait till the whole force had assembled at Koi, as had been his intention, and on the 29th Ranicol H.Q. with one company of Sikhs, the Pack Battery and one squadron of Levy cavalry reached Darband, having left one company of mounted and one of dismounted Levy infantry under Captain H. E. D. Orr-Ewing, to hold Ranya. I put my office buildings at the disposal of Colonel H—— and my bungalow became the officers' mess, with the roof as a dormitory. I breathed again. For over two months Öz Demir had been kept off by bluff and the tortuous devices of tribal diplomacy, but just in the nick of time, as the possibilities of such expedients had become exhausted, the Army was here and all was well. A renewed advance into Pizhdar territory being ruled out by G.H.Q. instructions, I informed Babakr (who had seen little of his summer

camp since June and had been accustomed to come himself to Darband whenever plans for an attack seemed to be maturing) that from now on his role would be to hold Qala Diza and as much of his qaza as he could, and made a virtue of necessity by giving formal permission to the disintegrating *lashkars* at Ranya to return to their homes.

On the morning of the 31st, an hour or so before daybreak, we were wakened by the crack of a rifle, followed by another, and another. As we hurried into our clothes it became clear that the piquet of twelve men of the 15th Sikhs on the first high crag of Asos on the far side of the river was being attacked. The firing developed into a furious fusillade, and before very long we could distinguish hand-grenades bursting not very far from the defenders. There was a sudden silence, and then figures began to appear high up on the sky line against the pale light of dawn—nine, ten, eleven, twelve . . . and then, yes, a thirteenth and a fourteenth. So that was that. Bullets began to whistle about our ears, and plunging in the mule-lines showed that the transport was suffering the first casualties. My bungalow was too exposed to be of any use and was abandoned. The office buildings afforded some cover but were insufficient to protect the horses and mules. Two wounded Sikhs managed to cross the river and reported that their ten comrades had been killed.

In spite of air attacks and bombardment by the Mountain Battery fire from the ridge was kept up all day, and there was no protection whatever for the parties sent to fetch water from the river. In the afternoon Colonel H——, who earlier in the day had decided that he was too weak to attempt to retake the piquet and had sent for Orr-Ewing from Ranya to reinforce Darband, issued orders that the column would evacuate Darband at dusk to retire on Ranya and countermanded his instructions to Orr-Ewing. But that officer had already acted, and Ranya had immediately been occupied by the hostile party that had come down through Shawur; he therefore halted at the village of Boskin, about two miles to the south-east, where there was an ancient mound of some size and abundant water. Now that Ranya was held by the enemy Colonel H—— decided that he must retire to Koi.

At sunset the enemy fire died down and column was formed

for the evacuation. I returned to my bungalow and hurriedly packed one mule-load of bedding, a few treasures including my diary for the two and a half years since April 1920, and my official accounts with currency notes to the value of several thousands of rupees. I also arranged for my civilian officials and police-messengers (who had no uniform but arm-bands) to be allotted a place in the middle of the column immediately behind the transport.

As we were about to start Jelal Efendi came to report that some over-zealously security-minded British officer had turned 'these Kurdish scallywags' out of the place allotted to them. I arranged with the staff officer for their re-installation and for their status to be explained to the officers of the nearest units of the column. I left with the rear-guard, but Simko, who was pulling very hard and walking at a pace far faster than that of the marching troops, quickly brought me to the middle, where I was able to assure myself that my Kurdish party was still safely in position, and then to the advance-guard. When I reached the head of the column I turned back in order to be somewhere near my civilians. I was just passing the Pack Battery and the Transport when four or five shots rang out from the village of Kurago on our right, about two miles from Darband.

As the bullets whistled past the whole column, or rather that part of it which I could see, turned at an angle of 225 degrees to the line of march and stampeded in the direction of a small sulphur-impregnated lake called Ganaw (Stinking Water) on our left. I can still see, as if it were last night, the spindly legs of one little Indian sweeper running like a rabbit as he still clutched the hurricane lamp of which he was the custodian. It is extraordinary what stupid things one can say on such occasions and, I suppose owing to my training in the principle that political officers should beware of interfering in the details of military dispositions, I remember calling out to Broad, the gunner officer, 'Do you want me to help stop these chaps?' He shouted an affirmative, and for a minute or two Simko had the time of his life. But all our efforts were unavailing, and I shall never forget the feeling of utter desolation that came over me as I found myself standing quite alone in the silvery moonlight, the whole of Ranicol, the troops on whom I had pinned such

faith, having, as far as I could see, disappeared for ever into the night.[1]

After a few minutes I descried the O.C. himself, accompanied by Captain S. Fosdick of the Levy cavalry and two or three Indian sepoys of whom one was a bugler. The rally was sounded. The Levy advance-guard and the Sikhs joined us in good order from the right and then there came in from the left a confused mob of gunners, transport and civilians. There had been no more firing after the first volley from Kurago. After some trouble the column was reformed and we marched on to Boskin, where we found Orr-Ewing snugly entrenched. In the direction of Darband we could see bright flames rising skywards.

None of the troops had had much to eat during the day (the male goats and their shepherds had of course disappeared the moment the firing began), and orders were issued that all ranks were to have a cooked meal the next morning, the 1st September, before the withdrawal was resumed. But cooking is a long business. The column was ordered to move off about ten o'clock, before the troops, or at any rate the Levies with whom I had bivouacked, had had their meal, before aircraft had come over to cover the march, and just as the enemy, who had dispersed to various villages for the night, came buzzing round again. This time I accompanied the advance-guard furnished by the Levies. As we were getting into position about a hundred yards from the village, ten minutes before the column was due to start, we were heavily fired on from three sides. A bunch of Ranya police, Kurdish officials and mixed transport galloped out from Boskin, crashed through the advance-guard and made in the direction of the prominent mound of Waranga. The Levy infantry were carried along in an attempt to keep in front of them. All efforts made to stop the transport, which now included Levies, Assyrians and Indians (many mules being without drivers), failed, and every time that Captain Griffith, commanding the advance-guard, attempted to halt the infantry or to get them into some sort of position the transport

[1] I learned afterwards that the shots were fired by eight riflemen of the Shilana who were sheltering for the night in the village after it had been deserted by the Ramk inhabitants. They had been surprised by the tramp of marching troops and after some hesitation had decided to fire one volley in the direction of the sound before making a bolt for it; they had no idea at all of the result they achieved.

crashed into them again or came to a stop among them in a confused mass. . . . All this time I saw no case of individual funking among the combatant Levies. . . . A party of Levy cavalry sent forward to the left flank disappeared; they were under a bad Kurdish officer who subsequently deserted to the Turks.[1]

All this time we were under continuous and heavy fire from both flanks and the rear. Emboldened by the scene of confusion some of the enemy came so close that the Sikhs were able to charge with the bayonet, inflicting the kind of casualties that tribesmen like least, and earned several well-merited awards for gallantry.

About two miles from Ranya the direct and best track to Koi passed over the tip of a low ridge, the last expiring spur of the south-western wall of Shawur, which thrusts out into the Bitwên Plain east of the Bast-i Astrilan. Not liking the look of this obstacle the O.C. had insisted on taking a more southerly route across country, confident that he would be able to find a way round the paddy fields irrigated by the Ranya canals when he came to them. In the event the column was not under sufficient control to obey any order to halt while a route was reconnoitred; it lurched into a broad belt of marshy ground and was quickly bogged; the enemy fire was still heavy, and it was here that the guns and practically all the baggage (including the Treasury notes and my one precious mule-load) were lost.

This was our predicament when at last we heard the welcome drone of aircraft, followed by the rattle of their machine-guns as they came into action, punctually, I believe, at the hour given them on the previous day before the calamitous change of time-table in the morning. The whining of enemy bullets gradually died away as what was left of the column emerged on the far side of the rice, reformed, and marched on unmolested to a place called Buraish. From Buraish I rode on another mile with a small escort to Sarkhuma, Suwar Agha's village, to feel the pulse of the Piran. His control over his tribe was absolute and he had had the good sense to prevent them from joining in the fray; he had no inducement to pick their chestnuts out of the

[1]This paragraph is taken almost textually from a report which I wrote immediately afterwards at the request of G.H.Q. on the behaviour of the Levies.

fire for the Pizhdar and, moreover, there were close by in Koi the fresh troops, a company of the 15th Sikhs and a squadron of Levy cavalry, who had arrived too late to join Ranicol at Darband; nevertheless his good sense served as well, and I hesitate to think what would have happened if the Piran had been waiting for us west of the bog.

Satisfied on this score I returned to Buraish to try to snatch a couple of hours' sleep before the column was due to resume the march. When I came to take off my helmet, a pith 'Cawnpore', I found two neat little holes on the right side, in line with each other about a quarter of an inch from my head, and I remembered that between Boskin and the marsh I had felt a little tap which had pushed the helmet slightly over my left eye. It was my good fortune always to be able to sleep at night without regard to the stresses and strains of the day, but I woke up once thinking I heard the pop-pop-pop of machine-guns, only to find that it was the snoring of our solitary prisoner, a Turkish soldier in uniform. We mounted again about midnight, and what I remember best of the march in bright moonlight to Koi is the disgraceful behaviour of Simko who, whinnying continuously, was trying to fight every stallion and mount every mare within reach as we picked our way down the narrow path from the top of Haiba Sultan towards the town.

At noon the following day orders were received that the Sikhs were to proceed forthwith to Arbil and the Levies to Kirkuk. This again looked unpleasantly like flight and compromised British prestige still further. I accompanied the Levies. We reached Taqtaq on the Zab that night, forded the river before dawn, rested during the heat of the day at Rhêdar, the headquarters of the Shuwan nahiya, marched on again through the following night, still in bright moonlight, and with another halt of three hours, reached Kirkuk about eight in the morning of the 4th September. Here we learned that all the British and Indian personnel had been evacuated by air from Sulaimani the previous day and that Goldsmith with his officers had already gone on to Baghdad. This incident attracted more attention at home than the circumstances that brought it about, being, I believe, the most ambitious air operation of that kind that had yet been undertaken in the history of flying; it was

honoured with a large and fanciful two-page picture in the *Illustrated London News*.

Before leaving Sulaimani Goldsmith had handed over the contents of the Treasury and responsibility for the administration (including control of the Levies still in the town) to the elective Council, which had been associated with him under the terms of the High Commissioner's announcement of the 6th May 1921, and they in turn had co-opted to be their President Shaikh Mahmud's brother, Qadir, who had been allowed to return to Sulaimani a few days earlier. Shaikh Mahmud himself had been brought from India as far as Kuwait. The logical sequel to these gestures of appeasement towards the Shaikhs, and to Saiyid Taha's failure to keep the appointment with me on the 10th August, was a decision to send Mahmud back to Sulaimani, where he would of course replace his brother as President of the Administrative Council. In return he undertook not only to prevent the Turks from entering the town but also to eject them from the other parts of the Division; he furthermore accepted the condition that he would on no account interfere in the affairs of Kirkuk and Arbil. Noel was to accompany him in the capacity of Representative of the High Commissioner and Adviser.

A month or six weeks after taking over at Darband I had been given simultaneously two opportunities of other employment: one by the High Commissioner of a senior appointment in the Revenue administration of Iraq; and another by H.M. Minister in Tehran who, in reply to Sir P. Cox's inquiries of April, had telegraphed after much delay to say that he was authorized to offer me the post of Acting Consul at Shiraz with a promise of confirmation in the rank as soon as the rules of the Service might permit. Both these I had rashly turned down. I think the real reason was that my blood was up and I wanted to see the Ranya imbroglio through. But I had argued with myself: as regards the first that Revenue was not my subject and that I was not made for central secretariat work; and as regards the second that in view of the notorious block in promotion then prevailing within the Levant Consular Service I should have to wait till the Greek Kalends before the promised confirmation was likely to come forward. Now, however, the

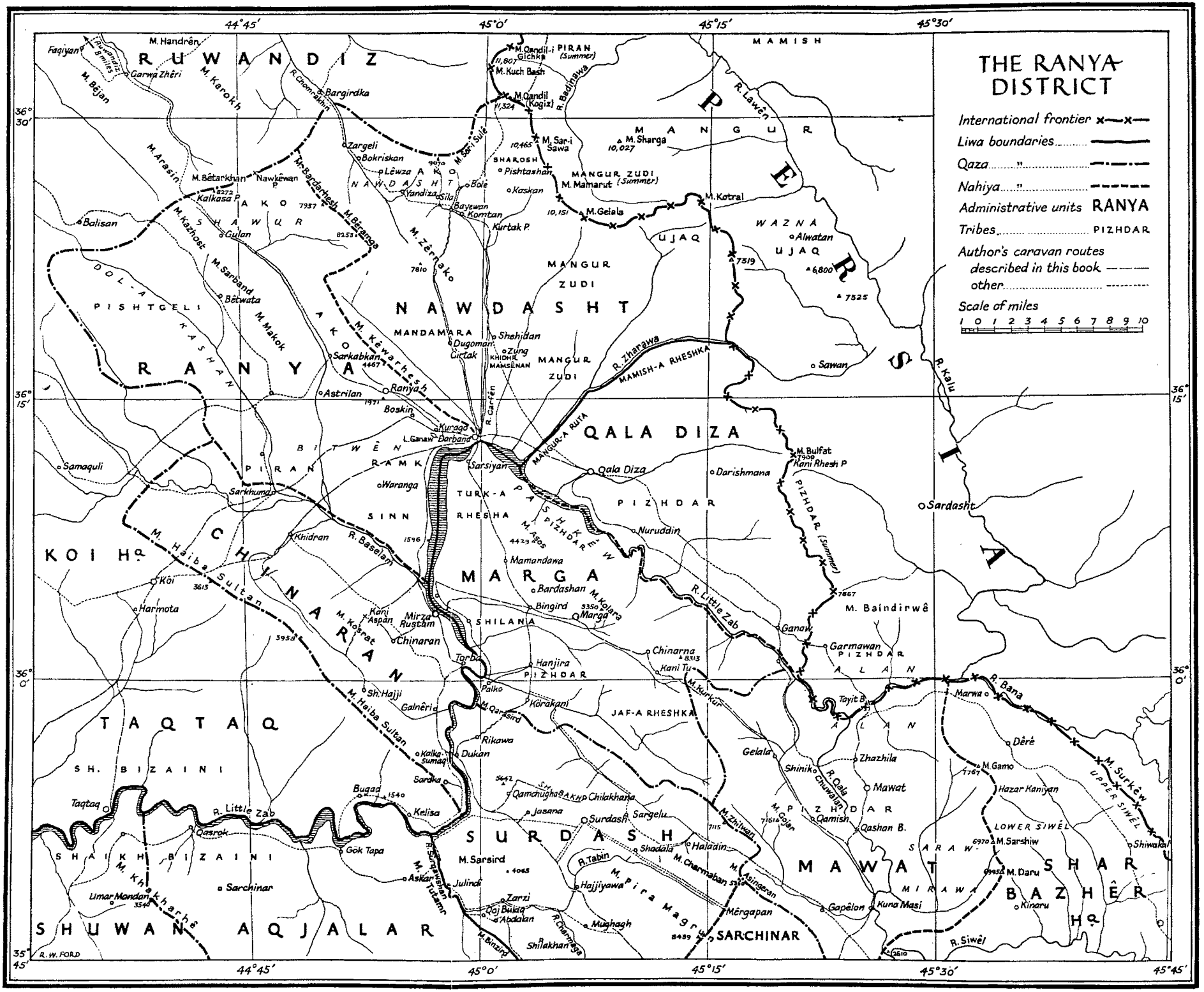
evacuation raised again in acute form the question of my future. The division of the old Political Department between the Residency and the Ministry of the Interior had been completed and the cadres of both had been fixed. Those of us who had been assigned to Sulaimani were included in neither and so, to use the modern term, had become redundant. The High Commission was small and there was not much room there. Cornwallis, the new Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, had come from outside and did not know us; it was not unnatural that Faisal and his Ministers should be suspicious of the instruments of an arrangement excluding a part of the Mosul wilayat from the new kingdom; some of our former colleagues had a vested interest in keeping us out lest we should compromise their chances of promotion to the higher grades; we had been given no choice when the postings were originally made, but that was our misfortune. In my own case, although I had gone to Kurdistan under protest, my subsequent rejection of the Revenue appointment did not strengthen my claims for a post in Iraq and I could not expect the Foreign Office to receive with anything but impatience another approach so soon after my refusal of an offer that had no doubt seemed to them, if not to me, handsome enough for a prodigal who had already been seconded away from his parent Service for seven years.

In view of the uncertainty how the situation might develop, however, it was only prudent for the High Commissioner to retain a lien on our services for a time, and we were therefore given temporary tasks in Baghdad, drawing our pay from the wasting asset of that part of the Sulaimani revenues that were held by the Residency. It so happened that Major C. C. Marshall, the Divisional Adviser for Kirkuk, was absent on leave. His senior assistant, Lyon, was too busy dealing with the repercussions of the Ranicol disaster on his own District of Arbil to be able to deal with the whole Division. It was therefore arranged before very long that I should go up to take over temporarily at Kirkuk but have no responsibility for Arbil. In the event Marshall was taken ill on his way back from leave and never resumed charge.

With my confirmation as a Divisional Adviser on the cadre of the Ministry of the Interior I was definitely turning my back on a career under the Foreign Office. I was destined to remain

seconded for another twenty-three years, making thirty in all.[1] Looking back, although the amalgamation of the five branches into which the Foreign Service was divided when I first joined was eventually carried through just in time to benefit one or two of my contemporaries, I have no regrets. My official appointments were restricted to a very small part of Asia, it is true, but I had many varieties of experience within those limits, and specialization is not without its delights and rewards.

[1]To preserve my status and pension rights not only did the Iraqi Government pay the appropriate contribution to H.M. Treasury but I myself was required to pay British income tax on the imaginary basic salary I should have been drawing had I been actually serving under the Foreign Office. It was a heavy price to pay, especially towards the end as the imaginary salary and the rates of tax went up, but the fact that I had behind me a permanent Service to which I could revert always gave me a feeling of independence which was of great moral value.


THE RANYA DISTRICT
International frontier
Liwa boundaries
Qaza "
Nahiya "
Administrative units RANYA
Tribes PIZHDAR
Author's caravan routes described in this book
other
Scale of miles
1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
RUWANDIZ
PIRAN (Summer)
MAMISH
MANGUR
PERI
WAZNA
UJAQ
NAWDASHT
MANGUR ZUDI
MANDAMARA
RANYA
QALA DIZA
PIZHDAR
SINN RHESHA
MARGA
KOI Hª
CHYNARAN
TAQTAQ
SH. BIZAINI
SHAIKH BIZAINI
SURDASH
SHUWAN AQJALAR
SARCHINAR
MAWAT
MIRAWA
SHARBAZHER Hª
ALAN
SARAW
LOWER SIWÊL
UPPER SIWÊL
JAF-A RHESHKA
TURK-A PASHKEW
MAMISH-A RHESHKA
MANGUR-A RUTA
PIZHDAR (Summer)
R. Little Zab
R. Lawên
R. Zharawa
R. Kalu
R. Bana
R. Siwêl
R. Qala Chuwalan
R. Tabin
R. Sarqiyan
R. Chamaga
R. Garên
R. Choman Shkin
R. Badrawa
M. Karokh
M. Arasin
M. Kazhoat
M. Sarband
M. Makok
M. Kewarhesh
M. Zêrnako
M. Haiba Sultan
M. Khakharhê
M. Pira Magrun
M. Kurkur
M. Zhiwan
M. Asingeran
M. Charmaban
M. Surkêw
M. Baindirwê
M. Kolana
M. Kosrat
M. Sar-i Suk
M. Bêranga
M. Bêtarkhan
M. Handrên
M. Bêjan
M. Qandil-i Glichk
M. Kuch Bash
M. Qandil (Kogiz)
M. Sar-i Sawa
M. Sharga
M. Mamarut
M. Kotral
M. Gelala
M. Bulfat
M. Gamo
M. Sarshiw
M. Daru
M. Sarsird
Ranya
Sarkabkan
Astrilan
Boskin
Kuraga
Darbana
Sarsiyan
Qala Diza
Darishmana
Sardasht
Nuruddin
Mamandawa
Bardashan
Bingird
Marga
Chinaran
Chinarna
Ganaw
Garmawan
Tayit B.
Marwa
Dêrê
Zhazhila
Mawat
Qashan B.
Qamish
Shiwakal
Kinaru
Kuna Masi
Gapêlon
Mêrgapan
Haladin
Shodala
Surdash
Sargelu
Jasana
Chilakhana
Qamchugha
Sarska
Kelisa
Bugaa
Qasrok
Taqtaq
Gök Tapa
Askan
Julinda
Zarzi
Doj Bulaq
Abdalan
Mughagh
Shilakhan
Limar Mondan
Sarchinar
Shiniko
Gelala
Dukan
Rikawa
Palko
Galnêri
Sh. Hajji
Kalka-Sumaq
Körakani
Hanjira
Torba
Kani Tu
Kani Aspan
Mirza Rustam
Harmota
Köi
Khidran
R. Baselam
Waranga
Sarkhunga
Samaquli
Balisan
Gulan
Kalkasa P.
Bêtwata
Dugoman
Shehidan
Zung
Kirtak
Kurtak P.
Bayewan
Komtan
Yandiza
Sila
Boié
Koskan
Pishtashan
Sharosh
Zargeli
Bokriskan
Lêwza
Nawkêwan
Bargirdka
Faqiyan
Garwa Zhêri
Ruwandiz
Ruwandiz 8 miles
Dol-a Pishtgeli
Dol-a Kashan
Piran
Bitwên Ramk
Ako Nawdasht
Ako Shawur
Ako 7937
Ako 9000
Ako 8153
Ako 7810
Ako 4467
Ako 1971
Ako 1596
Ako 4429
Ako 3613
Ako 3958
Ako 3540
Ako 5442
Ako 1540
Ako 4065
Ako 8489
Ako 7319
Ako 6800
Ako 7525
Ako 7867
Ako 8313
Ako 7115
Ako 7161
Ako 6970
Ako 6935
Ako 2610
11,607
11,324
10,465
10,027
10,151
8273
9000
8153
7810
4467
1971
1596
4429
3613
3958
3540
5442
1540
4065
8489
7319
6800
7525
7867
8313
7115
7161
6970
6935
2610
R. W. FORD
44°45′
45°0′
45°15′
45°30′
36° 30′
36° 15′
36° 0′
35° 45′

Part 3

XVIII KIRKUK

I HAVE already given in Chapter II a general description of the topography of the Kirkuk liwa. The internal administrative boundaries were changed several times, both during the period covered by this book and subsequently, but for the purposes of an account of the racial and tribal composition of the population I think it will be most convenient if I set out first in tabular form the organization as it finally took shape, and then indicate as may be necessary how it differs from the arrangements I found in force in 1922.

Qaza	*Nahiya*	*Qaza*	*Nahiya*
Headquarters	Headquarters Malha Altun Köprü Shuwan Qara Hasan	Chamchemal	Headquarters Aqjalar Sangaw
Tauq	Headquarters Qadir Karam Tuz Khurmatu	Kifri	Headquarters Qara Tapa Qala Shirwana Pêwaz

In 1922 all three nahiyas shown under Chamchemal belonged to Sulaimani and are discussed elsewhere. There was no qaza of Tauq: the home nahiya was subordinate to Kirkuk and Tuz to Kifri; Qadir Karam was divided into three tribal areas, Gil (for which a Shaikh of the Talabani family was responsible to Kirkuk), Zangana (in charge of an Agha of that tribe under Kifri), and Jabbari (under Chamchemal as already mentioned); there was also a small enclave of villages appertaining to certain Barzinja Shaikhs which was administered from Sangaw. Qala Shirwana formed part of Kifri headquarters and Pêwaz belonged to Warmawa in Halabja qaza.

The city of Kirkuk is built partly on the great rectangular mound that rises some 120 feet above the level of the plain and partly at its foot on both banks of the broad shingly bed of the Khasa Chai. The western half of the mound was largely in

ruins and the leading Muslim families were established in houses of comparatively modern construction in the newer parts below; but the Christian quarter on the eastern side was still inhabited and in good repair, with several large houses rising, like the walls of a fortified city, from the very verge of the steep slope. Of the many mosques, *takyas*, shrines and other monuments in the town I need mention here only two, the reputed tomb of Daniel and an ancient octagonal tower dating from Seljuq times. The tradition regarding the former is of course connected with the 'burning fiery furnace', the perpetual fires of petroleum gas in a depression called Baba Gurgur about two miles north-west of the town and near the shallow hand-dug wells of the primitive oil industry that had flourished here since the days of Herodotus and earlier. The second, according to the inscription, was erected in honour of a noble lady named Bughday Khanum, but was now chiefly valued by the occupants of the neighbouring houses as offering a convenient flat surface on which to plaster their cakes of dung to dry for fuel. Kirkuk became definitely a part of the Ottoman dominions under the first of the frontier treaties, that of 1555, but it was temporarily occupied by the Persians on at least two occasions during the wars of the next two centuries, in 1623–30 by Shah Abbas and in 1743–6 by Nadir.

The population at the time of which I am writing numbered perhaps about 25,000,[1] of whom the great majority were Turkomans and about one-quarter Kurds, with smaller colonies of Arabs, Christians and Jews. In the eighteenth century Kirkuk was the headquarters of the Ottoman province (ayálat) of Shahrizur, comprising the modern liwas of Kirkuk, Arbil and (nominally) Sulaimani, under a Mutasallim appointed by Baghdad; with the reforms of Midhat Pasha, Wali of Baghdad from 1869 to 1872, the name Shahrizur was given to the sanjaq of Kirkuk (corresponding to the present liwas of Kirkuk and

[1]This was of course before the Iraq Petroleum Company had even begun to prospect for oil. The pre-war figure may have been a little higher but can hardly have been the 70,000 given by Mark Sykes. Kirkuk has since become the centre of the activities of the I.P.C., but the 1948 census shows a population of only 69,000. The authors of the League of Nations *Report on the Question of the Frontier between Turkey and Iraq* (see p. 398 n. below) dispute the validity of the distinction which H.B.M. Government had sought to make between 'Turks' and 'Turkomans'. In this book I have generally used the name Turkoman to denote villagers or townsmen in the humbler ranks of society whose language is Turkish, and Turk for the Ottomanized civil servants, officers and members of aristocratic families.

Arbil) while the historical Shahrizur remained outside in the new sanjaq of Sulaimani; the Mosul wilayat was formed in 1879; Kirkuk remained an important garrison town and, for reasons of language and the racial composition of the population, an important recruiting centre for civil servants and gendarmes on whom the Ottoman administration could rely.

The leading aristocratic families either were in fact Turks or, even if their origins were Kurdish, nevertheless considered themselves to be such. The most important of these families were: the Naftchizadas who, as their name implies, owned and exploited the ancient oil seepages; the Ya'qubizadas, land-owners, who were alleged to be of Kurdish Zangana origin; and the Qirdars, who were both land-owners and merchants. In addition there were several soldiers and civil servants who, though not members of the old and wealthy families, had reached high office in the Ottoman service and had returned to their native province after the dismemberment of the Empire. The leading Kurd was Saiyid Ahmad-i Khanaqah, a member of the Barzinja family, but unlike the majority a Naqshbandi; he kept open house at this well-endowed *takya* and not unnaturally exercised great influence over his peasant compatriots, who formed the largest racial group in the liwa as a whole.

Under the Sasanian Empire Kirkuk was a celebrated centre of the Nestorians, the seat of the Metropolitan Bishop of Bêth Garmê. This ancient community was now represented by about 150 families of Chaldeans,[1] most of whom, as I have mentioned, lived in one of the older quarters on the mound. They were headed by the Metropolitan, Stefan Jibri, whose see still bears the ancient name, and by three prosperous Christian merchants and land-owners, Minas Gharib, Qustantin, and Toma Hindi, who enjoyed considerable esteem; the first was a member of the elective Administrative Council, a body which had had important functions under the Turks but which tended to lose its independence under the more centralized administration of Iraq. Until the war the community could boast of having preserved the most ancient Christian church in the world, the fifth-century Church of the Martyrs commemorating the

[1]The Chaldean Uniate Church is composed of former Nestorians who, while preserving in large measure their original discipline, Syriac language, and rites, have entered into communion with Rome and acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope.

victims of the persecutions of the Sasanian Yazdigird II (A.D. 438–57); used by the Turks as an ammunition dump it was blown up and completely destroyed when they retreated in 1918.

The Jewish community was humbler than the Christian, being composed chiefly of traders in a small way. They were headed by the Rabbi and a merchant named Ishaq Ifrayim who, later on, was for a time Jewish Member of Parliament for Mosul. The head of the liwa finance department, Uzair Efendi, an able and scrupulously honest official, was also a local Jew.

The Turkish-speaking townships on the great high road have been mentioned many times in previous chapters. The *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, under 'Kirkuk', says that these Turks were probably there before the Ottoman conquest but that it is uncertain whether they are to be traced to Turkish garrisons established by the Caliphs in the 9th century A.D. or to immigration in the time of the Seljuks (Great Seljuks 1037–1117, Seljuks of Iraq and Kurdistan 1117–94) and the Begtiginid Atabegs of Arbil 1144–1232); the writer of the article does not mention their religion. Now in some of these places (notably Kirkuk itself and Kifri, which were important centres of Ottoman administration, and Altün Köprü which is the nearest to Arbil) the religion of the majority is orthodox Sunni; but in the others most of the people are heterodox, and extremely secretive about their beliefs. Locally they are described as Qizilbash, and their principal groups are found at Taza Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu and Qara Tapa, all on the high road, and also in the considerable villages of Tis'in near Kirkuk, Bêshir near Taza, and Lailan in Qara Hasan.

Iraqi students of history with whom I have discussed the problem of their origin have variously suggested or maintained: (1) That they were brought from Anatolia by the Great Seljuks; (2) That they are descended from 100,000 Turkish prisoners captured by Tamerlane and spared from death on the intercession of the Shaikh of Ardebil, the Khwaja Ali whom we have already met as the first head of the Safawi order of dervishes to reveal Shi'a tendencies (therefore between 1392 and 1405); (3) That they were brought from Anatolia to protect the road by Sultans Selim I and Sulaiman I (1512–66); (4) That they are the descendants of Azarbayjanis from Maragha planted as garrisons by Shah Isma'il Safawi (1502–24)

during his occupation of Iraq; and (5) That they are to be traced to garrisons of Azarbayjanis established by Nadir Shah (1730–47).

The name Qizilbash, or Red-Heads, was originally applied, after the colour of their turbans, to the nine Azarbayjani tribes forming the *corps d'élite* of the army which was to win the throne of Persia for Shah Isma'il. Later it was used to describe the numerous heterodox sects of Asia Minor, many of whom seem to have been affiliated to the Bektashi order of dervishes.[1] (The use of the name Qizilbash to describe the Persians generally, which occurs in the instrument of ratification of the Treaty of Zuhab, is, and was intended to be, mere vulgar abuse, making a tempting jangle in combination with the word *awbásh*, ruffians).

There is a considerable literature on the Bektashis both in European languages[2] and also, since the reforms of Mustafa Kemal, in Turkish from the pens of former adepts. For my present purpose I need recall only three points connected with their history. (1) The eponymous founder of the order was Hajji Bektash Wali, a saintly Pir from Khurasan, who settled at Kir Shahr in Anatolia in the second half of the thirteenth century and established his influence in the usual manner; but its systematic organization is ascribed to one Balim Sultan, who lived at the beginning of the sixteenth. (2) The famous corps of Janissaries, the principal branch of the Sultan's armies for over four centuries, composed originally of boys levied on the Christian subjects of the Empire and forcibly converted to Islam, was founded by Orkhan, the second Sultan of the house of Usman (1326–59) and was from the first closely associated with the order; Hajji Bektash was their patron saint and throughout their history, until the suppression of the corps in 1826, Bektashi 'Babas' were attached to them as chaplains; this seems to indicate that in spite of their heterodoxy and exaggerated devotion to the Twelve Imams the Bektashis were considered in the great political schism as standing on the Sunni rather than the Shi'a side of the line. (3) At some unknown date the doctrines and perhaps the adherents of the extraordinary and extreme Hurufi heresy taught by Fazlullah, a Persian of Astara-

[1] *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans* by F. W. Hasluck, Oxford, 1929, Chap. XII.
[2] See in particular *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* by J. K. Birge, London, 1937.

bad, who in the year 1398 proclaimed himself divine and was put to death by Tamerlane, received hospitality under the spreading mantle of the Bektashi order.

I found the Qizilbash of the Kirkuk district far more secretive than the Kakais, but my inquiries did establish that they are divided into two groups, Darwishan and Sofiyan, the former at Tauq, Tuz and Lailan, the latter at Taza Khurmatu, Beshir and Tis'in (I have no note of Qara Tapa but it is probably Darwishan). After I had myself come to the conclusion that the Sofiyan group must be the latter-day representatives of the old Safawi order, that is to say the original Qizilbash, I was positively assured by two very reliable informants that this was so; this identification would be consistent with the second or the fourth of the suggested dates of their coming given above. The Darwishan might then represent another Anatolian Qizilbash group more akin to the original Bektashis as organized by Balim Sultan, and this would be consistent with the third of the suggested dates. Of course Turks of earlier settlements might have been converted on the spot by Bektashi propagandists, but there seems to be a strong case for putting the date of the establishment at any rate of the unorthodox element of the Turkoman population much later than that given in the *Encyclopaedia*.

Whatever their history these Bektashi-Qizilbash, unlike the Kakais, are now generally considered to be Shi'as, and the Mujtahids of Kerbela and Najaf have made a point of sending missionaries to turn them from their errors and to instruct them in the regular Ja'fari creed and rites. These activities were much resented by the leading Sunni Turks of Kirkuk and even by some of the votaries themselves; and on more than one occasion during my time the missionaries had to be sent away for reasons of public order. Nevertheless they had a certain amount of success, more, curiously enough, among the Darwishan than the Sofiyan.

In the liwa as a whole perhaps the most important family was the Talabani, of which I have already mentioned one celebrated member, Shaikh Riza, the author of the poem on the glory of the Babans quoted in Chapter V. They are Kurds and furnish an excellent example of a house which in quite modern times rose to a position of wealth and worldly power by virtue

of the religious influence of its dervish founder. Shaikh Riza himself recorded the foundation of the shaikhly family in the following lines:

Xuda, wextê ke hez ka bendeyêk y xoy bika xoshnuwd,
Le rhêge y duwrewe boy d'ê be pê y xoy shahyd y meqsuwd.
Le Hyndistanewe, sheshmange rhê ta xak y Kurdistan,
Xuda Shêx Ehmed y Hyndiy' rhewan kird bo Mela Mehmuwd.
Mela Mehmuwd y Zengene.

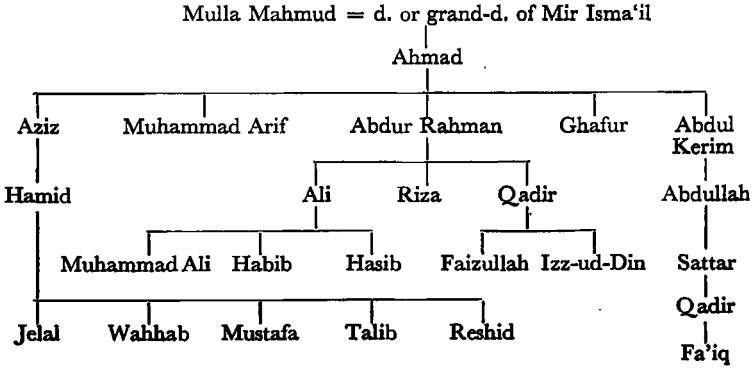
When God wills to make one of His servants happy,
The destined charmer of his heart comes to him from afar of his own accord.
From Hindustan, a six-months journey to the land of Kurdistan,
God sent Shaikh Ahmad the Indian to Mulla Mahmud,
Mulla Mahmud of Zangana.

The poet goes on to describe how the precincts of Mulla Mahmud's tomb echo continually with the dervish ejaculations of '*Yá Hú* and *Yá Ma'búd*, O He! and O Worshipped One!' and how the shaikhly mantle received from Shaikh Ahmad descended from father to son down to his brother Shaikh Ali; he ends this poem by apologizing for his own unworthiness to belong to this pious family:

Rheza'sh l'ew nesleye; biy bexshe, ya Rheb, chunku qet nabê
Gulh y bêxar u behr y bêbuxar u agir y bêduwd.

Riza too is of that stock; forgive him, Lord, for there cannot be
A rose without a thorn, or a sea without vapour, or a fire without smoke.

The following table shows the relationship of the principal members of the family mentioned in this book:

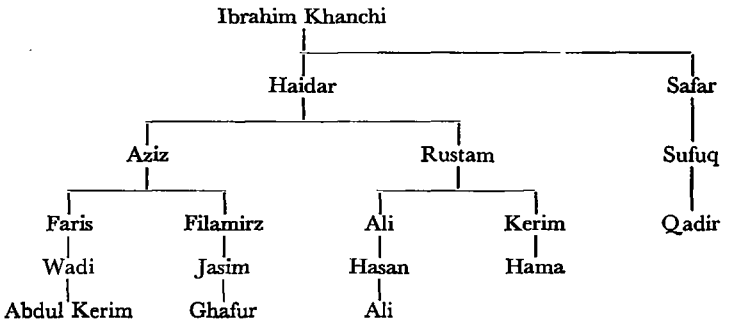


Mulla Mahmud, who, allowing again thirty-three years for a generation, may have flourished towards the end of the eighteenth century, married a daughter or granddaughter of Mir Isma'il, then paramount chief of his own tribe, the Zangana, who lived at Qaitul. Their son, Shaikh Ahmad, moved to the village of Talaban (from which the family takes its name) across the Basira River in Chamchemal territory; he had nine sons who left male progeny, and these in their turn were so prolific that the next generation was numbered in scores, and the next in hundreds. Of Ahmad's sons Ghafur founded the Koi branch of the family. Muhammad Arif, who settled in Zuhab, acquired a great reputation as a miracle-working saint; according to the story his intervention in one of the many campaigns against the Persians on the Zuhab border proved so efficacious in turning Turkish defeat into victory that he was rewarded by a grateful Pasha of Baghdad with the grant of several villages in the estate of Binqudra north of Khanaqin. In the third generation from Mulla Mahmud the shrewdest of a shrewd lot must have been Shaikh Hamid, son of Ahmad's son Aziz who first acquired property in Gil. At the time of the British occupation in 1918 Hamid ranked as the most important personage in the liwa; a bitter enemy of the Turks he threw all his influence in on our side and, in recognition of his services, had been allowed to administer the Talabani group of villages in Gil direct, without the intervention of a Mudir or official police, and to exploit for a nominal royalty the primitive oil wells in the district. The old man died in May 1921, and I never saw him. He was succeeded, at the family *takya* and in his privileges, by one of his younger sons, Talib. All Hamid's sons were fine figures of men physically and on the whole friendly to the administration, though inclined to trade on the stock of official goodwill accumulated by their father. The Talabani family was also represented in the nahiyas of Qara Hasan and Tauq.

The parent tribe of Zangana is mentioned in the *Sharafnáma* (1596), which, however, only says of it that members of the ruling family rose to high office under Shah Isma'il (1502–24), but that when no chief of importance remained they scattered to take service under various Shi'a amirs. However that may be, by Qajar times they were strongly entrenched as a coherent tribe in Mahidasht and other districts of Kirmanshah under an

influential ruling family tracing its descent from a certain Shaikh Ali, who attained the rank of Prime Minister to one of the Safawis (therefore before 1736). The Zangana of Iraq, orthodox Sunnis, still live in what they claim to have been their original homeland on the upper waters of the Aw-a Spi (as well as in a group of villages near Kifri to the south-east) and assert that Shaikh Ali migrated from here to take service under the Persian Shah; their dialect is not Kurdi but one of the Macho-macho group, that is, Gorani.

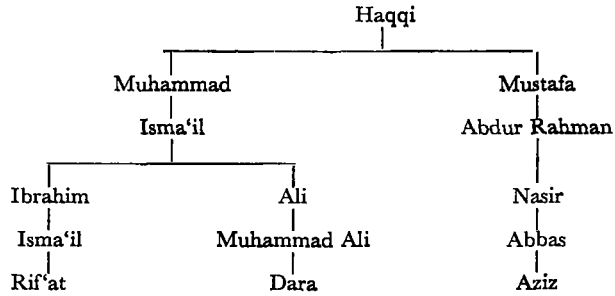
The members of the modern ruling family in Iraq are known as Agha and trace their descent from a certain Ibrahim Khanchi:



They were fond of referring to the great Mir Isma'il as if he were their ancestor, but their title of Agha seems to bear out the allegation of their detractors that Ibrahim Khanchi was in fact an upstart appointed by the Babans to protect the important village and caravanserai on the main road from Kifri to Qala Chuwalan or Sulaimani which still bears his name. In 1922 Hama-i Kerim Agha, who lived at Ibrahim Khanchi, was recognized as a Mudir responsible for the preservation of law and order in a group of about thirty-five villages, of which perhaps twenty were in the hands of Zangana squires; neither he nor they had any kind of authority over the Talabani or other neighbouring lands where the majority of the villagers were actually Zangana tribesmen.

The Talabani of Gil and Tauq were at almost permanent feud with their tribal neighbours, the Jabbari, the Kakai and the Dauda, who are the targets of numerous obscene and scurrilous poems by Shaikh Riza. The Jabbari and Kakai I have already discussed. The Dauda is a typical, sedentary, south-

country Kurdish tribe, with no particular history that I was able to trace. The ruling family claims descent from a certain Haqqi Beg, and by the fifth generation members of it were very thick on the ground in the nahiyas of Tauq and Tuz Khurmatu, owning or occupying many large villages. The following table shows the relationship of the three principal chiefs with whom the administration had to deal in 1922:



Of these Dara Beg was the richest, owning with his close relations a dozen large villages in the Tauq nahiya; he was a steady, quiet man who always kept on the right side of the authorities. Rif'at Beg, with his relations and another section of the tribe, occupied a large *miri* estate called Albu Sabah in the neighbouring nahiya of Tuz; his reputation was that of a restless person, always ready to take part in any subversive movement that might be afoot. Aziz-i Abbas, an older man than the other two, had a reputation for truculence and made a point of avoiding as far as possible all contact with the officials of Government, a policy made possible by the fact that his group of villages lay in the small plain of Dasht-i Pataki astride the Aw-a Spi, not far from Tuz Khurmatu it is true, but separated from it and from the high road by the first low ridge and therefore not easily accessible for wheels.

Having now described the principal Kurdish tribes and the religious minorities I think that I can best complete the background sketch by taking the various administrative units in turn, giving under each any facts of interest or of relevance to the story that follows.

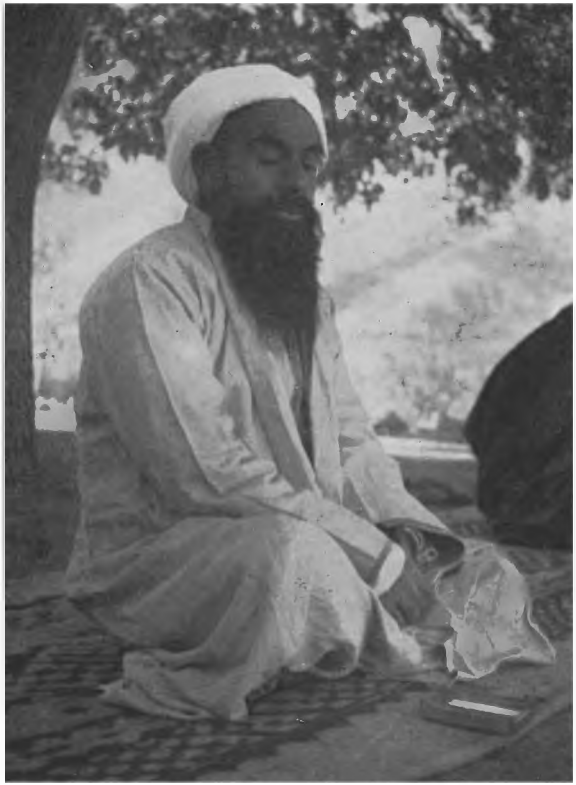
As regards the Headquarters nahiya (pop. 24,500) there is little to add to what I have already said about the city itself and the villages of Taza Khurmatu and Tis'in. The dozen or so

villages north-east of the straight line passing through Altun Köprü and Kirkuk are without exception Kurdish. The more numerous villages to the south-west are very mixed, with all three races in most of them and a few all-Arab settlements on the edge of the Hawija steppe, the home of the Arab camel-breeding Ubaid. Most of the villages are owned by the aristocratic city families and have no tribal significance. For a time, as an experiment, a Mudir was stationed at a small oasis in the Hawija to administer the Ubaid and the other Arab tribes near the Jabal Hamrin, but the arrangement was short-lived.

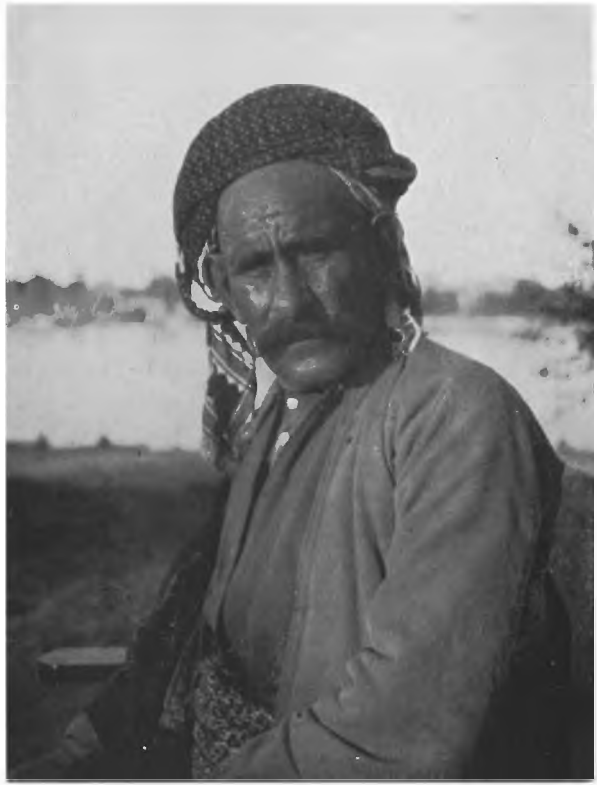
Malha (pop. 15,000) lies along the left bank of the Zab from a point about twelve miles south-west of Altun Köprü to its confluence with the Tigris, and is thus about forty-five miles long. The inland boundary was an indeterminate line[1] not very far from the river dividing the primitive settlements and camping grounds of several small Arab tribes and two small colonies of Chechens (who had emigrated in the middle of the nineteenth century from the Caucasus after the Russian annexation of their homelands) from the open Hawija. Most of the Arabs were of the Jubur, an almost amphibious tribe wedded to the lower reaches of the two Zabs and the adjacent stretches of the Tigris.[2] All Jubur are expert swimmers, but to cross the rivers in time of flood they do not disdain to invoke the aid of inflated skins exactly in the manner portrayed in the Assyrian reliefs. They had one other less enviable title to notoriety in that the whole community, men, women and children alike, was reputed

[1]In 1922 the upstream limit was 7 miles nearer Altun Köprü; but three or four years later a compact block of about twenty-five villages, half Kurdish and half Arab (Albu Hamdan) was transferred to Altun Köprü. The administrative headquarters was then transferred from the village of Malha at the north-eastern end to the more central position of Tall Ali but the old name was retained. From about 1940 onwards the whole of the canal system, known as the Hawija Scheme, constructed by the Irrigation Department was included in Malha, necessitating a more rigid definition of the inland boundary; when the irrigable land came to be distributed first priority was given to the original Jubur inhabitants and the Chechen colonists and second to the Ubaid.

[2]According to Shaikh Shahir, chief of the Jubur of Zummar north of Mosul, this tribe is divided into five principal sections: (1) al-Jamus, on the Tigris north of Mosul, mostly on the right bank in the nahiyas of Zummar and Humaidat with a few on the left bank in the qaza of Dohuk; (2) Albu Toma, a sub-section of Jamus, who had moved to various canals south of Baghdad; (3) Albu Injad, on both banks of the lower reaches of the two Zabs and on both banks of the Tigris between the two confluences; (4) al-Hayachil, on the Western Khabur in Syria; (5) Gidha, near Khanaqin, where they are known as Jumur, have become incorporated in the Kurdish tribe of Bajilan, and are to all outward appearance Kurds. Each of these sections is, of course, further subdivided, the Albu Injad of Kirkuk, for instance, into Albu Jabr, as-Saqr, Albu Jahash, and others.



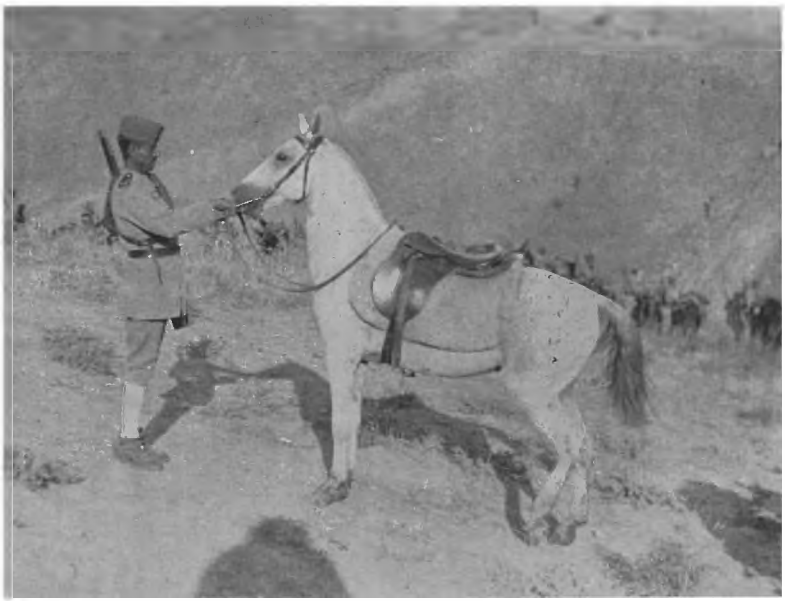
9(*a*) SHAIKH ABDUL KERIM OF SHADALA



9(*b*) HAMA AGHA OF RANYA



10(*a*) A.P.O.'S HOUSE, DARBAND



10(*b*) 'SIMKO'

to be infected with a foul disease called *bejel*, which is closely related to syphilis but is contagious in the ordinary way, being acquired more often in early childhood than in adult life.[1]

The nahiya of Altun Köprü (pop. 15,000) is situated on the left bank of the Zab and astride the Kirkuk–Arbil high road. The original part of the small township, which gives the nahiya its name, is built on an island in the middle of the river. The name means 'Bridge of Gold' and is variously derived from a lady named Altun, by whom or for whom the two bridges were built, and (more cynically) from the mint of money which, owing to corrupt practices, they had cost. To the Arabs the name is simply 'al-Qantara' and to the Kurds 'Pirdê', both meaning 'bridge'. The place is an important centre for *kalak* navigation. Apart from a family of Kurdish Begzadas claiming to have come from Ushnu near Urmiya, some forty families of Salihi Kurds and a few Arabs, the population is composed of orthodox Sunni Turkomans; in the poorer of the houses there was said to be much overcrowding. Except for the few Arab villages transferred from Malha after my time the villages of the nahiya are solidly Kurdish, Salihi nearer the river and Bibani inland of them to the south-east, but, most of the land being owned by city notables, neither had much tribal cohesion; two chiefs of the Salihi, Taha and Taufiq, generally lived in Kirkuk or in other villages owned by them on the borders of Qara Hasan and Jabbari.

Shuwan (pop. 11,000) is situated on the left bank of the Zab, east of Altun Köprü. The landscape is not so forbidding as in the parts of the foothill country to the south. From the Zab valley the ground swells up into puckered downs and, in the ridge of Khalkhalan, rises to an altitude of nearly 3,000 feet before falling again to the valley of the Khasa and the Kirkuk Plain; it is well watered and offers excellent grazing for sheep. Immediately adjacent to the river lies the string of villages belonging to the Shaikh Bizaini which, as I have already recorded, were for a time transferred to Sulaimani. The rest of the nahiya is inhabited by the Shuwan tribe; they are all peasants (the name means 'shepherds'), have no Aghas, and are not

[1]'Bejel: Syphilis as a contagious Disease of Children' in the *American Journal of Tropical Medicine*, Vol. 18, No. 6, Nov. 1938, by E. H. Hudson, who first studied the disease extensively and introduced the name into medical literature. I have to thank Dr. W. Corner for this reference.

claimed by any more aristocratic tribe as their clients. They were largely under the influence of their absentee city landlords, the Naftchizadas and others, but at the same time were not entirely without feelings of tribal solidarity; in tribal politics they had a good understanding with the Hamawand, their neighbours on the south-east. The Shuwan are divided into three sections: Kashik with forty-five villages, but poorer and weaker than the others, Sarkhasa-i Gulunkêwa with six villages, and Sarkhasa-i Yakhtakan with fifteen, the last two (as the name shows) in the south near the stream. The principal personality known to Government or, perhaps I should say, to the police was Azza-i Sherif-i Jelil of the Yakhtakan, a bearded old ruffian with a reputation for brigandage second to none, not even the Hamawand.

Qara Hasan (pop. 14,000) lies south of Shuwan and east of Kirkuk Headquarters. Of about fifty-five villages seven belong to Saiyids of an old established family known as 'Sadat-i Qara Hasan', five to the Barzinja 'Saiyids of Kanikawa', about twenty to the Talabani, and the rest either to absentee landlords or to the non-tribal villagers themselves. There are four Turkoman villages, Lailan (300 houses), Yahiyawa (150 houses), Tarjil (150 houses) and Qaralu (seventy houses); the first has already been mentioned as one of the principal centres of the Qizilbash, and a large proportion of the people of the other three were doubtless of the same persuasion. From the early days of the occupation it had been found convenient to regard this as a Talabani sphere of influence, and in 1922 the Mudir was still Shaikh Habib, a nephew of Shaikh Riza, who was allowed to make his headquarters at his own village of Khalid Bazyani.

The nahiya of Tauq (or Daquq) is situated astride the high road immediately south of Kirkuk Headquarters. It takes its name from the ancient town which in early Muslim times seems to have been a more important centre than Kirkuk itself[1] and

[1]In the *Nuzhat al-Qulúb* of Hamdullah Mustaufi of Qazvin (fourteenth century) Kirkuk is not so much as mentioned. The oil springs are referred to in connexion with Tauq, 'a medium sized town with a climate that is the best in all Arabian Iraq'. The river is described as one of three minor rivers of Arabian Iraq (another being the 'Bayat River', perhaps the Aw-a Spi) and as rising in the neighbourhood of the pass called Darband-i Khalifa, which must be Bazyan. The earliest mention of Kirkuk by any Muslim writer seems to be that in the history of Tamerlane known as the *Ẓafarnáma* by Ali of Yazd written in the fifteenth century (see Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, p. 92.)

where there still stands the base of an ancient decorative minaret. The modern township, which has a small bazaar, stands on the high road near the Basira River or Tauq Chai, here a broad shingly bed which fills up only after heavy rains in the hills. About five miles up-stream, where the river emerges from the first ridge of the foothills, the Turks had built a bridge of brick; the first floods after its completion had carried away several arches and the later efforts of our own Public Works Department to repair it had not been more successful; but the days in the year when the river was quite impassable were very few, so that even when the bridge was usable few cars made the ten-mile detour involved. As regards the population, Tauq itself is primarily Turkoman Qizilbash. The inhabitants of most of the villages are mixed Kurd and Arab, with a few families of Turkomans in two hamlets near Tauq; there are several all-Kurdish villages on the east and three or four all-Arab on the west. The actual ownership of the land, however, is vested in three important Kurdish families: the Kakai Saiyids who rank as tribal chiefs (eighteen villages), Shaikhs Faizullah and Izz-ud-Din Talabani, cousins of Shaikh Habib (seven villages), and Dara Beg Dauda (eleven large villages). Every year in the late spring or early summer, when the discharge of the river began to fall, fighting was apt to break out over the division of the water unless the administration had taken measures in advance to ensure a fair distribution.

Qadir Karam (pop. 15,000) corresponds closely to the old Turkish nahiya of Gil and in 1922 was divided into the three tribal areas discussed elsewhere.

The nahiya of Tuz Khurmatu (pop. 30,000) adjoins Tauq on the south-east and in 1922 was subordinated to the qaza of Kifri. Like Tauq it lies astride the high road and is divided from north-east to south-west by a river, in this case the Aw-a Spi, or the Aq Su as it now becomes. As has already been mentioned the township after which the nahiya is called is an important, perhaps the most important, centre of Qizilbash Turkomans in the liwa. The name is derived from the brine wells situated in the gap by which the Aw-a Spi breaks through the first low range of foothills close by into the plain, *tuz* being the Turkish for 'salt'. Three-quarters of the village population are Dauda, and of these about two-thirds are settled in the

foothills and one-third in the plain. The only other element of importance in the nahiya is the Bayat, a curious, composite tribe, the nucleus of which is said to have come originally from Khurasan. Their two dozen villages being situated in the southernmost quarter of the nahiya, adjacent to the Jabal Hamrin and the nahiya of Qara Tapa, their feuds and friendships were with the Arab tribes rather than the Kurds. Apart from an occasional visit from two or three of the chiefs my direct dealings with them were few, and I did not get to know very much about them at first hand. I have however preserved a note to the effect that they are divided into seven sections of which one (Albu Husain) is Sunni by religion and Arab by language, two (Al-Amara and Albu Wali) are Sunni Turkomans, three (Bair Ahmad, Qazadali and Yalanchi) are Qizilbash Turkomans, and one (Amarli) is Kurdicized Qizilbash Turkoman. Faris Beg of the Amarli was recognized as the senior chief for the purposes of Government business.

Kifri, with about 2,000 inhabitants, is the second town of the liwa and the seat of a Qaimmaqam. It is situated in front of another gap in the first range of foothills and on the high road at the point where the shortest caravan track to Sulaimani takes off for Ibrahim Khanchi and Sagirma; it is thus the natural market for the surrounding tribes and, before the extension of the railway to Kirkuk, was an important entrepôt for the Kurdish trade. On the north side of the gap there is a 'coal mine', actually a deposit of solidified bitumen, the output of which was about 150 tons a year before 1915 and had been raised to 1,000 by the Turkish military authorities during the war.[1] The stone quarried in the hills close by is light in colour and helps to give the town a clean appearance which always struck me on every visit and which was noticed by Heude and other early travellers. The leading families of the town consider themselves Turks; the population in general is mixed Kurdish and Turkoman. In Turkish times the town and qaza were officially known as Salahiya.

The old nahiya of Kifri was later divided into Headquarters, comprising the town and immediate environs (pop. 5,000), and Qala Shirwana (pop. 16,000), but it will be convenient to take them together, as I knew them. Outside the town the popula-

[1] It was again exploited during the war of 1939–45.

tion is entirely Kurdish: Jaf, Talabani, Dauda of Aziz-i Abbas (in a small enclave named Dauda Kurdistan separated from the rest of Dauda by a wedge of Zangana), Dilo and Gêzh. Some years before the end of the Ottoman régime the Dilo had been driven out of their ancestral homes farther north by the Zangana and had settled, some in an arc of villages running clockwise round and close to Kifri town from north-east to south-west, and others in the 'transferred territories' of the Khanaqin (Anglo-Iranian) Oil Company's concession; the Kifri section had remained wild and undisciplined, and had taken a leading part in the attack on Kifri and the murder of the British political staff during the Arab rebellion of 1920; under the civilizing influence of the Oil Company, to whom they supplied guards, the Khanaqin group came to be useful members of society. The Gêzh may be identical with the Gaj mentioned in the *Sharafnáma* without further details in a list of Persian Kurdish tribes; in Kurdish the word *gêj* means 'giddy' and their detractors say that they are well named; they occupy two or three villages on the Sirwan near Qala Shirwana and two more farther west, on the Narin River; they are quiet cultivators and are said to be Kakai by religion, though I never verified this.

Pêwaz (pop. 5,500) comprises, with some additions, the 'leg' of the nahiya of Warmawa which, in the early organization of Sulaimani, was thrust down between Sangaw and the Sirwan,[1] and which was transferred to Kirkuk when the Qara Dagh range became the boundary. The inhabitants are almost exclusively Jaf, with a few Zangana near the Aw-a Spi on the west.

The nahiya of Qara Tapa (pop. 21,000) occupies the angle formed by the Sirwan River and the Jabal Hamrin, in the extreme south-east of the liwa. The village of Qara Tapa itself has a mixed population of Turkomans, Arabs and Kurds, but the majority of the other villagers is Arab, the most important and homogeneous tribe being the Karawi in the tip of the angle. Several estates are irrigated from the Sirwan and the Narin, but the interests of Qara Tapa have always tended to be subordinated to the demands for water of the more influential landowners and tribes south of the Jabal. The Kurds are represented by the two small tribes of Zand and Palani on

[1]See p. 141 n. above.

the Sirwan north of the Karawi, and by the Gêzh on the Narin already mentioned. The Palani (seven or eight villages) are quiet folk who attract little attention. The Zand (ten villages), now Sunnis, claim to be fellow-tribesmen of that 'excellent prince' Kerim Khan of Persia (1750–79), who is said to be still gratefully remembered in his capital, Shiraz.

XIX LIFE AT KIRKUK

I LEFT Baghdad for Kirkuk by the metre-gauge line on the evening of the 20th September 1922. Shaikh Mahmud and Noel were on the same train, and the next morning when we reached rail-head at Kingirban, four miles from Kifri, hundreds of horsemen from the local tribes who had assembled for his *istiqbál* invaded the station, shouting and waving banners. They fell upon the Shaikh and dragged him away in triumph before an official deputation from Sulaimani could get in a word of the speeches of welcome they had come prepared to deliver. We stayed at Kifri for three days, and on the 24th, after seeing Noel, Mahmud and his party safely out of the town, I was flown up to Kirkuk by Flight-Lieut. S. M. Kinkead of No. 30 Squadron.[1]

The administrative status of Kirkuk was very different from that of Sulaimani. Although the liwa had not yet acceded to Faisal's kingdom it was being administered almost exactly as if it had, except that Turkish was still being used not only for local purposes but also in communications with Baghdad, that all the civil servants were local men (of whom there was no dearth in this cradle of Ottoman officials), and that the Iraqi flag was not flown over the serai. The responsible head of the administration and senior representative of all the Baghdad Ministries was therefore the Mutasarrif, and it was he who gave their orders to the Qaimmaqams, Mudirs and other officials. The Divisional Adviser (D.A.) technically had no executive functions, but for some time after the transfer of power, when

[1]Kinkead was one of the R.A.F. team which won the Schneider Cup from the Italians at Venice in 1927; he did the fastest lap but his engine gave out before the end and the actual winner was F/Lieut. Webster. Kinkead was killed the following year in an attempt on the world's speed record over the Solent.

both Ministers and Mutasarrifs lacked experience, it was usual both in the north and in the south for the more important communications to be written in parallel columns of English (generally the original) and Arabic (in our case Turkish). Difficult problems requiring a careful exchange of views between the province and the centre were generally thrashed out first by demi-official correspondence between the D.A. and the British Adviser to the Ministry before the result went forward as a recommendation or an instruction over the signature of the Mutasarrif or the Minister as the case might be. A few months after my arrival in Kirkuk, in order to underline the non-executive character of the post, the title 'Divisional Adviser' was changed to 'Administrative Inspector' (A.I.); but for several years more, indeed almost until the end of the Mandate, the High Commissioner continued to keep a close hand on everything that might affect the Kurdish political situation, and our position remained much stronger than that of our colleagues in the south.

The Mutasarrif was Fattah Pasha, a former Turkish general, whose family originally came from Tuz Khurmatu. He was a dear old gentleman and was quite happy to leave most of the work to the A.I.; our rooms on the first floor of the serai had a communicating door and our consultations were frequent and informal. Like most former Ottoman officers of my acquaintance he enjoyed a convivial evening, so that our contacts were not confined to office hours. We developed a good understanding, and I came to be very fond of him.

Another good friend was the Mayor, Mejid Beg of the influential Ya'qubizada family, a strong character and an energetic administrator, with ideas well in advance of those of his colleagues in other parts of the country.

One of the most important officials from my point of view was Murad Beg, Commandant of Police, also a former Turkish officer, who, if he was not actually a member of the Gêzh tribe, was related to them through his mother or by marriage. The police force in Iraq comprised both a dismounted division which performed all the ordinary duties which we are accustomed to associate with the police, and a mounted division which was more like a gendarmerie. In addition to his duties as Commandant Murad was for all practical purposes the Mudir

of the Headquarters nahiya (which, under the queer Ottoman system already described, was the direct responsibility of the Mutasarrif without the intervention of a Qaimmaqam or Mudir) and also deputized for the Mutasarrif in the settlement of tribal disputes in all parts of the liwa, whether under the provisions of the Tribal Disputes Regulations or by less formal methods. He was very knowledgeable and had a quiet sense of humour; I always enjoyed his company on the many tours of the district we made together.

On the judicial side the President of the Court of Sessions was overshadowed by his Vice-President, Umar Nazmi Beg, a native of Kifri, who, after playing an honourable part in the struggle for the Mosul wilayat, was destined to rise to the highest offices, first as a Mutasarrif and eventually as Minister of the Interior and Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq.

Among the other leading citizens able to influence public opinion were: Izzat Pasha, another former general, who had become Minister of Communications and Works in the first Iraqi cabinet; Nazim Beg, head of the Naftchizada family, who had been a deputy for Kirkuk in the Constantinople parliament, had confidently expected to be chosen as the first Mutasarrif of Kirkuk, and had become somewhat disgruntled over the preferment of Fattah Pasha; and Abdullah Safi Efendi, Mejid's brother, head of the Ya'qubizadi family, also a former deputy for Kirkuk. Of the 'spiritual heads', as they were officially called, I have already mentioned Saiyid Ahmad-i Khanaqah and the Chaldaean Bishop. Among many others whom I remember were one entitled Khadim as-Sajjada, Servant of the Prayer-Carpet, from the fragment of the Prophet's carpet of which the family were the hereditary custodians, and Shaikh Muhammad Ali Talabani, elder brother of Shaikh Habib of Qara Hasan (I suppose by another mother), a garrulous old man in his second childhood and a frequent visitor to the serai, who could often be seen riding through the streets from the family *takya* on a big, white Bahrain donkey, his long robes flying in the wind and an enormous umbrella held over his turbaned head to keep off the sun.

My principal British colleagues were Captain A. F. Miller (Assistant A.I.), Captain F. Reeve (Inspecting Officer of Police) and Dr. William Corner (Civil Surgeon); there was

also a Public Works Engineer whose sphere of duties included Arbil. Miller was a good Turkish scholar but never learnt any Arabic or Kurdish; he had moreover become too heavy to ride; his value for district work was therefore limited, but he was a most loyal assistant, liked by and influential with the Turkish-speaking officials and notabilities of the towns. Corner, in addition to the professional competence which had won him the unquestioning confidence of all classes of the population, was an indefatigable traveller and had made a name for himself among the tribes by penetrating with his motor ambulance to places in the broken country previously considered quite out of reach for anything on wheels. Corner lived in the inner and I in the outer half of an old Turkish house, and we continued the arrangement made by my predecessor whereby two rooms of the outer court served as a mess, the membership of which varied from time to time and of which Corner acted as secretary.

Although Arbil was nominally subordinate to Fattah Pasha, the administration there was for all practical purposes quite independent of Kirkuk. The two liwas, however, had many interests and problems in common and I always maintained a close and friendly liaison with the Assistant Mutasarrif, Ahmad Efendi, who had been Mayor in Turkish times and belonged to an influential local family, as well, of course, as with my colleague, Lyon, and the I.O.P., Captain C. Littledale.

The R.A.F. was represented by a Special Service Officer (S.S.O.), who lived in the town, for Intelligence, and by a combatant flight or a squadron (according to the political weather), housed in a garden belonging to Minas Gharib by the airfield on the southern edge of the town. The 55th Cooke's Rifles, Indian Army, and a regiment of Levy cavalry occupied the barracks adjacent to the serai.

There was in the bazaar at this time an appreciable number of Indian shopkeepers, who had followed in the wake of the Army of Occupation and who, in the absence of any British consular representative, looked to the A.I. to protect their legitimate interests. I have preserved a letter which I once received from one of them and which I cannot forbear to reproduce:

I most respectfully beg to submit before you the following few

lines as an 'APPEAL' and request that the same be considered favourably:—

On 7.11.23 was a great festival of Hindoos called 'DIWALI'. This day is observed as a holiday by all Hindoos stopping all kinds of work and business, and enjoyed with feasts, games, etc. A most popular game played by Hindoos on this festival throughout India, and which some way or other has become a most distinct feature of the ceremonies of this day, is a game played with Playing Cards and small pieces of Coin. Taking into consideration perhaps its popularity and importance on a religious festival, the Government also does not object in this, and therefore the game is played publically in Bazars, Shops, Houses, etc. very openly on Diwali festival.

I being a Hindoo invited certain friends of mine in my restaurant on the above festival so that they may have a Dinner with me and join me in the celebration of the day. According to the aforesaid Indian custom I put the Playing Cards before my guests for the purpose of passing of time by the above game, far from the idea that it will be taken afterwards as 'GAMBLING'. A few minutes after the game was started a Police Sergeant came in and stop the game. I was anyhow to present myself in the Police Station next morning which I did accordingly and was sent to the Court for a trial under an escort. The court fined me Rs. 25/- the charge being 'GAMBLING'.

Now I beg to request your honour to very kindly consider my case in the light of the above-described fact and see how far this game can be called 'GAMBLING'. I am fully aware of the fact that the Gambling is a crime and after realization of this fact how this could be possible for me to play myself or allow others to gamble openly in a public place like Restaurant. Never a man can't. The game was not played as a gambling but was played simply to celebrate the day after our Indian custom, which is allowed by the Government. You may inquire the other Hindoos as to the correction of this statement of mine.

Hoping a full justice will be done in the case and money paid by me as a penalty be refunded. Thinking in anticipation. I beg to remain, Sir, Your most obedient Servant, Haveli Ram, Proprietor Victoria Restaurant.

I told the petitioner that I could not interfere with the decisions of the Court, and that the next time he wished to celebrate a festival in a way liable to be misunderstood he would be wise to apply to the police for permission beforehand.

This reminds me of another ludicrous incident. The conditions in which we lived at Kirkuk, if not quite so primitive as

those at Darband, Halabja or Sulaimani, were nevertheless very simple. Hearing one day that a shop had been opened near the bridge with European-style goods I went down to inspect and had a bit of a fling, buying all kinds of useless things just for the sake of buying. Among my purchases was a rather expensive bottle of verbena bath-salts made by a leading British firm of beauty specialists. I had never owned anything quite so effeminate in my life before and had no idea in what quantities the salts should be used. When I went to change for dinner that evening I emptied half the bottle into the steaming galvanized-iron tub set out on my bedroom floor. There immediately arose an almost suffocating aroma that first filled my bedroom and then floated across the courtyard to the mess, where the other diners, members and guests from the R.A.F., were already beginning to assemble. It was greeted by a volley of coarse jests and ribald laughter, which was redoubled when I myself entered the room with the scent still clinging strongly to me. However I was not going to be deterred and continued to use the stuff for the next few days, in weaker solution, until it was exhausted. Now the water supply of our part of the town was arranged on the quite usual system of two open streams passing from house to house, one carrying water supposed to be clean (we had our drinking water brought directly from the source higher up) and another to serve the purposes of a drain. A day or two after I had finished the bottle Corner, who had been called in to treat one of the family, brought me a polite message from our down-stream neighbours to say that they would be very grateful if the members of the Political Mess would refrain from pouring whisky into the stream, alcohol being, as I doubtless knew, forbidden to those who valued the future welfare of their souls. It transpired that owing to the carelessness of the owner of the two houses, who was responsible for keeping the channels in good repair, part of the contents of the second stream had been flowing into the first as they passed under the dividing wall, and that for months the good folk next door had been drinking my predecessor's bath water and mine.

My Kirkuk appointment lasted two and a half years and I consequently sampled all the seasons of the year there. In the height of summer the maximum temperatures may rise as high as those in Baghdad, but the hot season is shorter and the

winter a good deal colder, but still not severe. One of the delights of autumn and winter was that on any day after office hours it was possible to take one's gun and be pretty certain of picking up two or three couple of snipe and perhaps a mallard down by the river or along one of the many irrigation channels, or an occasional quail among the young crops. For black partridge, as the British commonly call the francolin in the Middle East, we had to go farther afield and make a day of it; our favourite place within reasonably easy reach was Dara Beg's village of Iftighar on the Tauq Chai, where he and his men would form a line of mounted beaters and advance with us through the cover, shouting with excitement as each bird fell to a kind of shooting they had never seen before the arrival of the British Army. A few woodcock were generally to be found after Christmas in the village gardens near Kifri and in the thickets on the banks of the Sirwan farther east. For really big bags the best places for duck were in Qara Tapa, where there was a large marsh suitable for a party of between twelve and twenty guns, and for black partridge near the Sirwan in the Karawi country; but I was always far too busy in the other parts of the liwa to get down there more than once or twice during the whole of my time.

In my first autumn I used to go riding every morning for exercise, but before very long I found that an hour with Simko before breakfast made me so sleepy in office by about eleven that I had to give it up. The pleasantest going was out to the west of the town, and I frequently passed a prominent mound named Bilawa, where flint implements and cores of the neolithic period lay in profusion on the surface. Corner, fired with enthusiasm for research by a small booklet called *How to observe in Archaeology*, which the Director of the British Museum had caused to be prepared and widely distributed among the British officers of the Civil Administration, made a large collection of flints, not only from Bilawa but from other mounds which he inspected in the course of his medical tours, and sent them home to the Museum, where they aroused some interest.

He made another discovery of outstanding importance when, from information supplied by a grateful patient, he traced the exact provenance of certain cuneiform documents known as the 'Kirkuk tablets', of which a very few had then found their way

to western museums. Some time in 1922 or 1923 a fall of earth from the side of the great mound of Kirkuk after heavy rain had carried with it a number of tablets which were picked up when the debris was being removed. The find was not reported, but eight of the tablets reached the Baghdad museum through a dealer, who could only say that they came from Kirkuk. Corner had seen them during a visit to the museum and on his return successfully traced the finder, a respectable Muslim citizen, from whom he bought twenty-five more for the Baghdad museum and eighteen for himself (these were later acquired by the British Museum). The tablets had been lying on a floor several inches deep in carbonized material, and this no doubt accounted for their baked condition and excellent preservation. At Corner's instance Gertrude Bell sent up Dr. Edward Chiera of the American School of Oriental Research in Baghdad with a small grant of 500 rupees to make further investigations (February 1925). But inspection of the site showed that the side of the mound could not be further excavated without grave danger to the houses standing on the very edge above.

In the meantime, however, Corner had heard stories of a native of Tarkelan, nine miles south-west of Kirkuk, who, some thirty-five years before, had come upon some tablets when excavating for bricks in a line of swelling ground known as Wairan Shahr, Ruined City, a little north of a prominent mound called Yorghan Tapa. The villager, Atiyya by name, had carried on clandestine excavations for some months, apparently tunnelling by hand, and was known to have made several journeys to Baghdad with a donkey, until early one morning he was found suffocated in one of his own burrows. The place was still known as Atiyya Harabesi, Atiyya's Ruin, and the marks of his activity were still plainly visible when Corner took Chiera down and obtained permission for him to dig there from the landowner, Husain Beg Naftchizada, uncle of Nazim. When I visited Chiera four weeks later he had already cleared a brick-paved courtyard with a stratum of ash which had yielded so far sixty cuneiform tablets. He was worried because the 500 rupees were almost exhausted, and I was glad to help by telegraphing to Miss Bell, successfully, urging her to increase the grant by a sum sufficient to enable him to complete a season's work. I believe that no more tablets

from Kirkuk itself, other than the fifty-one already mentioned, have been traced; and it seems certain that all the so-called 'Kirkuk tablets' which reached the museums of Europe before 1925 were in fact the product of Atiyya's illicit excavations.

A study of the fifty-one tablets from the Kirkuk mound and thirty-one Yorghan-Tapa tablets traced in the collections of the British Museum was published by Mr. C. J. Gadd in the *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale* for 1926; from them he was able definitely to identify Kirkuk as the site of the ancient city of Arrapha (the position of which had theretofore been a subject of controversy) and Atiyya Harabesi as that of a city called Nuzu; many of the proper names were neither Babylonian nor Assyrian, and the local usages described in the contracts and judgements, which made up the majority of the tablets, indicated a society fundamentally different from that found in the neighbouring countries.

The excavation of Nuzu was continued in subsequent years by a succession of well-equipped American expeditions, and the discoveries, including thousands of cuneiform tablets, have given rise to a considerable literature. I am indebted to Professor Sidney Smith for the following note:

'The writing and language of the earliest tablets belong to the time of the Kings of the Agade Dynasty, roughly the 22nd century B.C., when the place, named Gasur, was under their control: their rule extended to Elam for a time. In the 19th century some form of textiles, mentioned in the trading letters of merchants settled near Caesarea (Mazaca) who were Assyrian subjects, was called 'of Gasur'. By the time of Hammurabi, first half of the 18th century, the town at Yorghan Tapa was called Nuzu, and the Assyrians mention it in letters found at the ancient Ma'er. The first king of the Kassite dynasty to hold Babylon itself mentions his lordship over Gutium and Alman (Ḥulwán) and the home of the Kassites in a way which proves that about 1600 the Kirkuk region was under his control; the excavations at Nuzu have not produced any written evidence between the time of the merchants, the 19th century, and the late 16th or early 15th century. The vast stores of tablets in the last proved level of habitation at Nuzu testify to the activities of four generations of a landed aristocracy of *Ḥurri*. This people, called Horites in the Old Testament, spoke a language almost certainly related to the later Urartaean, and it is found written both in

Babylonian cuneiform and in the alphabetic cuneiform script of Ras aš Šamra. Their mythology and ritual is becoming partially known from texts found at Boğaz Köi. They seem to have been an indigenous population of the Taurus region, who began to spread over Mesopotamia in the early 18th century, as far as the Orontes Valley, where they were a large element at that time in the population of Atshanah excavated by Woolley. By the early 15th century there was a confederation of kingdoms under dynasts who bore names in some early form of Sanskrit, perhaps to be considered 'Indo-Iranian'. One of these, Saušsatar, king of Mitanni, the overlord of the confederation, sacked the city of Ashur and a letter of his found at Nuzu proving that he was recognized there dates from about 1440–1420. This letter belongs to the later half of the time represented by the four to five generations found in the Nuzu documents; when Assyria recovered from the blow dealt by the king of Mitanni, the first step taken was to attack the Kirkuk region, and almost the last known document at Nuzu gives an account of the sack of a village by the Assyrians, about 1400. The whole province was called Arrapḫa. The capital at Kirkuk could be called the city of Arrapḫa, but was properly known as the 'city of the gods'. Some scholars think it was the seat of a dynast, others believe that Mesopotamian kings resided there. It is certain that a king also had a palace at Nuzu and a separate establishment of wives and children there. It is of some interest to note that when Kyaxares the Mede was allied with Nabopolassar in the final war against Nineveh, 617–612, his first attack was on Arrapḫa. This early history of the Kirkuk province is in many ways parallel to the part it played in the struggles between the Ottomans and the Shahs.'

Another discovery of historical interest was made in 1923, when a party of Assyrian Levies, who were levelling the parade ground opposite the barracks, came upon a sealed jar filled to the brim with 2,000 or more Sasanian coins. We most of us acquired a certain number. Of Corner's large collection the British Museum reported that five kings were represented in the hoard: Kubad I (A.D. 499–531), Khusrau I (531–79); Hormuzd IV (579–90), Bahram VI (590–1), and Khusrau II (590–628). The latest of the coins is dated 601, but it is tempting to suppose that the treasure must have been buried as the invading Arabs threatened Kirkuk after the decisive victory at Qadisiya in 636, which gave them possession of the Persian winter capital of Ctesiphon and was the prelude to the final extinction of the Sasanian dynasty in 651.

The most famous citizen of Kirkuk thrown up in modern times is undoubtedly Shaikh Riza Talabani, the poet from whose work I have already had occasion to quote. With the possible exception of Hajji Qadir of Koi, the early apostle of Kurdish nationalism, he is probably still (in spite of his old-fashioned language with its large admixture of Arabic words) the most popular of all the poets of Southern Kurdistan. His career was not untypical of the kind of thing that used to happen to Kurds, especially the younger sons of prominent clerical families, in the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid, and his poems are interesting as a reflection of certain aspects of the Kurdish society in which he lived. I hope therefore that it will not be considered out of place for me to conclude this picture of the lighter side of life at Kirkuk with a short account of this remarkable man.[1]

Shaikh Riza, a great-grandson of Mulla Mahmud, the founder of the family, and a first cousin of Shaikh Hamid, was born in about the year 1840 and died in 1909. As a young man he travelled extensively within the Ottoman dominions: he spent eight years in Constantinople under the patronage of the great Kamil Pasha; was for two years Persian tutor to the sons of the Khedive of Egypt; returned to Constantinople for a time; performed the pilgrimage to Mecca; lived again in Kirkuk; and finally settled down in Baghdad. The outstanding merit of his verse is what the Persian critics would call *zûr-i kalám*, vigour of diction, a quality which I hope can be dimly perceived even through my closely literal translations of the passages quoted below. A large proportion of his compositions shows him to have been an unblushing blackmailer and scrounger. Several of his journeys seem to have followed on tiffs with the rest of the family, which is not surprising if the following was typical of the sort of letters they used to get from him:

BERXE NÊR

Qewmekan, b'ew Zate wa hukmy leser behr u berhe,
Berxe nêrê, ger nenêrê her kesê xawenmerhe,
D'êm be gijya, dey dirhim, ger *fi'l maṣál* shêr y nerhe.

[1]Much of the material contained in the following paragraphs has already appeared in my article 'A Kurdish Lampoonist: Shaikh Riza Talabani' published in the *J.R.C.A.S.*, Vol. XXII, Jan. 1935. Later in the same year a volume of Collected Works in Kurdish, Persian and Turkish was published by the Mariwani Press in Baghdad.

Ba neqewmêt u nezanin em hemuw shorh u sherhe
Gisht leser biznê shel u kawrhê gerh u berxê lerhe.

MALE LAMBS

Relations! By Him who ruleth over land and sea,
Whichever of you is a flock-owner and does not send a male lamb,
I'll attack him, I'll rend him, though he be by reputation a ravening lion.
It's better that it should not come to this, and people should not know that all this scrapping
Is over a lame goat, a mangy kid, and a skinny lamb.

The following is an anecdote, told against himself this time, of an adventure with a nephew:

BRAZA EZIYZEKEM

Rhuwm kird e bezm y xas y braza eziyzekem
Emshew, be sed tewazu' u ixlas u serkiziy.
Nwarhiym le dirz y qapiyewe; xoy u taby'an
Da niyshtibun duw rhiyze le dewr y Xle y Keziy.
Det wut temê krabu be mexsuwsiy qapiyewan;
Xoy kird be nêre Tirk u wuty: '*Kim bilir sizi?*'
Pêm wut: 'Minim, flhane kesim, Mame Shêx Rhezam;
Bilmez misin, Hümeyis Efendi, meğer bizi?
Em sedd y babe bo mine? Izhar ke ta birhom,
Yan merhemet ke, hiyze, le serma gunim teziy.'
Wextê ke l'em mu'amele zaniym gherez chiye,
Der-halh gerham e pashewe, emma be aciziy.

MY DEAR NEPHEW

I went to my dear nephew's private party
This evening, feeling most polite and friendly and unassuming.
I looked through the crack of the door; he and his cronies
Were seated in two rows round Khidhr, Kazi's son.
You would have said the door-keeper had been specially warned;
He drew himself up like a lusty Turk and said: 'Who knows you?'
I said to him: 'It's me, I'm So-and-so, I'm Uncle Shaikh Riza;
Don't you know us, Humaiyis Efendi?
Is this shutting of doors for me? Speak out, that I may go away
Or allow me . . . you beast, my feet are numbed with cold.'
When I perceived what the object of the proceedings was
At once I returned home again, but feeling vexed.[1]

[1] I have been obliged to take two small liberties with the translation of the ante-penultimate line.

This Khidhr was a celebrated raconteur of racy stories; he is a good example of a man distinguished by his mother's name after his own instead of his father's. Knowing Shaikh Riza as we do we may suppose that he was vexed less by the disrespectful conduct of his nephew than at missing Khidhr's stories. Shaikh Habib Talabani assured me that he was not the 'dear nephew' of the incident but his elder brother, old Muhammad Ali of the umbrella.

But it was not only his relations who were expected to satisfy his whims unquestioningly. The following letters are said to have been addressed respectively to Saiyid Nuri Naqib, a member of the Barzinja family resident in Sulaimani, and to Hajji Asad Agha Huwaizi of Koi:

KELHESHÊRÈ

Kelheshêrê be Rheza lazime, Kirmashaniy,
Ziyrek u chabuk u demgerm u dirh u sherhrhaniy;
Kelheshêrê ke qepy girt le binagö y kelheshêr
Pirh be dem biy pichirhê wek seg y Hewramaniy;
Kelheshêrê ke eger shêr y nerhy b'êt e mesaf
Rhay rhifênê be sheqê mysl y ker y talhaniy;
Be drhêjiy weku Mewlan Begeke y Miyr y Beyat,
Be cesamet weku Köxazileke y Biybaniy.
Ey Neqiybzade, binêre kelheshêrêk y weha
Bo Rhezake y segeke y qapiyeke y Geylani.

A GAME-COCK

Riza wants a game-cock, a Kirmanshah one,
Clever and quick, a strong pecker, aggressive and pugnacious,
A cock such that when he snaps the lobe of another cock
He will tear out a mouthful, like a dog of Hewraman;
A cock such that if a ravening lion encounter him
He will drive it back with a kick, such as one gives to a looted donkey;
As tall as Maulan Beg, Mir of the Bayat,
As hefty as Headman Fatty of the Bibani.
O Naqibzada, send a game-cock like this
To Riza, that watch-dog of the Gilani gate.

TUWTIN

To kemnezery der heq y min êsteke, Agha;
Min mawe hewa y suhbet y tom her le demagha.

Bo tuwtineke y Bêsheme w Shawur u Shêtne
Shêt buwm u nehat; wexte dilhim der chê le dagha;
Caran chi be cagh u chi be bar bot ehenardim;
Nay nêry emêste ne be bar u ne le cagha.
Rhê y newteke, bacgiyry eger zore defermuwy,
Rhê y Xase be shew xalhiye, ba b'ê be Blagha.

TOBACCO

You are inconsiderate to me nowadays, Agha;
As for me, longing for your company persists in my mind.
For the tobacco of Bêshama and Shawur and Shaitana
I am mad, and it has not come; soon my heart will burst with the torture.
Formerly you used to send it to me either in jars or in bales;
Now you do not send it to me either in bales or in jars.
If you say the excisemen are many on the oil-well road,
The Khasa road is deserted at night, so let it come by Blagh.

Most of the references will I think be clear from what I have said earlier in this chapter, and in the last. In the first poem the point of the reference to the looted donkey is that a donkey is difficult to urge along at any time; it therefore requires superhuman efforts, as every Kurdish schoolboy knows, to get away with a looted one before the pursuers come up. In the second Shaitana is a village; Bêshama is the name of a tobacco with a characteristic flavour; the oil-well road approached Kirkuk from the west, through what is now the Iraq Petroleum Company's field; the Khasa road came down the river bed from the north-east; Blagh is a spring at the foot of the great mound near the site of the ancient 'Church of the Martyrs'.

But compliance with such demands did not mean that the recipient was out of the wood, as the following lampoon directed at Miran-i Khidhr Beg of the Khoshnaw tribe will show:

ÊSTIR Y DIYARIY

Miyr be sed mynnet hernardy êstirêk y rhuwt y quwt
Chwarpely sist u seqet, endamy her wek enkebuwt.
Xaweny aliky, nalhêm, pê nedawe, mutlheqa
Dawiyet ê, emma, weku bystuwme, quwt y layemuwt.
Pishty rhêsh u shany zamdar u ceduw bu; na ilac
Chend qroshêkim hebu bom da be newt u enzeruwt.

Sey Fettah y meyterim rhojê be huccet lêy newiy,
Kilky der hêna le bin; enca be astem göy bizuwt.
Gerchy natwanê bibizwê, hend lerh u kemquwwete,
Denkê coyêky niyshan dey, ta qiyamet d'ê le duwt.
Puwsh le lay helhwaye, heta ger peloshey ching kewê,
Bay deda, luwly deda, quwty deda manend y huwt.
Ger qelhew bê em ecinne y nêre, char nakrê, meger
Shêx y Rheffayi ilacy ka be esma y Celceluwt.
Meslhehet waye, heta ney xwarduwim, biy nêrmewe;
Zor detirsim def'eyê quwtim bida, bim ka be quwt.

THE GIFT MULE

The Mir as a great favour sent me a mule, all stripped and bare,
His four legs weak and lame, his body just like a spider's.
His master gave him, I will not say no fodder; of course
He gave him some, but, as I have heard, only just enough to keep him from dying.
His back was sore, his shoulders blistered, his withers galled; perforce
The few coins that I had I spent on oil and astringent herbs for him.
Saiyid Fattah, my groom, one day in exasperation bent over
And pulled his tail out by the roots; at that he twitched his ear a trifle.
Although he cannot move, so thin and weak is he,
If you show him a grain of barley he will follow you till resurrection day.
Straw for him is a sweetmeat; if only he gets hold of a thistle,
He shakes it, he rolls it on his tongue, he swallows it like a lusty whale.
If he gets fat, this lusty monster, there will be nothing for it but for
A Rifa'i Shaikh to treat him with the names of Jaljalut.
It would be wise, before he has eaten me, to send him back;
I much fear some time he may swallow and make a meal of me.

The point of the first line is that no bridle, saddle or blanket accompanied the mule; *enzeruwt* is said to be a weed with a poisonous yellow flower, resembling the tobacco flower in shape, commonly used for the purpose here referred to. The Rifa'i order of dervishes is associated with cures for rabies and snake-bite; Jaljalut is apparently one of the supernatural beings invoked in their charms.

Some of Riza's best known poems consist of attacks on the tribal enemies of the Talabani family—Jabbari, Dauda and

Kakai; but most of these, like many others aimed at individuals, are far too vitriolic and obscene to be translated into English.

Gibbon (*Decline and Fall*, Chapter XXXIII) distinguished among what he called 'the insipid legends of early Church history' the 'memorable fable' of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, the seven Christian youths who were walled up by the Emperor Decius in a cave and slept for 187 years till the reign of Theodosius. It is reproduced, with advantages, in the eighteenth *súra* of the Koran entitled 'The Cave', where the period of sleep is given as 309 years, and the picturesque detail added: 'in the entry lay their dog with paws outstretched'. Of the number of the 'Companions of the Cave', as the Sleepers are there called, the Koran records:

> Some say, 'They were three; their dog the fourth':
> Others say, 'Five; their dog the sixth':
> Others say, 'Seven; their dog the eighth'.

This the Muslim theologians have interpreted as meaning that the dog is included in the number of the Companions and is, therefore, covered by the assurance that they shall enter Paradise.

Shaikh Riza Talabani died at Baghdad and is buried there in the precincts of Shaikh Abdul Qadir-i Gilani. The epitaph in Persian now engraved on his tomb was composed by himself before his death, and refers to this legend:

> Yá Rasulu'lláh! Chih báshad, chun sag-i aṣḥáb-i kahf
> Dákhil-i jannat shavam dar zumra-yi aḥbáb-i to?
> U ravad dar jannat u man dar jahannam, kai ravást?
> U sag-i aṣḥáb-i kahf u man sag-i aṣḥáb-i to.

O Apostle of God! Why should not I, like the dog of the Companions of the Cave,
Enter Paradise in the company of thy friends?
That it should go to Paradise and I to Hell, how is that seemly?
It being the dog of the Companions of the Cave and I the dog of the Companions of thyself.

XX ROWLASH

I CAN now resume the political narrative at the point where I left it at the beginning of the last chapter.

During my three days at Kifri I avoided Shaikh Mahmud but saw something of the leaders of the Sulaimani deputation, Ahmad Beg-i Taufiq Beg, Hama-i Abdur Rahman Agha, Izzat Beg Jaf and Mustafa Pasha, yet another former General, and was struck by the seriousness with which they were taking themselves as members of a temporary Kurdish national administration. The tribal chiefs, however, were already talking wildly of a Kurdistan stretching south to the Jabal Hamrin.

Arrived at Kirkuk my immediate preoccupation was, of course, the Turkish threat. Öz Demir had followed up his success at Ranya by occupying Koi with a small force and by sending Abbas-i Mahmud of the hostile Pizhdar in command of a tribal *lashkar*, with a stiffening of his own regulars, to threaten Sulaimani itself; Abbas, however, had been prevailed upon by the notables of the town to halt in Surdash and await Shaikh Mahmud's arrival. Patrols from Koi had come down to the Zab at Taqtaq, and messages had been dropped by us on Koi giving the citizens, rather unfairly as I now think, three days in which to expel the Turks unless they wished the town to be bombed; they had replied that the presence of tribal auxiliaries with the enemy made this impossible, and asked for time.

I agreed with Minet, who was now commanding all Levies at Kirkuk, that the first thing to do was to put a garrison into Altun Köprü in order to protect the only bridge over the Zab and to safeguard communications with Arbil and Mosul; we also recommended a vigorous air offensive against the *lashkar* in Surdash. On the 27th September he received from G.H.Q. the familiar *non-possumus* reply to both proposals.

On the same day, however, I had a visit from a senior R.A.F. staff officer, who had been sent up by Air Vice-Marshal Sir John Salmond to discuss the situation, in anticipation of the transfer of the Iraq Command to him on the 1st October, in

accordance with the decision taken at the Cairo conference. It was like a breath of fresh air and a foretaste of the close and friendly understanding which was to mark the relations between 'the Political' and the Air Force in the years to follow. It is my firm conviction that the appointment of Sir John Salmond came only just in time to save Iraq; we were on the run and, had the wilayat of Mosul been lost, Baghdad and Basra alone could hardly have made a viable state. The very next day after the staff officer's visit, even before the official transfer of responsibility, aircraft were over Surdash looking for the enemy *lashkar*, and although they did not then find it in that wooded and rocky country the mere demonstration was invaluable.

I had gone down with fever the day of my arrival at Kirkuk, and all this business had been transacted from my bed. By the 29th I felt well enough to get up and, not yet having set foot in my office at the serai, motored to Altun Köprü—two hours on an uninteresting road—to find out what I could, at closer quarters, about the Turkish dispositions, to make arrangements for improving our intelligence from the evacuated areas, and to take over three caravanserais for the accommodation of the party of civil police (whom we were going to send in any case) and the two squadrons of Levies whose dispatch, I now felt confident, would be sanctioned on the 1st October, if not before.

The village of Altun Köprü stands, as I have mentioned, on an island in the river. There were about 400 houses, with a small bazar in the principal street where the main-road traffic brushed up against the wares hung out for sale and the knees of the loungers squatting on coffee-shop benches. Building had not yet spread to the mainland on either side. The two bridges had been blown up by the retreating Turkish forces in 1918 and had been replaced by unsightly iron trestle constructions which, however, even at this season of low water, could not entirely spoil the picturesqueness of the view from the south: a rickety old Government serai built over the road with a tunnel through the ground floor, the translucent blue-green of the river, flowing on the up-stream side through deep narrow channels hollowed out in the rock, and on the down-stream side past the melon patches at the foot of conglomerate cliffs that merged into the crumbling walls of the houses above.

With no organized arrangements for obtaining information I did not learn very much. Raftsmen from Mirza Rustam reported that Öz Demir had put in his own Mudir, a disgruntled Agha of Koi, at Taqtaq; and ample confirmation was forthcoming that the Shaikh Bizaini tribe, on the main track from Kirkuk to Koi on both banks of the Zab, had definitely thrown in their lot with the enemy.

Two days later, with still one day to go to the 1st, Minet moved with the bulk of the Levies to Köprü; simultaneously a vigorous air offensive from both Mosul and Kirkuk was launched against the barrack quarter of Koi and the principal Shaikh Bizaini villages. On the 5th Sir John Salmond himself flew up and stayed the night as my guest. Tall, handsome, well groomed and endowed with great charm of manner, he radiated energy and made it quite clear that from now on our line was to be the offensive. It was an unforgettable evening. After dinner we sat on the roof in bright, almost blinding, moonlight. He listened patiently as I unburdened myself on the errors of the past and gave my appreciation of the political and tribal situation. An elderly staff officer named de D—— was supposed to be taking notes as I expatiated, but he kept on dropping off to sleep in his deck chair. His chief, noticing this, amused himself every now and then by shouting: 'Got that, D——?'. D—— would start up, reply smartly 'Yes, sir!' and scribble vigorously while I helped him out by repeating the difficult tribal names; but before long D—— had dropped off again. The upshot was that the A.O.C. agreed that a ground operation by the Levies against the Shaikh Bizaini should follow the air offensive; he also told me that if the bombing did not drive the enemy out of Koi very soon he would be prepared to send a column of regular troops. The party returned to Baghdad the next day, but D——'s famous note-book lay forgotten for a week in the Squadron mess at Kirkuk. Results came quickly: some of the Shaikh Bizaini Aghas had made overtures for submission immediately the operations began, others thought they would have a better chance by going to Noel and Shaikh Mahmud at Sulaimani, so that Minet had only a few recalcitrants to deal with on the ground; on the 7th the Turks, who had started by reinforcing their garrisons, were obliged by the mounting hostility of the population to evacuate Koi. On the 11th I

motored to Arbil with Lyon, who left the next day with Littledale and a column of civil police to re-occupy that place. This they did without incident on the 14th.

Arbil is a remarkable town, built on the summit of a high circular mound rising steeply out of the plain. It was hither that Darius fled after his defeat by Alexander at the battle which is known by the name 'of Arbela', though it was actually fought on the plain of Gaugamela near the modern Christian village of Karamlais,[1] sixteen miles east of Mosul. Unlike those of Kirkuk the leading families, Turkish and Kurdish, still lived on the mound in their great ancestral mansions which, built on the very verge of the summit, seemed to ring the city round with a continuous fortified wall. There were only three or four precipitous paths leading to gates in the ring, and the general effect was far more imposing than that of the crumbling and ruinous acropolis of Kirkuk. There had so far not been much building at the foot of the mound. Arbil owed its importance to its position in the centre of a great wheat-growing district on the high road between Kirkuk and Mosul, and to its ideal situation as the market town of the mountain tribes to the east and north.

While these dispositions were being made on the ground the air offensive against the enemy parties in Ranya and Marga had continued without intermission. The effects were slow in manifesting themselves, but gradually more and more feelers for pardon began to reach Arbil, Kirkuk and Sulaimani from the tribal chiefs, many of whom had only gone with the tide from fear. I seemed to be constantly in the air, either being ferried[2] between Kirkuk, Arbil, Koi, Kifri and Baghdad, or guiding aircraft to their objectives. I had my first experience of bombing on the 27th October and noted in my diary:

We started the intensive bombing of Marga today. I went up to point out the targets. My pilot, McLaren-Reid, did some beautiful shooting; one 'cooper' in particular burst in the doorway of the

[1]'Notes on Alexander's Crossing of the Tigris and the Battle of Arbela' by Sir Aurel Stein, *G.J.*, Vol. C, No. 4, Oct. 1942. Professor Sidney Smith informs me that the site of the ancient city is not known; it was almost certainly not on the mound; it is curious that no cuneiform inscriptions from Arbil have been recorded.

[2]By this time No. 8 Squadron (de Haviland 9 A 'Ninaks') had been relieved at Kirkuk by No. 6 Squadron (Bristol Fighters) and a Flight of No. 1 Squadron (single-seater Snipe fighters). The Bristol was an open machine with the rear cock-pit so shallow that the passenger's chest and shoulders were well above the gunwale. Parachutes were not yet carried.

serai and ought to have done some damage. The sensation of bombing is exhilarating as you cruise over your target and after each discharge heel over to look down on your handiwork before working round to repeat the attack. One does not get the feeling of any great speed oneself, but the other machines look like so many angry hornets and terribly businesslike.

With the devastation wrought in the Ruhr or in Tokyo fresh in our minds it is easy to forget what a very puny thing bombing was in 1922. The 'cooper' was the ordinary missile and, as far as I remember, was a shrapnel bomb weighing twenty-five pounds, and previous warning was always given of a decision to bomb; the introduction of a 100-pounder and later of a 220-pounder, created quite a sensation. Incendiaries were used for the first time on the 1st November:

> The new incendiary bombs having arrived seven Ninaks flew up from Baghdad and attacked Marga; all machines from here co-operated with ordinary bombs. Four large fires were observed in the morning but evidently did not spread far since they were out by the afternoon; mud houses are very unpromising material.

These operations were not conducted without casualties on our side: on the 6th October a charming South African named Lockwaters, of No. 8 Squadron, who had been staying with me, crashed near Tarkelan and was killed; on the 24th Pilot Officer Horricks of the Snipes did not return from an attack on Ranya; and there were one or two others unknown to me personally. During the next two years it was my frequent duty to ask for some particular air operation, but on such occasions I was always racked with anxiety until from the roof of the serai, whither I invariably went towards the time when the machines were due back, straining my eyes in the direction of the target, I could descry the right number of aircraft coming in.

If the actual damage inflicted was not great the moral effect was, and for several weeks on end the Bristols and the Snipes were out every day on operations which were progressively extended from Marga to hostile villages in Pizhdar and to the Shawur valley, the enemy's main line of communication with Ruwandiz.

While these operations against the invaders and their tribal allies were in progress, things had not been going too well at

Sulaimani. Shaikh Mahmud may have been perfectly sincere when, before leaving Baghdad, he gave the assurance that he would confine his activities to the liwa of Sulaimani; but the tumultuous welcome in the station yard at Kingirban and the intoxicating air of Kurdistan as he rode across country in easy stages to his capital had quickly wiped out any memory of the limits placed upon him. A number of the Kifri chieftains, including even the Bayat, had accompanied him, and very soon I received complaints from the Talabani Shaikhs and others that on his way Mahmud had pressed them to sign a memorial demanding inclusion in a Kurdish state under himself. He reached Sulaimani on the 30th and was greeted as Hukmdar or Ruler of Independent Kurdistan; the local press emphasized that Noel, who had come up with the style of Liaison Officer, was in fact nothing more than that, a sort of Consul to serve as a go-between with the High Commissioner. On the 10th October a rescript 'given in Sulaimani the capital of Kurdistan' announced the formation of a 'Cabinet of Kurdistan' with eight members. In November the Ruler assumed the title of King.

The Kurdish case, as it was being argued by the nationalists of Sulaimani, can perhaps be best illustrated by the following two extracts from the local paper *Rhozh-i Kurdistan—Sun of Kurdistan*[1] the first from No. 1 of the 15th November and the second from No. 6 of the 27th December 1922:

It (an Arabic newspaper of Baghdad) talks of Kurdistan as if it were part of Iraq and calls it the liwa of Sulaimani, because it has close commercial and economic relations with Baghdad. It calls the Cabinet of Kurdistan by the name of 'Provincial Administrative Council'. These remarks are most deplorable. It is unbelievable that any enlightened person could be so unjust or inexact. We never expected our great and friendly neighbour to trample underfoot all our thousand-year-old rights and the good relations of these two governments and peoples, or . . . to violate our frontiers. . . . The formation of a Government of Kurdistan offers a hundred thousand benefits for Iraq; nay, the continued existence of Iraq can only be achieved through the continuance of the Government of Kurdistan. . . . History and geography bear ample witness that the Kurdish people have always had an individuality in the world and have always established their nationhood by practical proofs.

[1]See my article 'A Kurdish Newspaper: Rhozh-i Kurdistan' in the *J.R.C.A.S.*, Vol. XII, 1925.

If they were not greater, they were certainly not less than their likes in education, crafts, commerce, human rights, civilization, lands, population, etc. . . . The law and principle of self-determination are strongly impressed on the mind and soul of every individual of the nation. In the blessings of rights and frontiers, which have been justly allotted by the League of Nations, we too have our share. To preserve this share we shall make all necessary sacrifices with our moral and material being. . . . We submit with all pride that we are a clean and fearless people. We are not slaves but free. . . . Now, to God a hundred thanks, our night has turned to day, and . . . a great head and leader like the King of Kurdistan, King Mahmud I, has, as if by the miracle of the Messiah, been brought to life again for us. . . . The sacred aim of His Excellency the King of Kurdistan has ever been the protection of the rights and natural frontiers of Kurdistan and the maintenance of brotherly goodwill with our neighbours.

Kurdistan. When an educated person pronounces this word he does not mean only this zone of Sulaimani, but a broad, geographical region, and he thinks of a united, numerous Kurdish people. The natural frontiers of this country . . . are clear. . . . As the population of Mosul is Kurdish, why should the recovery or retention of this wilyat be demanded by outside peoples. The Turks, Arabs and Assyrians base their claims on the presence of a small number of their people. . . . The demand we make of the Lausanne Conference is not the protection of a minority, it is the vindication of the right to live of a great independent people with a country of its own.

These ambitions of the wild men of Sulaimani did not fail to cause a certain anxiety in the neighbouring liwas. The leading citizens, being real or assimilated members of the hitherto ruling race, regarded as unthinkable any idea of subordination either to an Arab government in Baghdad or to a Kurdish government in Sulaimani, while the majority of the Kurds also hesitated to declare for a Kurdistan that was to be ruled by Mahmud. Pending a decision as to the future of the Mosul wilayat as a whole they preferred a 'special administration' under the supervision of the High Commissioner, something between the licence given to Sulaimani and the centralized control of the rest of the country by Baghdad.

At Kirkuk we seemed to be very remote from the other problems agitating political circles in the capital and in the south. The term 'Mandate' had come to denote in the minds of

the politically-conscious classes of Iraq the idea of tutelage imposed on the country rather than of a trust limiting the freedom of action which, under older conceptions of international law, the Mandatary Power might have claimed by right of conquest. Opposition to the whole idea of a Mandate had quickly developed; and His Majesty's Government had decided very soon after the formation of the Provisional Government of Iraq that, for the purpose of defining their relations with the state they had set up, the Mandate should be replaced by a Treaty of Alliance, to which would be annexed a series of subsidiary agreements laying down the manner in which, and the machinery by which, the Mandatary Power should discharge its obligations. After the signature of the Treaty the next step in the constitutional advance of Iraq was to be the election of a Constituent Assembly to perform three specific tasks: to approve the Treaty, to draw up a Constitution, and to pass a new Electoral Law.

Our own local problem was brought to a head by the signature of the Treaty on the 10th October, three weeks after my arrival in the liwa,[1] and by the instructions sent shortly afterwards to the Mutasarrif of Kirkuk and the Sub-Mutasarrif of Arbil to proceed with preparations for the elections to the Constituent Assembly; my instructions were to work steadily but unobtrusively to wean Kirkuk from its attitude of aloofness towards full adherence to the Iraqi State; the notables were not slow to see that participation in the elections must prejudge the very decision they were anxious to postpone.

It was inevitable that a grave difference of opinion should arise between Noel and myself as to the policy we ought to follow. He, as it seemed to me, tended to look at the problem too unquestioningly through Sulaimani spectacles:[2] we had

[1]The period of twenty years laid down for the validity of the Treaty was so bitterly attacked that it soon became obvious that there would be little hope of its ultimate ratification without alteration. A Protocol was therefore negotiated and signed on the 30th April 1923, providing that the Treaty should terminate upon the admission of Iraq to the League of Nations and, in any case, not later than four years after the ratification of a treaty of peace with Turkey (it being assumed, wrongly as it turned out, that by such a treaty Turkey would renounce all claim to sovereignty over the whole of Iraq). The subsidiary agreements were not signed until March, 1924.

[2]And no doubt he felt much the same about me. I give these details not in order to suggest that I was necessarily right and he wrong, but only to illustrate the kind of quandary in which we were constantly finding ourselves until the Mosul issue with Turkey was finally settled. For the next two years I was second to none in mooting ideas and projects for local palliative action, many of which proved impracticable or gave very poor results; an example follows almost immediately.

despaired of keeping out the Turks with our own resources and had brought back Mahmud to consolidate Kurdish national feeling as the sole means of doing so; unless our policy was to stultify itself we must accept its logical consequence and concede all his demands, supported as they were by the Kurds of all three liwas. On the 17th October I wrote to the High Commissioner:

The tenor of recent communications from Sulaimani fills me with misgiving. The policy advocated seems to be based on . . . a series of false premises leading to highly dangerous conclusions. The demand for immediate elections is coupled with the assumption that the vast majority of Kirkuk liwa will vote for Shaikh Mahmud. I have shown in another letter that such a result is extremely doubtful; at any rate we must reckon with the possibility of a majority vote against Shaikh Mahmud. We are told that if we try to cook the result Mahmud will come out against us. If he really is convinced that he commands the support of three-quarters of the liwa he will jump to the conclusion, when he fails to win the election, that it has been cooked, and the result will be the same. (I then went on to set out the technical difficulties of holding any popular consultation of the kind proposed according to procedure laid down for the elections to the Constituent Assembly.)

While Mahmud was clamouring to be recognized as the head of an enlarged Kurdish state, affairs in Sulaimani were going from bad to worse. The very considerable sum of money left in the Treasury at the time of the evacuation had been squandered away in the first three weeks, mostly on presents to the tribal chiefs assembled in the town and on the entertainment of their numerous retainers. The Kurdish officers who had been generously released by the Iraqi Army to give a nucleus of intellectuals to the administration were thoroughly disgruntled by the preferment of uneducated Shaikhs, and one of the most enlightened of the ex-officers who had settled in Sulaimani, Jemal Beg, was foully murdered for criticizing Mahmud's methods. Unfortunately for us the exhaustion of the funds in the Treasury coincided with the first deliveries of the new season's tobacco, the principal money crop of the district, to the Customs warehouses in Sulaimani; and Mahmud was able to finance himself by collecting both the tithe and the excise duty at the rates laid down by law. In the emergency I was

often obliged to take urgent action without regard to the cumbrous procedure of normal times and I gave instructions that receipts issued in Sulaimani for the excise duty, which unlike the tithe was a central and not a local revenue, were not to be recognized. For some reason financial officials seem to be more hide-bound than others, and before very long I received a bitter protest from the Directorate-General of Customs and Excise against this interference in their domain, and it took me quite a long time to get them to understand that the money collected in Sulaimani was being spent on hostile purposes and that they themselves were losing important revenues. This measure, however, only embarrassed Mahmud for a few weeks; eventually the merchants preferred to pay the duty twice rather than bring the trade to a full stop.

At the end of October a new and dramatic turn was given to the course of events by the sudden and unheralded arrival at Dêra, eighteen miles north of Arbil, of the redoubtable Isma'il Agha 'Simko', chief of the Shikak tribe on the Turco-Persian boundary in the Qutur region, who, after wresting from Persian authority, in a rebellion to which he sought to give a Kurdish nationalist complexion, the whole of the border districts from Dilman to Bana, had suddenly collapsed before a converging movement by Turkish forces from the west and a Persian army, rejuvenated by the reforms of Riza Khan, from the east, losing not only his guns, machine-guns and ammunition train but also, among others, his wife killed and a small son of six, the apple of his eye, captured. He had drifted down to Iraq looking for help, and was surprised and distressed by our refusal of permission to come straight on to Arbil.

The case of his principal lieutenant, Saiyid Taha, who arrived independently a day or two later, was rather different: he was an Ottoman subject, had tribal and landed interests in the Ruwandiz qaza and, it will be remembered, had been considered as a possible candidate for the office which the speed of events had forced us to confide to Shaikh Mahmud. He was therefore directed to come in the first place to Kirkuk, where I saw him on the 31st.

Saiyid Taha was a heavily built man of perhaps eighteen stone. He was dressed in the north-country homespun jacket and bell-bottomed trousers with grey stripes, and the thick

felted waistcoat over the jacket; on his head he wore the knitted balaclava, shaped rather like a helmet with a pompon on the top, which, in accordance with a favourite Asiatic practice, he had adopted as the symbol of his branch of the Kurdish nationalist movement. He was a man of great intelligence and considerable polish, physically tireless in spite of his weight, and a crack shot with a rifle.

He was clearly disappointed to hear that the High Commissioner was most unlikely to entertain any proposal for activity outside the frontiers of Iraq, but nevertheless offered his co-operation in the re-establishment of our authority in Ruwandiz. He thought it would be quite simple to turn out the Turks, who numbered only 130 in the Ranya area, 120 in Ruwandiz, and fifty in Zêbar farther west: he would use his own tribesmen of whom 300 families were now in Iraq, the great nomad tribe of Harki who were even then approaching their winter quarters near Aqra, and certain other tribal chieftains well affected to him; the only assistance required would be some air support, a supply of rifles and ammunition, and money for the food of his *lashkar*. He made no stipulation regarding his own reward but hinted that he would hope to be put in charge of the qazas of Ruwandiz, Aqra and Amadiya just as Shaikh Mahmud had been given Sulaimani.

The idea of a forward policy towards Ruwandiz on these lines, with a view to re-establishing our administration up to the frontier of the Mosul wilayat, and at the same time solving the Sulaimani problem by cutting off Mahmud from direct contact with the Turks, appealed to me strongly and I recommended it to Baghdad. Bourdillon took it up with enthusiasm, and Saiyid Taha was flown down to take part in the tripartite conversations then in progress between King Faisal, the High Commissioner and a delegation from Sulaimani regarding the future relationship between the autonomous liwa and the Iraqi Government. In the meantime I was instructed to go out to see Simko.

Accordingly on the 4th November I flew to Koi to confer with Lyon, and on the 5th to Arbil. On the 6th Lyon (who had returned from Koi by road), Ahmad Effendi, Littledale and I motored out to the rendezvous at the Gerdi village of Bahirka ten miles on the road to Dêra. Simko was accompanied by his

brother Ahmad, two or three minor relatives, and about twenty retainers. The Aghas were dressed in smart uniforms of British-Army serge, Russian top-boots, and the high cylindrical felt hats of the Shikak completely hidden by the turban of silk handkerchiefs wound tightly round; the jackets were double-breasted with stand-up collars and full skirts of cavalry type, the breeches might have been cut in Savile Row. They were all, of course, festooned with bandoliers and one or two had field-glasses slung over their shoulders. Simko himself was a well-knit, leanish man of middle height; his features seemed very European, the brown tooth-brush moustache would have graced any British officer, and the regularity of his shining white teeth was discovered by a winning, almost shy, smile.

His attitude was much the same as Saiyid Taha's: he had no particular feeling of resentment towards the Persians—he had given as good as he had received—but he wanted to get even with the Turks, who had made a pretence of backing him and had then turned upon him; he was astonished that we should be so careful of the susceptibilities of the Persians, since they were known to be co-operating all along the border with the Turks who had turned us out of Ruwandiz and Ranya and were still openly warring against us; he had come in the hope of finding us ready to champion the cause of Kurdish freedom against two governments hostile to us; if he was wrong he had no wish to demand asylum but would make his way back to his tribes and do his best alone.

During this interview I had an interesting demonstration of the reason why it is always so easy to get wind of any Kurdish tribal intrigue. The meeting was held behind closed doors in the guest-room of our host, Jemil Agha Gerdi. From time to time his coffee-man would come in to distribute coffee in the Arab fashion, which demands two or three rounds on each occasion; after each round he would loll nonchalantly against the doorpost, and the assembled Kurds seemed to be quite unaware that he was listening carefully to everything that was being said. It fell to me or Lyon to turn him out or stop the conversation whenever the precaution seemed necessary.

The plan that emerged from the Baghdad conversations was not at all to my liking: in addition to the rifles, ammunition and money for which Saiyid Taha had originally asked, 150

Kurdish volunteers were to be released from the Iraqi Army for one month to stiffen the tribal forces; Noel (who had been in Baghdad with the Sulaimani deputation) was to be in political charge, and I also was go to Arbil with a view to moving on eventually to work from Aqra; an announcement regarding Kurdish rights was to be made as soon as the text had been approved by the British and Iraqi Governments. Now while I had expected that some regularly formed force, probably the Levies, would be on the spot to follow up and consolidate our authority in any area which the tribal threat might induce the Turks to evacuate, it seemed to me that 150 individual soldiers detached from their units and without the support of any of the ancillary services required to maintain troops in the field would, with their three guns, be a liability rather than an asset and would impair the mobility and intangibility of the harassing operation which I had contemplated. I also felt that Ahmad Efendi and Lyon, who were in charge of the civil administration of Arbil liwa (the subordination of which to Kirkuk was little more than nominal and was in any case to terminate at the end of the year) should have been put in charge rather than outsiders like Noel and myself. However, though the child was not all that I had hoped I could not escape all parental responsibility, and so on the 21st I moved up to Arbil.

Misfortune dogged Operation Rowlash (Ruwandiz *lashkar*) from the start. On the 17th the windows of heaven had been opened and for three whole weeks, almost without intermission, the rain poured down from leaden skies. The Mosul and Baghdad volunteer contingents arrived on the 26th and the 28th after floundering through seas of mud, cold, wet, without their baggage, and almost mutinous. Such equipment as had been provided proved, on arrival some days later, to be for the most part old junk which had been cast as unserviceable by the Ordnance Department. Saiyid Taha, too, was proving a disappointment; his claims regarding his own resources had been very much exaggerated, and even the Harki, on whom he had relied, showed no disposition to do his bidding; he seemed to have no plan for his own activities and to be counting on indiscriminate bombing, not only of hostile targets but also of tribal chiefs who hesitated to co-operate with him. As the days passed by without any sign of a forward move the volunteers

began to wonder what was going to happen to them if they did not rejoin their units before the month expired. Delay in the publication of the promised political announcement was also unsettling the officers.

The first week in December found Rowlash still bogged down at Arbil with little prospect of an early move. For the time being there was nothing I could do; so it was agreed that I should visit Koi, do what I could from there to arrange for the discomfort of the enemy parties still in the Ranya area, and then return to Kirkuk.

Babakr Agha had come in to see us at Arbil, and on the 8th we left together with his escort of seventy Pizhdar horsemen, cheered and warmed by the first sunshine we had had for three weeks. After eight miles of rolling downs we came to very broken country with numerous watercourses deep down between dark red sandy cliffs. We passed several camps of Bolê nomads on their way to their winter pastures in the Arbil Plain but no villages, until towards sundown we reached a large settlement of a hundred houses called Shakha Piska. Among the crowd that flocked out to see us arrive was a former Turkish soldier from Adrianople, who piped us in with a home-made bagpipe; the bag when inflated was large enough for him to remove his lips and sing several lines of a Turkish song to his own accompaniment before the pressure was exhausted.

At Koi we were lodged by the Qaimmaqam, Jemil Agha Huwaizi, whose ladies (I noted in my diary) had prepared the most delicious meal I had had in Kurdistan. Among my many visitors were Ziyad Agha, the child of Hama Agha Ghafuri's old age, and Reshid Beg, chief of the Pishtgeli, who reported that two nights earlier the Turks from Ranya, who for fear of the R.A.F. now only dared to march by night, had passed through his village of Bêtwata, situated in the valley of the Ranya 'fan' immediately west of Shawur, in full retreat for Ruwandiz. The sustained bombing of Marga and Pizhdar had finally induced their principal ally, Abbas-i Mahmud, to withdraw his support, while rumours of the preparations afoot at Arbil had made them fear for their communications. This was comforting evidence that the conception of Rowlash had not been entirely unsound even if faulty execution and unpropitious weather had compromised the chances of complete

success. Noel continued to struggle manfully, trying to bring Saiyid Taha, Simko and Shaikh Mahmud together for joint action; his efforts were doomed to failure since, although the first two were desperate men and could hope for no mercy from the Turks, Mahmud was still trying to use them as a lever to secure his own demands and ambitions.

After two nights at Koi I said good-bye to Babakr, who was disappointed by my inability to promise an early re-occupation of Ranya and Pizhdar. It was a glorious, clear day as I rode southwards through more broken country green with oleander in every watercourse. When I halted at midday the Zab lay just three miles away, a streak of silver in the shingly bed, with Khalkhalan and the other green hills of Shuwan swelling up beyond; to the east the gaunt crags of Jasana and Qamchugha towered up behind the end of Haiba Sultan and, although over forty miles away, the snowy peak of Pira Magrun, peeping over Sarsird, seemed very close. I spent the night at Taqtaq and crossed by the ferry in the morning. The onward road ran first over the springy meadows of the alluvium and then rose and fell to cross numerous torrent-beds, of which the Bast-i Umar Mandan[1] was the largest. The point where the track crosses Khalkhalan, at an altitude of 2,500 feet, offers a superb view of the mountains to the north and east and, in later years, after the construction of a motor road, became a favourite place of excursion for visitors to Kirkuk from the south.

Back at my headquarters I found two conflicting influences at work: Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Qadir Karam, the Jaf Begzadas and other moderates had sent messages to say that they had broken with Shaikh Mahmud on account of his relations with the Turks; on the other hand it was now becoming obvious that Rowlash was going to be a fiasco, and Mahmud's contemptuous refusal to co-operate with Saiyid Taha had gained him considerable prestige, especially among the tribal chiefs at the Kifri end of my liwa, even the Talabani having felt constrained to play for safety by visiting him at Sulaimani. I therefore pressed for the early issue of the promised announcement regarding Kurdish rights and suggested that it should be communicated officially, not to Mahmud, but to the Sulaimani

[1]Taqtaq is the Kurdish word for 'snags' or 'rapids'. For the village of Umar Mandan see p. 187 n. above.

moderates. This was approved, and it was decided at the same time that Captain A. J. Chapman, who had been holding the fort at Sulaimani, should come under my orders until such time as Noel should return (which, in the event, he never did).

Accordingly, on the 22nd December, accompanied by Corner and Reeve, and with the announcement in my pocket, I left by car for Dara Beg's village of Iftighar, where we enjoyed an afternoon's shooting and spent the night. The next day we rode over rolling country to Bahram Begi, the residence of Shaikh Tahib Talabani, head of the tribal enclave of Gil. Three of his brothers, Jelal (the eldest), Ghalib and Reshid, all wearing dark overcoats of European cut and, as befitted their religious character, checked Arab headcloths in two shades of dark blue held in place by *'aqáls* of loose camel-hair of the kind affected by townsmen in the south, came in, very ashamed of their recent visit to Sulaimani and full of excuses and promises for the future. Bahram Begi was the centre of the small local oil industry resembling that of Kirkuk, and before leaving in the morning we inspected the three refining retorts at the village itself and the ten shallow wells about two miles away.

The road on to Qadir Karam lay through broken country of the most forbidding type, red clay, shale and sandstone furrowed with deep gullies. A heavy rainstorm made the narrow tracks dangerously slippery, and we reached our destination after dark, wet, muddy and very cold. The Shaikh's son, who had ridden out to welcome us, guided us down the last treacherous slopes to the two-storied guest-house of the *takya*; the old man received us hospitably in a carpeted upper room, where a large fire of crackling oak logs was blazing in an open grate.

I had a good deal to do with Shaikh Abdul Kerim in the next two or three years. His great ambition, as I have already explained, was to see the establishment of a Kurdish state under the Barzinja Shaikhs, but he was shrewd enough to see that Shaikh Mahmud, the obvious, indeed the only possible candidate for the highest office, was his own worst enemy; he disapproved of his antics not so much because they were wrong in themselves as because they were likely to forfeit our good will and so compromise the chances of his hopes being fulfilled. He was nevertheless a useful ally in the day to day task of rallying moderate opinion.

The announcement which I was instructed to communicate read as follows:

His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of Iraq recognize the right of the Kurds living within the boundaries of Iraq to set up a Kurdish Government within those boundaries and hope that the different Kurdish elements will, as soon as possible, arrive at an agreement between themselves as to the form which they wish that that Government should take and the boundaries within which they wish it to extend and will send responsible delegates to Baghdad to discuss their economic and political relations with His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of Iraq.

This text, in particular the use of the words 'Kurdish Government' rather than 'Kurdish administration' and the absence of any geographical definition, went far beyond anything which the previous attitude of the Iraqi Government, and indeed of the High Commission, had led me to expect, and I translated it orally to Abdul Kerim with some misgiving. In Baghdad however they had felt no such qualms and had published it simultaneously in an official communiqué.

We spent Christmas Day pleasantly, coursing hares on the other side of the river with the Shaikh's sons. From Qadir Karam we marched in two easy stages to Tuz Khurmatu and, after quick visits to Kifri and Tauq, I returned to Kirkuk just in time to get a back seat in Kinkead's 'Ninak' for Baghdad, where I stayed with the Bourdillons and, robed in a motley mixture of silk pyjamas, bright handkerchiefs and brass curtain-rings, saw in the New Year as a peace-loving gondolier from Venice.

XXI KOICOL—I

All eyes were now on Lausanne, where the Peace Conference had opened on the 20th November 1922, with Lord Curzon and Ismat Pasha Inönü as the protagonists for Great Britain and Turkey respectively. Turkey was claiming the retrocession of the whole of the Mosul wilayat down to the Jabal Hamrin, while His Majesty's Government were asking for a frontier to correspond with the northern boundary of the

wilayat. There was a complete deadlock, neither side budging an inch from its original position, until on the 4th February it was finally agreed to exclude the 'Mosul question' from the programme of the Conference, and to give the two Governments a year in which to reach a direct understanding; failing such an understanding the dispute was to be referred to the League of Nations, and in the meantime the *status quo* was to be respected. With this otherwise negative decision the abortive Treaty of Sèvres was finally buried, and with it the obligation on the Mandatary Power to keep open for the Kurds of Iraq the possibility of exercising a right to adhere to any Kurdish state that might be formed in the eastern provinces of Turkey.

Early in January 1923, while the Lausanne conversations were still in progress, it became evident that the Turks were concentrating troops at Jezirat-ibn-Umar (Jezira, now Cizre), a few miles from Zakho. The population was quick to get wind of these threatening movements and to observe the redistribution of British troops that followed; excitement in Kirkuk reached fever heat, local officials co-operating with us went about pallid with terror, and if, on the 27th, the Cooke's Rifles had marched out by the Kifri instead of the Arbil road, there might well have been an ugly outbreak. Pro-Turkish secret committees, on which most of the influential families took care to be represented by at least one or two minor members, sprang up overnight; a leading spirit of the agitation was, rather surprisingly, Saiyid Ahmad-i Khanaqah. The agreement to shelve the Mosul question reached at the beginning of February, by emphasizing that the future of the wilayat was still uncertain, added to the general unrest.

In these circumstances progress in solving the Kurdish problem was hardly to be expected. On the 8th January the 'doughty champion of Kurdistan, His Excellency Isma'il Agha Simko', as he was styled by the local press,[1] arrived in Sulaimani, and was received with a parade of troops, a salute of seven guns, and the proclamation of a public holiday; although no agreement for co-operation between him and Mahmud resulted, his presence could only add fuel to the fire of nationalistic exaltation. Twice Mahmud sent messages asking me to

[1]For a reconstruction of events at this time, based on the Sulaimani press, see again my article 'A Kurdish Newspaper'.

meet him, the first time at Qadir Karam and the second time at Kirkuk, but on each occasion he excused himself at the last minute; two special representatives, Kerim Beg Jaf and another, arrived instead on the 20th, but their instructions were so extravagant that no serious discussion was possible. At the beginning of January also Mahmud had hoisted his flag at Ranya; the qaza then being part of the Sulaimani liwa, this was a legitimate move within the conditions laid down at the time of his return, but it brought him into direct contact with Ruwandiz, and two Turkish officers actually visited him in Sulaimani soon afterwards. Early in February his brother-in-law, Fattah Efendi, who had been a captain in the Turkish Army, arrived from Ankara with promises of support, and, although Öz Demir (as we learned later from captured correspondence between Mahmud and Divisional Headquarters at Jezira) had skilfully evaded all requests for assurances regarding Kurdish rights, Mahmud finally threw off all restraint and set to work to stir up revolt in the Kurdish parts of the Kirkuk liwa.

In the face of these two threats, from the pro-Turkish parties and from Mahmud, I did my best to rally the morale of the Mutasarrif and the officials to administer the liwa without fear or favour and, by frequent visits, to stiffen the will of Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Qadir Karam, the Talabani, the Jaf and other tribal chiefs to resist the hostile propaganda assailing them from both directions. Both my intelligence and Lyon's pointed to an outbreak timed for early March, with Kirkuk and Koi as the first objectives. On the 14th February Bourdillon flew up for consultations; we agreed that if we could evict the Turks from Ruwandiz the Sulaimani problem would be half solved, but that, since such an operation in the immediate future was out of the question, direct action must be taken against Mahmud.

On the 16th, accordingly, I flew down to Baghdad where, at a conference attended by Sir Henry Dobbs,[1] Bourdillon and myself on the one side and Air Commodore A. E. Borton and Group Captain W. F. McNeece for A.H.Q., a plan of action

[1]Sir Percy Cox was still in Iraq but was at this time concentrating on questions connected with the constitutional development of the new state. The ordinary problems of administration were being dealt with by his Counsellor and successor designate, Sir H. Dobbs. Bourdillon was Secretary to the High Commissioner and was promoted Counsellor when Dobbs took over.

was agreed to: (1) On the 21st the High Commissioner would telegraph to Mahmud instructing him to come to Baghdad; (2) Failing his compliance a force of aircraft would demonstrate over Sulaimani and drop notices announcing his dismissal and giving him five more days within which to report in Baghdad together with all the members of the Administrative Council; (3) Two companies of the 14th Sikhs would be moved by rail to Kingirban and ferried thence by air (a novel operation at that time) to Kirkuk, to reinforce the Levies as a precaution against any impulsive drive in our direction; and (4) The barracks and Mahmud's headquarters at Sulaimani would be bombed if he refused to leave the town. I was also authorized to inform Simko that on the High Commissioner's representations the Persian Government had agreed to pardon him, and to encourage him to leave Sulaimani. We expected that rather than come in Mahmud would either retire to his own villages within nuisance distance of the town or, at best, fade away into Persia. Further action would of course depend on developments, but, if no central authority could be installed in Sulaimani strong enough to control the whole liwa, I had a scheme for detaching the qazas of Ranya, Chamchemal and Halabja and administering them, the first from Arbil and the others from Kirkuk. My own staff was to be reinforced by Chapman, who was to be recalled from Sulaimani, and Captain E. J. Douglas, an officer of the former Sulaimani establishment. When I returned on the 19th Kirkuk aerodrome had been reduced to a morass by heavy rain; all four machines in the flight became completely bogged, but fortunately none of us tipped up on our noses.

On the evening of the 20th I duly telegraphed the High Commissioner's message. Shaikh Mahmud replied asking me to go to the telegraph office and give him further explanations; I answered that I had no authority to discuss my chief's decisions and that he must act on the orders he had received. The ferrying of the Sikhs was completed on the 22nd. There was great excitement in Kirkuk town when the Grand Armada of twenty aircraft was seen circling overhead and then flying off eastwards; but, alas for the best laid plans, the great demonstration ended in complete fiasco. Over Chamchemal the officer commanding the operation, who had been suffering from malaria,

fainted in mid-air; the mechanic, leaning forward from the rear cockpit, pulled the machine out of its spin, but the officer, whose actual faint lasted perhaps less than a second, was too dizzy to continue and turned back. Visibility beyond the Qara Dagh was extremely bad; several pilots concluded that their leader had decided to call off the operation and turned back also. Others lost their way and Flying Officer A. T. K. Shipwright found himself alone over Sulaimani. He dropped his quota of proclamations on the crowds in the streets and, at about twelve miles on the way back, met Flying Officer D. W. F. Bonham Carter, also pounding along alone through the haze and waving his bundles to show that he had not yet been over. The two turned back for a second visit before returning safely to Kirkuk.

The operation was therefore repeated the next day by twelve Bristol fighters and four twin-engined Vickers-Vernons, but we again had our anxious moments. In the middle of the morning it was reported that no fewer than seven of the machines were down in the Bazyan valley: one Bristol had forced-landed with engine trouble; Flight-Lieutenant A. McLaren-Reid in another had landed alongside to help; in spite of his signals a heavy Vernon landed and was bogged; then more Bristols. Eventually they all got off except the Vernon; I had messages dropped on the villages of three friendly Hamawand Aghas to put a guard on it; the guard remained for several weeks and the aircraft was eventually salved.

From midnight on the 24th for several hours there was a constant exchange of telegrams between Mahmud, his brother Shaikh Qadir, and the notables of Sulaimani at one end of the line and myself at the other, Mahmud prevaricating, the notables interceding for him and asking for time, and I repeating that the High Commissioner's orders must be obeyed to the letter. Aircraft sent on the 2nd March to drop a few bombs as an earnest of our intentions had to turn back owing to the weather; but the bombs were dropped, accurately, on the 3rd. The same day a deputation including Shaikh Qadir and Mustafa Pasha, arrived in Kirkuk. Seeing that further argument was useless Mustafa Pasha spent the whole night at the telegraph office communicating with Mahmud and the notables; he finally woke me up at half-past four in the morning

to report that Mahmud had left Sulaimani two hours earlier in an unknown direction, taking with him the contents of the Treasury and most of the Levies.

In the meantime the Mutasarrif and I had made a joint request for authority to arrest and deport Saiyid Ahmad-i Khanaqah as the most effective step we could take in Kirkuk to counter Turkish propaganda. This was a delicate operation owing to the Saiyid's religious prestige and influence, and our plans had to be carefully laid. We agreed that the Mutasarrif should send for him, explain what we knew about his activities, and then (Murad being away on tour) call in Reeve to make the arrest; the verandahs of the serai were generally thronged with waiting litigants and petitioners, so an adequate number of constables would be about in order to prevent any attempt to release him as he was led away to the police cars, which would whisk him off to the waiting Vernon on the aerodrome. I was to keep out of it if possible, but was to be ready, in case of need, in my room on the other side of the communicating door.

On the appointed morning, the 6th, Saiyid Ahmad's arrival was duly reported to me by the doorkeeper, and I waited for the Mutassarif to come in and tell me that all was over. Five minutes, ten minutes passed with no sign and, when it became a quarter of an hour, I decided that I must go through and see what was happening. I found Fattah Pasha sitting up at his desk, looking grey and miserable, and the Saiyid lolling in an arm-chair, important and debonair, evidently still without an inkling of the reasons for his summons to the serai. The old Pasha looked at me imploringly, and there was nothing for it but for me to face the holy man with the catalogue of his misdeeds myself. Saiyid Ahmad was earnest, sarcastic and indignant by turns and ended by saying that these suspicions were intolerable and that he could not go on living in Kirkuk if we really believed all these calumnies. I could not have asked for a better cue. I replied that the Mutasarrif and I had already come to the similar conclusion that he would be better out of Kirkuk and that arrangements had been made for his journey in comfort to Baghdad if he would go at once to the car waiting outside. He sprang to his feet protesting that it would be quite impossible for him to leave without preparation; but Reeve, who had entered in response to the bell, tapped him on the

shoulder in the most professional manner, and pointed to the door. Drawing the folds of his *'abá* across his chest with a magnificent gesture and throwing back his head until his nose pointed high in the air, Saiyid Ahmad stalked out of the room.

I was genuinely sorry about the necessity to remove the Saiyid in this way. I had come to Kirkuk with a soft spot in my heart for him, remembering that in Longrigg's time, when I passed through with Fraser's Force, he had been a staunch supporter of the administration. But something had gone wrong between 1919 and 1922—whether it was the effect of the Caliphate agitation, or a conviction that the Turks were less likely to exalt Shaikh Mahmud as a king over him than we were, or some rebuff that he had suffered, I do not know—and I had found him irreconcilable, even before he had attracted attention as an active agitator. When I met him in happier circumstances later he neither admitted nor denied the charges, but complained only that he had been given no wrap in the aircraft and had been terribly cold.

Immediately after the arrest several others with guilty consciences deemed it prudent to abscond and make their way clandestinely to Turkey; the chief of these was no less a person than Nazim Beg Naftchizada, the leading citizen of Kirkuk.

At this juncture we had the tremendous piece of luck to which I have already referred, the interception near Mosul of a long report, with many enclosures, from Öz Demir to the Turkish General commanding the Jezira front. It not only confirmed all our information regarding the projected attacks on Kirkuk and Koi and the degree of Shaikh Mahmud's complicity, but showed also that Öz Demir was already planning to follow up with an attack on Arbil, and that he was in communication with the Persian military commander over the border about the passage of his troops across Persian territory and the recruitment of reinforcements for his irregulars from the Persian tribes.

Sir John Salmond reacted with characteristic energy. On the 7th March he arrived in Kirkuk to get my latest information and political appreciation, flew on the next day to see Lyon at Arbil, and then, at Mosul, gave orders for the operation which three weeks before Bourdillon and I had been obliged to dismiss as 'desirable but out of the question'. Two columns were to be

formed: the first, Koicol, under Colonel Commandant B. Vincent, composed of Imperial troops (the Cameronians, the West Yorkshire Regiment, the 1/13th (formerly 15th) Sikhs, the Ambala Pack Battery and some Pioneers), was to move from Mosul to Arbil and thence to Koi; the second, Frontiercol, under Colonel Commandant H. T. Dobbin, composed of Levies (the 2nd, 3rd, 4th Infantry Battalions and the Pack Battery) and police, was to concentrate at Arbil after the departure of Koicol and then to advance on Ruwandiz by what was then the main caravan track through Dêra and Duwên Qala and over the Spilik Pass. Some four or five weeks were likely to elapse before the columns would be in position for the final thrust, and in the meantime there was to be no relaxation in our measures for keeping the local situations in Kirkuk, Sulaimani and Arbil under control.

For a day or two after Shaikh Mahmud's departure from Sulaimani early on the morning of the 4th March reports of the direction he had taken were conflicting, but before long we located him in north-western Surdash; he himself had made his headquarters in the great cave at Jasana, his Levies, the tribal contingents and other adherents being billeted in the neighbouring villages; he was collecting revenue and otherwise exercising his authority in the nahiya and also in Sarchinar and Shar Bazhêr, while my old friends Riza Beg and Abdur Rahman Agha (I was sorry to learn) were in charge of a party just outside Sulaimani, terrorizing the town and extorting blackmail from merchants and others unfriendly to him. He had even taken the municipal printing press with him, and on the 8th issued on a half-sheet of foolscap the first number of a new organ, *Bang-i Ḥaqq* (The Call of the Truth), still, like the *Rhozh-i Kurdistan* which it replaced, 'an official, political, literary and social periodical' but 'printed at General Headquarters of the Army of Kurdistan'; the very name was a subtle appeal to fanaticism (for, it will be remembered, *ḥaqq*, truth, right, in mystical language, also means the Divine Reason or God Himself), and the single article it contained was a proclamation of Jihad, Holy War. This, taken with the activities of Riza Beg which had led to the resignation of the Administrative Council nominated by the High Commissioner immediately after Mahmud's departure, showed that the Shaikh was

quite unrepentant. Frequent air reconnaissances were therefore made over Sulaimani and Surdash, and from time to time attacks were made on Jasana and on any large bodies of horsemen observed on the move. I obtained authority to take over Chamchemal and entrust the administration to a 'bullet-proof' Qaimmaqam in the person of Amin-i Reshid Agha of the Ramawand section of the Hamawand, an enemy of Kerim-i Fattah. Elsewhere I did my best to encourage other friendly or moderate elements to resist the collection of taxes by representatives of the dismissed Ruler.

Kirkuk seemed to have been stunned by the deportation of Saiyid Ahmad and the flight of Nazim Beg, and all agitation ceased as if by magic, In the middle of the month I flew to Kifri and arranged for Douglas to arrest certain Aghas of the Zangana and the Gelali Jaf (including, to my regret, Taufiq Agha, father of Guldasa) and then to vindicate Government authority by proceeding with the Jaf sheep count and the collection of the *koda* tax. These simple measures set in motion a stream of petitions for pardon from many persons with guilty consciences who were no longer within easy reach of reprisals from Mahmud.

On the 23rd Sir Henry Dobbs arrived in Kirkuk by air, and the next day I went on with him to Arbil for a conference with the Amir Zaid (King Faisal's youngest brother, who had been sent to Mosul early in the month to rally Arab resistance to the threatened Turkish invasion), the A.I. from Mosul, and Lyon. The principal item on the agenda affecting us was the policy to be followed after the re-occupation of Ruwandiz, but I took the opportunity, before flying back to Kirkuk, to urge that the first operation should be followed by the re-occupation of Sulaimani also.

Koicol was due at Koi on the 4th April. I was anxious to see Colonel Vincent and also Lyon, who was with the column as Political Officer, and decided not to ask for an aircraft but to show the flag on the ground by riding across country through Shuwan and the recently disaffected Shaikh Bizaini villages on both sides of the Zab. It was possible to get Fords to a point about fourteen miles out from Kirkuk on the Taqtaq road, where my horses and escort awaited me, and I spent the first night at the village of Hajji Bey Khan, seven miles farther on.

Here in the low country, where there are no quarries and no oak forests, the houses are generally built of mud in the Arab style and heating is by means of a fire of dried dung in a shallow depression in the middle of the room; there is no chimney and often no vent in the roof. The headman was so anxious to give us a warm welcome that the guest-room was quickly filled with particularly acrid smoke which set our throats choking and our eyes streaming. Many south-country Kurds must spend much of the winter in such an atmosphere, with great detriment to their eye-sight and general health.

We resumed our march the next morning in lovely April weather, the Shuwan uplands were deep in lush grass and the orchards were bright with blossom. At Taqtaq the Zab, swollen by the spring thaw and recent heavy rains, was rushing down in a chocolate-coloured torrent a good 150 yards wide; the ferry-boat was carried far down-stream before we could make the opposite bank, and it took us fifty minutes to cross and haul the boat up-stream far enough for her to re-cross to the other bank at the point of original departure.

Koi was full of troops and very muddy after the rain. I lodged with Mulla Huwaiz Agha Ghafuri. Both he and the Qaimmaqam, Jemil Agha, entertained the O.C. and the senior officers to sumptuous meals in the best traditions of Kurdish hospitality. Sir John Salmond himself arrived by air on the 9th to give his final instructions for the operations, and on the 10th Koicol crossed the Haiba Sultan to Sarkhuma, the first manifestation of Government authority (other than by air action) in the Ranya district since the disastrous retreat of Ranicol seven months before.

No developments were to be expected for several days. I therefore decided to make for Altun Köprü and then to visit the nahiya of Malha which, owing to my constant pre-occupation with Kurdish affairs on the Sulaimani side, I had hitherto neglected. Twenty minutes after mounting we passed Harmota, the only all-Christian village in the qaza of Koi. For some miles our route followed the Rubar-i Koi, a considerable stream at this time of year, and we must have crossed and re-crossed a dozen times before leaving it for a track farther to the west through Umar Gumbud and Sêgirdkan. About sunset we reached the tents of Mahmud Agha Shaikh Bizaini on the bank

of a broad torrent-bed called Bast-i Hawar, about a mile from his village of Sartik and about thirty miles from Koi.

I spent a restful evening in delightful pastoral surroundings and might have been a thousand miles from the war-like scenes I had left only that morning. The conversation came round to language. My host said that the people of the two villages I had passed through that day, Sêgirdkan and Umar Gumbud, spoke a dialect of their own; tribally, he said, they were Shaikh Bizaini like all the villagers on both banks of this stretch of the Zab but they had preserved the older language in place of the Kurdi which the bulk of the tribe had adopted comparatively recently. A few words they gave me seemed to indicate a dialect akin to the Kurdish of Kirmanshah or the Lakki of northern Luristan. It will be remembered that according to their own story the Shaikh Bizaini came originally from Mosul or farther north. The linguistic evidence is thus more consistent with the story I was told by Jemal Agha of Koi that the people of these two villages are immigrants belonging to a tribe called Darbandi and came from the Rijab district north of the Persian high road about the Taq-i Girra Pass where the Hulwan River breaks through the *darband* of Dartang on its way to Qasr-i Shirin and Khanaqin.[1]

The next morning at Altun Köprü I found Miller and Chapman waiting for me with a sheaf of office work. They were accompanied by Lieutenant Charles Goring, whose gallant exploits with an armoured car named 'Harvester' during the Arab rebellion of 1920 had made him something of a legend, and who was now in charge of patrols on our line of communications. Two hours were sufficient to dispose of the papers and, leaving them to return to Kirkuk by car, I continued my leisurely journey down the left bank of the river to Malha, then the headquarters of the nahiya of that name and the last Kurdish outpost in this direction.

The following day I rode on through all-Arab country to Tall Ali, passing on the way several large mounds, Mahus, Rumman, Mutaibikh (masses of burnt bricks and lime of the quality, I was assured, that comes from the hills), Tall Ali itself

[1]At Altun Köprü I was told that the inhabitants of the two villages of Darmanaw on the left bank opposite the mouth of the Bast-i Hawar were Lakks, but they were not specifically coupled with the people of Sêgirdkan and Umar Gumbud.

(large square burnt bricks two feet by two feet), and others, all of which no doubt mark ancient Assyrian sites, for the site of Ashur itself is only about twenty miles away. Before I had left Kirkuk Murad had warned me on no account to accept hospitality from the Arab tribes of this region, mostly Jubur, owing to their universal infection with the foul disease of *bejel*. I was therefore not a little relieved to find at Tall Ali Hajji Hasan Awchizada, a notable of Kirkuk and a progressive farmer who had some years previously built himself a house near the river; the courtyard was strewn with fragments of agricultural machinery, some of it imported before the war, lying idle for lack of spares and maintenance. He was then occupied in aligning a canal which he hoped would bring under cultivation lands neglected since mediaeval times. The maps in use at that time showed two large ancient canals named (on what authority, I do not know) the first Safir al-Fil with the head about six miles above Tall Ali, and the second Abbasiya with the head another twenty miles still farther up-stream; Hajji Hasan, who took me to see them, begged me to try to interest the Irrigation Department in this once rich area. This I duly did, but it was many years before the 'Hawija Scheme' came forward in a crowded programme of capital works. In 1944, however, I had the satisfaction of revisiting the area and finding several hundred families of Chechens, Jubur and Ubaid happily settled, with others only awaiting the completion of the second branch of the new canal.

From the canals we went on to inspect some extensive ruins of the Islamic period called by the Arabs Al-Isma'iniyat. The principal remains[1] I noted were two rectangular buildings standing side by side, a tomb known as Imam Isma'in which gives its name to the site generally, a fallen minaret, and other walls and unrecognizable masses of brick and mortar. The first of the rectangular buildings is well constructed of burnt brick; the exterior is relieved by lines of patterns in the brick work; the entrance has a pointed arch; the interior consists of a single chamber measuring about twenty feet square; the walls are decorated with elaborate plaster work; each wall has three rows of baroque niches surmounted by five narrow arcades, one

[1]For fuller details and photographs see my article 'An Abbasid Site on the Little Zab' in *G.J.*, Vol. LXXX, 1932, p. 332.

above the other, of pointed arches; a passage from the Koran, the famous 'Throne Verse', runs round three sides (the fourth being the door side) between the niches and the arcades; the last few words of the inscription after the verse are rather mutilated, but the name Muhammad Yahya was decipherable with the date A.H. 670 (1271–2); this interior decoration is very similar to that of the Arba'in mausoleum (A.H. 660) on the Tigris, sixty miles away.[1] The second building is about ten yards away from the first, which it resembles externally; there is no plaster work within. In places the bricks of both buildings show signs of having been glazed, but the glaze has worn off. Imam Isma'in is of about the same size as the first two buildings but is better preserved: part of the dome remains, the drum superimposed on an octagon; the arch of the doorway is pointed; the interior is octagonal; the sides are plastered to a height of about fourteen feet, with a niche in each; in the southern side a small *miḥráb* indicates the direction of Mecca; there is an arch in the brickwork on each of the eight sides, above the plaster; wooden beams are visible at the base of the dome.

Hajji Hasan thought that the ancient name of the place was something like Zuwij, and I have little doubt that the Isma'iniyat are in fact the ruins of Bawazij of which Guy Le Strange wrote:[2]

> To the east of it (i.e. of as-Sinn at the junction of the Zâb with the Tigris) four leagues higher up the bank of the Lesser Zâb stood the town of Bawâzîj (Madînat-al-Bawâzîj as Ibn Hawkal gives the name), which however appears at the present day to have left no trace on the map. . . . Yâkût refers to the town as Bawâzîj-al-Malik, 'of the King', and in the 8th (14th) century it still existed, for Mustaufî describes it as paying 14,000 dinars to the treasury of the Îl-Khâns.

In the meantime the military movements had been going forward according to plan. On the 15th April, when I got back to Kirkuk, Frontiercol had reached the Harir Plain about half way between Arbil and Ruwandiz, but the Spilik, a difficult pass by which the column would have to cross the ridge bounding the plain on the north-east, was known to be held in force

[1] Described by Sarre and Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat- und Tigris-Gebiet* (Berlin 1911–20), pp. 222–4, figs. 109–13 and plate XXX.

[2] Op. cit., p. 91.

by the enemy. Koicol, for its part, had carried out a series of punitive raids in Bitwên, in the course of which the two guns lost by Ranicol (minus one breech-block subsequently found at Ruwandiz) were recovered, and was back at Sarkhuma ready for the next move. On the same day the A.O.C. made a personal reconnaissance by air; impressed by the natural strength of the Spilik position and concluding that without a simultaneous outflanking movement it could hardly be forced without heavy casualties, he instructed Colonel Vincent to examine the feasibility of turning it by marching with Koicol up the Dol-i Kashan (the second valley west of Shawur in the Ranya 'fan') through Pishtgeli country to Balisan and thence down the Alana valley east of the Harir Ridge.[1] Vincent in anticipation of such a development had asked Lyon and myself, on the occasion of my visit to Koi, to obtain the fullest information possible about this route, which lay through terrain still unmapped, and had already collected the necessary transport. A strong and resolute commander, he was not to be deterred by the evident threat presented to his communications by the wild nature of the country, the hostility of the inhabitants and the unreliability of supply columns composed entirely of locally hired mules, and, being fully prepared, was able to concur in the proposed plan immediately.

On the 17th Squadron Leader E. R. Manning, O.C. No. 6 Squadron, flew me over to Sarkhuma to see Vincent and for a last-minute exchange of information with Lyon. Bitwên was a sea of mud after the heavy rains, and we made what seemed to me a miraculous landing in a few yards on a small pimple of dry ground. We waited until the last of the column had marched out and then took off again for Kirkuk.

The operation was entirely successful. Koicol, as had been expected, met with considerable resistance on the first day and again on the 19th beyond Balisan but, with aircraft co-operating closely, the enemy were driven off with comparatively heavy losses against only five other ranks wounded on our side. During the night of the 19th–20th, without firing a shot, Öz Demir abandoned the Spilik position, the strength of which proved, on examination, to have been in no wise overestimated.

[1]Despatch dated 22nd May 1923 from Air Vice Marshal Sir J. Salmond to the Air Ministry published in the *Supplement to the London Gazette* of the 10th June 1924.

Ruwandiz was occupied without further resistance on the afternoon of the 22nd.

The question of the form of administration to be set up in Ruwandiz proved a thorny one. The Iraqi Government, that is to say the King, the Prime Minister and the Mutasarrif of Arbil, supported on the British side by Cornwallis, Bourdillon and Lyon, were anxious to appoint an ordinary civil servant as Qaimmaqam; but Sir Henry Dobbs, supported by the A.O.C., insisted on the appointment of Saiyid Taha as a 'bullet-proof' official better fitted to face, without the assistance of troops, the situation likely to be created by the swarms of adventurers which, he knew from secret sources, the Turks were planning to send in after their evacuation in order to keep the district in a ferment. It is not possible to say, even in the light of after events, which was right; but the difference of opinion had unfortunate repercussions on my own plans for Sulaimani.

XXII KOICOL—II

I WAS dining in Baghdad with Air Commodore L. E. O. Charlton and Group Captains Hearson and McNeece of the R.A.F. and Bourdillon when the telegram reporting the re-occupation of Ruwandiz arrived. I had flown down the previous day to discuss the programme of action for Sulaimani, and also in order to attend a farewell dinner to the Coxes on the occasion of their departure from Iraq and Sir Percy's retirement. For me this was a melancholy occasion: the whole of my ten years of service since I first came out as a youngster to Bushire in 1912 had been spent in his sphere, and most of it under his direct orders; from him and from Lady Cox I had always received the greatest kindness, and even now I cannot reread without a glow of filial affection the kindly paternal tone of the 'confidential'[1] report he wrote on my work before he left.

The upshot of the conversations in Baghdad was general agreement that, unless the organization which Shaikh Mahmud

[1]By a rule of the Service the so-called confidential reports were always shown to the officer reported on before being sent home to higher authority.

had created around his headquarters in Surdash could be destroyed, there was little prospect of Kirkuk's enjoying undisturbed administration, even after the expulsion of the Turks from Ruwandiz. The two British battalions of Koicol, composed almost entirely of young post-war recruits, had acquitted themselves admirably in the operations described in the last chapter; but, on the return march they had gone down like nine-pins before the ravages of dysentery and other tropical maladies to which novices are prone. It was therefore decided that they should be replaced by two veteran battalions of the Indian Army, the 1/13th Frontier Force (formerly 55th Cooke's) Rifles and the 3/16th (formerly 33rd) Punjabis, and that the column so reorganized should proceed to the occupation of Sulaimani.

I returned to Kirkuk on the 27th April and the next day flew on to Koi (pilot Flight-Lieut. A. O. Wood). As we approached the town we encountered an unusually severe *rhesheba* tearing down the flanks of Haiba Sultan and were terribly bumped about; one vicious pocket lifted both Wood and myself out of our seats just as we were coming down to land. The object of this, and of another visit on the 3rd May, was to keep in touch with tribal developments in the Ranya district and to meet friendly chiefs or their emissaries, chiefly those of Babakr Agha who, as usual, was busily occupied with the diplomatic activities which played such a large part in his life. One success reported by his son, to which at the moment I attached little importance, was the weaning from the hostile group of Bayiz Agha, head of the Abbas-Agha branch of the Mirawdali family, who, with his sons, occupied Hanjira and two or three neighbouring villages at the extreme southern end of the Marga Plain.

On the 5th May an Operation Order was issued by A.H.Q. with the 'Intention' paragraph reading as follows:

> With the main objective of establishing local government Koicol, re-formed as in the next paragraph, will march to occupy Sulaimani town, leaving Kirkuk as at present arranged on the 14th May. Subsequent to the occupation of Sulaimani minor operations will be undertaken as necessary with the object of effecting the defeat of Shaikh Mahmud and the complete loss of his prestige, and of punishing those tribes which have evinced hostility. While it is not possible

to lay down the scope of these operations they should be restricted to the essentials for the object in view and should not be undertaken at such a distance from the centre, Sulaimani, as might render it a matter of difficulty and serious delay to concentrate the column for transfer at short notice to another field.

This was followed on the 8th by a proclamation, which was dropped on the town and other centres by aircraft, announcing the Government's intention (without any hint of the date) of re-occupying Sulaimani, and reassuring the population that only those who had opposed the troops would be punished.

From the 5th to the 10th I was again in Baghdad trying to obtain clear instructions for the policy to be followed after the re-occupation, but without much success. It was still uncertain whether Koicol would summer there (the suggestion had been referred home), or whether Frontiercol should provide a garrison of Levies to hold the ring while the civil authority was settling down and while a force of 500 gendarmes, to be paid for by the central Iraqi Treasury, was being recruited and trained to replace the garrison supplied by the Mandatary Power. As regards the form of the administration to be established there was again a sharp cleavage of opinion between the High Commissioner and the Iraqi Government. Sir Henry Dobbs was convinced that as long as Shaikh Mahmud remained at large no autonomous régime in Sulaimani could possibly survive and that, unless he was killed or captured, it would be best to make terms with him. The Iraqi Cabinet at the other extreme, ignoring entirely the facts of the situation and the implications of their own declaration of Christmas Day, 1922, were bent on having a form of administration far more closely bound to Baghdad than anything to which the leaders of Kurdish opinion at that time were likely willingly to submit.

I, as the Political Officer on the spot, disliked both policies. While admitting the force of Dobbs's views I was convinced, after the experience of 1919 and 1922, that any deal with Mahmud would restore the very conditions to put an end to which was the whole object of the operation; I asked for a really generous settlement which, without going anything like as far as that implied in the Christmas declaration, would rally moderate Kurdish opinion and give the semi-autonomous administration a chance of maintaining itself with a modicum of support, at

first from the Mandatary and eventually from the central Baghdad Government itself. To my representations Dobbs replied that, while he adhered to his own opinion as to the wise course to pursue, in view of the friction caused by his earlier insistence on the nomination of Saiyid Taha to Ruwandiz he was not going to try to impose either his own opinion or mine on an unwilling Iraqi Government.

This was still the position when, with Chapman (A.P.O.) and Growdon (I.O.P. commanding a party of thirty-five mounted police from Kirkuk), I joined Vincent's Headquarters mess, the other members, I remember, being Major A. F. Bastow (Brigade Major), Captain W. A. Lovat Fraser (Staff Captain) and Flight-Lieut. G. E. Gibbs (Air Liaison). I could only hope that things would have sorted themselves out by the time we reached our objective and in the meantime revel in the exhilaration of finding myself again in the once familiar role of Political Officer with troops in the field, an exhilaration tempered by the wry reflection that I had been doing precisely the same thing four years before, almost to the day, but that this time we could hardly expect a repetition of the stroke of good fortune that had attended the earlier expedition.

The appreciation of the immediate political and tribal situation which I prepared for the Column Commander was to the following effect. After the expulsion of Shaikh Mahmud and the break up of the Sulaimani administration the narrow enclave of Shaikh Bizaini villages separating the Shuwan nahiya from the Zab had remained in the air; owing to a case of murder and other internal troubles, I had been obliged to put in a 'bullet-proof' Mudir from Kirkuk named Wahhab Beg with a small establishment of irregular police paid out of locally collected revenues, and had subsequently recreated the old Zab nahiya by adding the northern villages of Qala Sêwka;[1] the Shaikh Bizaini tribe were thus under control. Similarly, for the last two months Chamchemal had been held in our interest by Amin Reshid Agha, and most of the Begzada, the strongest section, had recently made submission; no trouble was therefore

[1]The principal village of this group, Askar, is interesting as the original home of the family of Ja'far Pasha al-Askari, the colleague of Faisal in the Arab revolt against the Turks and brother-in-law of Nuri Pasha as-Sa'id, many times Prime Minister of Iraq, with whom he 'swapped sisters'. In 1924 the artificial Zab nahiya was broken up, the Shaikh Bizaini enclave being restored to Shuwan and Qala Sêwka to Chamchemal.

to be expected from this turbulent tribe. There was, indeed, a collection of Kirkuk outlaws with Saiyid Muhammad Jabbari, and therefore some possibility of sniping from the south of the road; but the Saiyid's recent inactivity together with the rapidity of the concentration of the column at Kirkuk made this also improbable. Shaikh Mahmud himself had recently returned from the Pizhdar country, where his efforts to raise the country in rear of Koicol as it marched on Ruwandiz had been frustrated by Babakr Agha. His forces, composed of Levies and irregular villagers and numbering perhaps 600 in all, were under the command of Salih Zaki Sahib-Qiran; they were disposed in various villages between Sulaimani town and the Zab, his own headquarters being at Jasana as before. No tribes as such had joined him, but any success would bring them flocking to his standard. Mahmud himself would certainly wish to fight, if not at Bazyan, then at Tasluja; but whether the morale of his following was sufficiently high we had no means of estimating.

There had been a good fall of rain during the night, and when we left Kirkuk at six in the morning of the 12th the dust had been well laid and it was pleasantly cool. We made only a short first march, seven miles to Greater Chiman, where there was a good camping ground with plenty of water in the stream. On the 13th we reached Bash Bulaq, another delightful camp on a fast-flowing brook south of the road, twelve miles from Chamchemal and twenty-three from the Bazyan Pass. The next day, at Chamchemal, Amin Reshid and my old friend of 1919, Mushir Agha of the Begzada, confirmed our air reports that the pass was not held; Vincent therefore decided to push on at once to Takya Kak Ahmad, the village within two miles of the pass where again there was good water, and before dark the Sikhs had picketed the heights on both sides; I rode on a short distance through the pass but met no Kurds. On the 15th a second double march took us through Bazyan and over the Tasluja Pass to Kandikawa, twelve miles from Sulaimani, making forty-three miles in the two days. The rapidity of the concentration and the advance had effected a complete surprise. Correspondence captured later showed conclusively that it had been intended to hold Tasluja; a letter from Mahmud, dated the 14th and addressed to the Column Commander at Kirkuk,

recommending him not to attempt to advance to Chamchemal, was actually delivered here at Kandikawa; the same morning Mahmud himself had set out from Jasana for Sulaimani with a view to organizing resistance on the road. Learning, or perhaps seeing for himself, that the troops were already over the last obstacle, he doubled back and ordered a general retreat through Shaikh Bakh to Mawat and Shar Bazhêr, thereby indicating an intention to fall back over the Persian boundary.

On the 16th, in a severe and prolonged thunderstorm, we moved on to Sarchinar, whither the notables of the town had been summoned by air messages dropped the previous day. That morning Vincent had given me a piece of information that filled me with misgiving: he proposed to stay at Sarchinar one day only, and then to march with the whole column up the Surdash Valley and over into Marga, in order to punish the Shilana, who had taken an active part in the attack on Ranicol and, moreover, had sniped Koicol from across the river in April. There was no denying that this was a very desirable measure, and indeed it had been first on the list of punitive operations which I had suggested for Koicol during its stay in the Ranya district; the diversion of the column to Ruwandiz had made this impossible but I had still hoped that it would be undertaken in due course after the occupation of Sulaimani. But such a move at this moment, so far in a direction away from that taken by Mahmud and before any steps had been taken to re-establish the administration at liwa headquarters, I did not like at all. However orders were orders, so I went on into the town with the notables to make such temporary arrangements as I could until the column should return. The police were re-engaged under a former Chief, the Municipality was instructed to function, Ahmad Beg-i Taufiq Beg was put in general charge of all departments of the civil administration, and Shaikh Qadir, brother of Mahmud, was made responsible for public security. Contractors were summoned, and arrangements made for supplies to be sent out to Sarchinar before nightfall.

All this business was transacted in Shaikh Mahmud's office at the secondary school, which had been the Political office in 1919. Behind his chair he had hung a photograph of himself

framed with official red tape held in position with drawing-pins and stuck on a typewriter board covered with brown paper. I also found a Kurdish flag with a tinsel crown ready to be attached as a distinguishing sign for the royal standard.[1] On the 17th two of the rebel detachments came in to Sarchinar to surrender; I myself spent most of the day in the town completing the business begun the day before and receiving the submission of tribal and village deputations.

After this halt of one day we marched off north-westwards and reached the Zab on the third day, camping successively at Girdabor, Hajjiyawa, and Dukan. Our route lay along the base of Pira Magrun, which rose majestically a sheer 6,000 feet out of the valley close by on our right. In Surdash scrub-oak grows in profusion over the hillsides, with here and there clumps of full grown trees that mark the sites of ancient graveyards and holy places and offer a very welcome shade for any halts on the march. Oleanders were in full bloom along all the water-courses; the Tabin at Hajjiyawa in particular was a glorious blaze of colour. It was here, where the road crosses the Tabin, that we found Shaikh Mahmud's own car bogged in the stream.

On the third day I went aside with a party of the Cooke's Rifles to Jasana. Through the cleft behind the village there is a steep gorge through which a goat-track gives access to Shaikh Bakh; a lovely crystal-clear stream of ice-cold water was tumbling and splashing down over great white boulders and through a pink maze of oleanders, and we paused to drink our fill before beginning the search. The entrance to the celebrated cave, just inside the cleft on the south side, was partially walled up and invisible until we actually reached it. By it were Mahmud's iron bedstead, a number of coffee-shop benches, and much horse litter; we also found in a house close by two royal standards, the telephone instrument used for communicating with Shaikh Bakh, Qamchugha and Dukan, a typewriter, and a flour dump from which we removed twenty loads.

That evening deputations arrived from all the villages of north-western Surdash and from others in the folds of Qarasird and beyond. Of the track over the Qarasird little was known

[1]This I still possess among my trophies. I also obtained the die used to print the stamps used for internal postage during the Shaikh's régime and later presented it to Mr. A. H. Mason, the Government Architect, a keen and expert philatelist.

except that it was very difficult. It was not considered advisable to give any hint of our plans by making specific inquiries as to whether it was held by hostile parties; but again the rapidity of our own movements, the composition of the village deputations, the confirmation they brought of Mahmud's retreat eastwards with a following reduced to seventy horsemen, and the recent adherence to Babakr Agha's party of Bayiz Agha Pizhdar of Hanjira on the far side of the pass in Marga, all made it pretty safe to assume that no opposition would be encountered.

Leaving our wheeled transport at Dukan we marched before dawn on the 21st. An easy path led over the first ridge to the orchards of Topzawa and Rikawa in a small gully called Dol-a Rut. A formidable climb of 2,000 feet by what was little more than a goat track, first through vineyards and then through thick oak forest, both of which would have offered ideal cover for enemy riflemen, brought us to the crest. It was an exhausting march, but fatigue was quickly banished by the cooling breezes that came to fan us as we rested in the shade. The view spread out before us was truly magnificent: around us a thicket of dwarf oak, low scrubby fig-trees and many varieties of shrubs; before us first the hillside vineyards of Körakani and Palko dropping to the great cañon so long believed to be the mouth of the Qala Chuwalan and, beyond, the Zab issuing from the Darband Gap and meandering in a network of silver threads through the broad Bitwên–Marga Plain until, just below us, it contracted again to enter the gorge north of Dukan; on the left the long line of Haiba Sultan and then Kosrat, end on, with three villages nestling on its eastern slope; the dark heights of Shawur and Nawdasht far away beyond the plain and, almost in line with Darband, the gleaming snows of Qandil falling down to the marbled streaks of Gelala and Kotral; nearby, to our right, the Kolara Ridge rising to Kurkur, still spotted with snow, and the bare southern slopes of the Jaf-a Rheshka highlands.

We had arrived in good time, concealment of our presence or intentions was no longer possible, and Vincent decided to begin the punitive operations forthwith. Fighter and bomber aircraft in Iraq were not yet fitted with wireless, and pack wireless sets for ground troops were still rare. Simple communications with aircraft were usually made by means of a contraption

called a Popham Panel, which consisted of a large rectangle of dark canvas with a system of white stripes which could be left exposed or covered by dark flaps; messages were conveyed by pre-arranged permutations and combinations of the white stripes left visible. More elaborate exchanges were effected by means of the picking-up device: the message from the ground was placed in a bag with a brightly-coloured streamer and tied to a long string stretched between two poles, and the aircraft would catch it up with a grapnel let down over the side; messages from the aircraft were simply dropped in similar bags. The Air Message Section was still toiling up the track some distance in the rear, but Gibbs tied two quite short poles to convenient tree-tops and the message of instructions for air co-operation was skilfully picked up by a Bristol at the first attempt.

The descent to Hanjira, where Bayiz Agha Pizhdar came out to welcome us and profess his obedience, was long and steep. After a short halt the force divided. I accompanied the Punjabis to the principal Shilana villages of Bingird and Bardashan, where we came under some not very accurate rifle fire. The only punishments which the commander of a punitive column can inflict on such occasions is to round up any livestock that has not already been driven away and to burn the village; this is not quite so drastic as it sounds since the houses are little more than mud hovels, but the replacement of roof-timber involves some cost and trouble. As we entered each village I arranged with the officer in charge to put a guard on the mosque, which to the inexpert eye would not be immediately distinguishable from an ordinary house, in order to make sure that it should not be fired or looted. The behaviour of the Punjabis, as of the Cooke's Rifles, whom I accompanied to the four Shilana villages on the river the next day, was admirable, both in this respect and in their treatment of any old people or women left behind; the men of both regiments were Muslims. On the other hand Chapman, who accompanied the Sikhs to Marga and two neighbouring hamlets, had some difficulty; this was no doubt due to the difference of religion or to the memory of the casualties inflicted on Ranicol.

From Hajjiyawa I had sent a message by air to be dropped for Babakr Agha at his village near Qala Diza asking him to meet me at the Sarsiyan landing-ground, a rendezvous which

would give no hint of an impending ground operation. He did not fail to keep the appointment, and I met him at his own village of Mamandawa, three miles beyond our camp at Bingird. After obtaining the latest information on the tribal situation in that area I brought him back to see the Column Commander, who was glad to meet this famous figure and to convey to him the A.O.C.'s appreciation of his useful contribution to the frustration of Mahmud's plans at the time of the advance on Ruwandiz.

On the 24th we re-crossed the Qarasird to Dukan and the column returned to Sulaimani by easy stages. A dump of shells having been reported at a place called Chilakhana in the Shaikh Bakh upland I accompanied a party of Sappers under Captain Hamilton detailed to find and destroy it. We chose the track through Qamchugha, which was reported to be easier than that through Jasana. Qamchugha, unlike Jasana, is situated in the mouth of the cleft itself, the entrance to which is protected by towers and other remains of fortifications in depth erected, it is said, by the Babans as a counter to the fort built at Sardka on the opposite bank of the Zab by the Blind Pasha of Ruwandiz; the gorge above was no less impressively picturesque than the other. After about half an hour we came to oak forest but continued to climb until, soon after passing a village called Sarmord, we emerged into an open, undulating upland between two parallel saw-like ridges of gaunt limestone, which here seemed to swing round to form the gap through which we had just come; through it there was a splendid view straight down to the Zab Gorge between the end of Sarsird and its continuation, the Haiba Sultan, where the river changes direction from south to west. We rode on through the vineyards and, just two hours after leaving camp in the trees below Qamchugha, reached the hamlet of Wurhachay at the top of the Jasana cleft. From here too there was a fine view through the cleft across the Surdash Valley and over Sarsird, the heights of Abdalan and the Qara Dagh near the Bazyan Pass to the mound of Chamchemal, clearly visible in the distance through the shimmering heat-haze of the broken foothills. The cave was still some three miles on and I loitered behind the others to question the Kurds working in the vineyards and to take bearings. When I eventually reached Chilakhana I had a fortunate escape: had I been

a minute later I should have stepped right into one of the dumps of what proved to be German 75 mm. gun ammunition. Hamilton was about to light the fuse and I was just in time to take cover with him before the explosion.

In camp on the way back I wrote my 'Summary of Political Intelligence—Koicol Operations, 12–27th May 1923' and, little dreaming what lay in store for me, concluded it with the following, I fear rather sententious, paragraph:

In case the absence of opposition to the column may give a wrong idea of the difficulty of controlling the Kurds, a word of warning is perhaps required, particularly as the future administrative arrangements of the Sulaimani liwa are to come up for immediate consideration. The present writer has been privileged to serve as Political Officer with Fraser's Force in 1919 and Koicol in 1923, was closely associated with the events leading up to the outbreaks of 1922, and was present at the Ranicol *débâcle*. The Southern Kurd is easily set by the ears and will fly before or give in to overwhelming force. On the other hand, if the troops sent against him are inadequate or if troops otherwise adequate are irresolutely handled, he develops offensive qualities that are not to be despised, as the fate of the retiring Turks in 1918 and our reverses of 1919 and 1922 showed. Strength is what the Kurd understands and he must be controlled by force—tempered with kindness perhaps, but still ultimately by force. Tribal trouble generally takes time to work up; rapidity of action is therefore the essential condition of success. If incipient trouble is tackled resolutely and at once comparatively small forces should suffice to keep order; otherwise a Fraser's Force or a Koicol is likely to be required with increasing frequency.

At Sulaimani, which we reached on the 28th May, we received definite confirmation that Mahmud had retired to Piran, a village in Mariwan, two miles on the Persian side of the frontier and about ten miles south of Pênjwin. Several of his adherents had come in to make submission, and others were known to be on the way.

The next day the Prime Minister, Abdul Muhsin Beg as-Sa'dun, and the Mayor of Baghdad, Sabih Beg Nash'at, who was a Kurd of Arbil, flew up to discuss future administrative arrangements. They were accompanied by Cornwallis, who dumbfounded me with the news that Koicol would be withdrawn in the middle of June and that there was no prospect of their being replaced by Levies from Frontiercol: His Majesty's

Government at home had been pressing for the early reduction of the Imperial troops in Iraq to six battalions in all, and a deterioration in relations with Turkey had led to renewed fears of a *coup de main* based on Jezirat-ibn-Umar against Iraq; they had not only vetoed the proposal that Koicol should spend the summer at Sulaimani but were insisting that all units should return to their normal stations without a day's avoidable delay; furthermore the High Commissioner had come round to the view that even with Saiyid Taha as Qaimmaqam the presence of a military garrison would be necessary in order to make sure that nothing untoward should happen at Ruwandiz.

On the 2nd June Sir Henry Dobbs himself flew up to join the Prime Minister and his party. A scheme was put to the Kurdish leaders, based in substance on my earlier recommendations but omitting a number of points which, while costing the Iraqi Government nothing, were calculated to appeal to Kurdish sentiment. The talks broke down on the inability of the High Commissioner to give an assurance that Imperial troops would remain until order was restored and the new administration had had time to establish itself reasonably firmly; the most he could agree to was to postpone the public announcement of the actual date of the withdrawal pending one more reference to London. The whole party returned to Baghdad on the 4th.

The next ten days were a time of feverish activity for me. My diary tells me only that on seven of them I was in the air, travelling between Sulaimani, Kirkuk and Baghdad, trying to evolve a scheme for saving something from the wreck. Finally, on the 14th, I had a most painful interview with the temporary Council, who resigned *en bloc* on being told definitely not only that the troops would not stay but that they would be leaving in three days' time, before anything had been done to re-establish the administration with the help of British officers and before a single gendarme had been recruited for the force they had been promised.

The last three days were a veritable nightmare. Streams of terrified citizens, many of whom had served us well, besieged the office asking what they should do or clamouring for animals to get away. Neither Chapman, nor Douglas (who had flown up to join me on our return from the Shilana operation),

nor I could show our faces in the street without being surrounded by women holding out their pension-books and wailing that they had received no payment for months, and by other persons in distress.

On the last of my visits to Baghdad I had sought and obtained authority to fall back, if the need should arise, on the scheme I had evolved before there had been any talk of Koicol to take over the districts adjacent to Kirkuk and Arbil for administration from these centres, and so to restrict the problem of Sulaimani to little more than the central qaza. Ahmad Beg-i Taufiq Beg and Shaikh Qadir, whom I now consulted, agreed that this would be the best thing to do, and even volunteered to accept responsibility for the central qaza if they could be given funds to raise a security force of 350 men and if one British officer, or even an N.C.O., could remain with them in the town. Chapman or Douglas would have been glad to stay, but Dobbs had already made it clear that in no circumstances would he allow this. The best I could do, therefore, was to send for the leading citizens and to charge them to prevent crime in their respective quarters, absolving them from responsibility for any disorder engineered from outside. Shaikh Qadir promised to stay for a few days after the departure of the troops to provide against the outbreak of looting and arson that might otherwise be expected in the first reaction to the removal of the last outward sign of Government authority.

A stream of refugees estimated at 2,000 preceded or attached themselves to the column as it moved out on the 17th, and many others left for the villages. There was some sniping on the road and several stragglers were looted by the Hamawand on the way down. On the same day, having deputed Chapman to accompany Vincent as Political Officer, I returned with Douglas to Kirkuk by air in order to get busy without loss of time on the organization of the *Cordon Sanitaire,* as it came to be called. With the first gentle rocking of the aircraft as it left the ground memories of the last four years, some gay but many tragic, came crowding thick and fast upon me and filled me with a feeling of bitter frustration. I thought that old Pira Magrun there in front was looking more cynical than ever and wondered what vicissitudes he was still planning for the distressful liwa.

XXIII THE SANITARY CORDON

I RETURNED to Kirkuk so displeased with life that I decided to exercise for the first time a right included in our contracts of service by which we were entitled to three weeks local leave each year without prejudice to the accumulation of the ordinary leave normally taken in England. My application was granted subject to my first putting in hand the arrangements for the administration of the *Cordon Sanitaire*. In Kirkuk liwa proper my relationship to the Mutasarrif was to remain as before; but I was to be directly responsible to the Ministry of the Interior (with a very free hand) for the administration of the units detached from Sulaimani (except the Ranya qaza which was attached to Arbil), and to the High Commissioner for dealings with the abandoned central core, where Shaikh Mahmud was to be left to his own devices, with an occasional touch of the cane if he broke bounds.

Chamchemal, as I have already mentioned, had for all practical purposes been taken over before the Koicol expedition. Amin Reshid Agha was now formally confirmed as Qaimmaqam and was to be assisted by Mejid Efendi, a notable of Sulaimani, who had been put in charge of the police there during our short occupation. I had heard very unsatisfactory stories of the behaviour of this pair in the town during the three days between the announcement of the evacuation and the actual departure of the troops, notably of various excesses in the Jewish quarter, but for the moment I could not afford to be too squeamish. Before very long, however, an epidemic of highway robberies on the various roads leading out of Kirkuk was traced to our Qaimmaqam himself, and early in July I was obliged to arrest him and his townsman accomplice with eighteen of his followers and replace him by Wahhab Beg, who had done well in the Zab nahiya.

Wahhab Beg was not at all a man of the higher civil servant class, though he had had experience of the technique of the Ottoman system of administration in minor duties such as the estimation of crops for revenue purposes and the like. He was

recommended by his toughness, fearlessness and general familiarity with the country, and he quickly justified his appointment by recovering much of the property looted under his predecessor's auspices and by collecting the substantial fine imposed on the Ramawand. He was the hero of a story which Nuri Pasha and other leading Baghdad politicians with a record of nationalist agitation in the early days of the Mandate were fond of telling in later years rather against themselves (an example of the lively sense of humour that is one of the most engaging characteristics of the Arabs of all classes in Iraq). The time came, as the administration settled down to normal, when Wahhab Beg, whose own methods had not always been as regular as they might have been, had to make way for a professional civil servant. I was still in Kirkuk and no doubt did my best, in view of his past services, to soften the blow—I have no recollection or record of the incident myself. However that may be, according to the story, he was supposed to have sent me a message in Turkish: '*Admonsa seulé, beni ayer bir daha tayin etmezsé vatani olourim*, Tell Edmonds that if he doesn't reappoint me to a job I shall turn patriot.'

Qara Dagh and Sangaw, the two southern nahiyas in which the influence of the Barzinja Saiyids was particularly strong, were formed into a new qaza and entrusted to one of the family, Shaikh Abdul Qadir, of the Qazanqaya branch and a not very distant cousin of Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Qadir Karam. Shaikh Awul of Sangaw, as he was generally called, resided normally at Gök Tapa, the most important village of the nahiya, which was conveniently situated, whether for legitimate or illegitimate purposes, at a strategic point below the Sagirma Pass near both the main caravan road from Kifri to Sulaimani and the only track along the valley between the Aj Dagh and the Qara Dagh chain. Blood-shot eyes and enormous moustaches gave him a ferocious aspect in keeping with his reputation for ruthlessness when circumstances were favourable. He liked to dress expensively in the brightest silks but, as a reminder of his religious status, affected an Arab '*aqál* of exaggerated size in camel's hair and wool to keep his headkerchiefs in position instead of tying them as a turban. His qualifications for office were the fact that under the influence of Shaikh Abdul Kerim he had aligned himself with the moderate party in local politics, his 'bullet-

proof' quality, his ability to prevent brigandage by others than himself, and his willingness to preside over a façade of administration. An experienced revenue official was attached to him in order to ensure that Government business was conducted as far as possible on regular lines.

As regards Halabja, before leaving Sulaimani I had allotted the various offices to the principal Jaf Begzadas—Qaimmaqam Ahmad Beg son of the Lady, Assistant Qaimmaqam Hamid Beg, Agent for the Jaf Kerim Beg—and induced them to sign a pledge undertaking not to intrigue against each other but to co-operate to keep out any nominees of Mahmud; I had given them half a month's pay for themselves and a small establishment, and instructed them to come to Kirkuk before the end of the month to discuss the minor appointments and other arrangements.

To prevent Mahmud from consolidating any kind of authority in the Pizhdar country and in Mawat we continued to depend, of course, on Babakr Agha, who received a subsidy. To keep in touch with him I made frequent flights to Koi and Sarsiyan, but for the districts adjacent to Kirkuk I preferred the method of marching through the country, spending the nights at villages or tribal camps. The extension and nature of my duties necessitated my being on the move even more constantly than before the Sulaimani fiasco. Totting up the journeys and flights recorded in my diary (and there may have been a few more which I omitted to enter) I find that, between the 20th September 1922, when I first took over at Kirkuk, and the 26th April 1924, when I went on leave, I spent 225 nights out of the 585 away from my headquarters and was airborne on forty-three days. I did not always record the names of my pilots, but of those most frequently mentioned Kinkead of No. 30 Squadron comes first, with Manning, McLaren-Reid and Shipwright of No. 6 Squadron[1] not far behind.

Although, by the very nature of the organization we were setting up, it was necessary to appoint to the principal executive post in each unit a man of the 'bullet-proof' class, I was now in a position to find employment, as revenue assistants or clerks, for many of the professional civil servants who had become redundant as the result of the evacuation of Sulaimani, not only

[1]No. 30 Squadron relieved No. 6 Squadron at Kirkuk about July 1922.

in the Sanitary Cordon where the patronage was in my own hands, but also, with the help of the Mutasarrif, in the liwa of Kirkuk. It was, however, only after a long battle with the Ministry of Finance (a battle which was not finally won until my own transfer two years later to Baghdad, where I was on the spot to follow up my earlier representations) that I succeeded in obtaining a ruling that service in the Sulaimani liwa not only before the British evacuation of 1921 but also during those periods when Shaikh Mahmud, by reason of some proclamation or pronouncement of the High Commissioner, might be considered to have been in legitimate control of the administration, should count for pension. These officials represented an appreciable proportion of the intellectual element of the population and were, moreover, in many cases drawn from the leading aristocratic families. They were of course aware of my efforts on their behalf and this, I think, created a fund of good will among the vocal classes which was to stand the Iraqi Government in good stead when the League of Nations Commission came to inquire into the Mosul controversy.

The organization of the Sanitary Cordon was not the only matter of importance with which I was required to deal before I could take my local leave. On my return from the Sulaimani expedition I had found waiting for me at Kirkuk a letter from Cornwallis saying that, the Protocol limiting the duration of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty having now been signed, the King and the Cabinet had decided to 'go full out' to complete the elections to the Constituent Assembly[1] with a view to securing the ratification[2] of the Treaty, and were actively considering the disciplinary steps to be taken against the Shi'a Mujtahids who had declared the proposed elections illegal.

Since the flight of Nazim Beg Naftchizada the Ya'qubizada brothers were without challenge the most influential notables of the town. Miller, who dealt with town affairs including the Municipality and who, as I have mentioned, spoke Turkish

[1]See the footnote on p. 303. A Royal *irada* ordering elections had been issued in the previous October but progress had been held up by the opposition of the Mujtahids of the South. A Mujtahid is a Shi'a cleric of high standing having authority to give his individual interpretation of the sacred law (the Sunnis do not recognize the existence of any such authority). A *fatwá* is an *ex-cathedra* pronouncement by a religious authority, generally given in reply to a specific question.

[2]In Iraqi practice parliamentary approval of a treaty takes the form of a short law authorizing the King to ratify it.

fluently and well, was on especially friendly terms with Mejid, the Mayor; he had done yeoman service during my frequent absences and the ground was well prepared. With the Mutasarrif I saw the brothers and other leading citizens, with the result that at the end of the month we were able to report our confidence that we could get on with the procedural preliminaries directly it was apparent that Baghdad itself and the other central Arab liwas (where it was known that difficulties were being encountered) were getting on with theirs, and on condition that a governmental announcement was first made guaranteeing that the official language of the liwa should remain Turkish and that the officials would be local men. This formula represented a considerable advance by Kirkuk, for it omitted the condition made in earlier negotiations that peace must first be concluded with Turkey, and several other minor but troublesome stipulations. (During these conversations we also consulted the notables regarding the opportuneness of a visit by the King. They felt that having rejected all His Majesty's previous overtures they had no basis on which to give an invitation; they would, however, greet him with all respect if he came. We concluded that on the whole it would be best to get on quietly with the task in hand without fuss or advertisement and to postpone a royal visit to a future occasion.) The decision of the notables about the elections was embodied in a formal resolution adopted by the provincial Administrative Council and was communicated officially to Baghdad by the Mutasarrif. It was acknowledged by the Prime Minister on the 11th July in the following telegram:

> Please inform the Administrative Council that their suggestions have been accepted and that the Government agrees that the appointments be filled by local men only and that the local language be considered as official. . . . You may inform the Administrative Council and promise them the fulfilment of these conditions in an official way.

Ministers and civil servants in Baghdad were naturally still very inexperienced and seemed quite incapable of understanding that even if the Kirkuk seed had germinated the tender plant still required careful nursing. Both the Mutasarrif and the Mayor (who had certain specific responsibilities in connexion

with the registration of electors and other preliminaries) were much upset by a peremptory order to get on with the work, without regard to the first condition that Kirkuk should not be expected to precede the capital and the other central Arab liwas. A fanatical hedge-priest named Mulla Riza, whose fiery sermons had done much to stir up the populace to oppose inclusion in an Arab state but who had remained quiescent for some months following his appointment to the post of Provincial Director of Pious Bequests, was dismissed by telegram without any sort of consultation with the Mutasarrif in order to make room for a nonentity *protegé* of the Minister concerned. Most foolish of all, the Mayor himself, on whose good will more than on that of anybody else success depended, was continually receiving pin-pricks over the administration of the Municipality, which under the still applicable Turkish law had a right to far more autonomy than the Ministry of the Interior seemed inclined to allow it. A private letter from me to Cornwallis was generally sufficient to put right these and other grievances, but it was exasperating to find the very people we were trying to help so short-sighted. However, we survived all these trials, and in the second half of August a start was made with the preparation of the electoral rolls.

It had also been decided to try to persuade the detached areas of the Sanitary Cordon to participate in the elections and, with this end in view, the Council of Ministers adopted and published, simultaneously with the answer to Kirkuk, yet another declaration of the Government's attitude to the Kurds:

> The Iraqi Government does not intend to appoint any Arab officials in the Kurdish districts except technical officials, nor do they intend to force the inhabitants of the Kurdish districts to use the Arabic language in their official correspondence. The rights of the inhabitants and the religious and civil communities in the said districts will be properly safeguarded.

Kurdish nationalists could of course complain that the assumptions latent in this document had little relation to their rights as admitted in the Christmas proclamation. But by this time it had become clear to all except the blindest that incorporation in Iraq offered the only possible future for their sorely afflicted country, though they might hope that the central Government

would have the wisdom to cement their loyalty by recognizing the existence of the Kurds quâ Kurds and not just as individuals having the same civil rights as individuals of the Arab majority, and that it would pursue a magnanimous policy towards their cultural aspirations and other manifestations of national consciousness as a mother race in the population of Western Asia. The preparations accordingly went forward *pari passu* with those in Kirkuk proper, and even residents in the abandoned core, in response to numerous appeals, were allowed to apply for registration at the nearest centre of our administration.

In the meantime the agitation of the Shi'a *'ulamá* against the elections and the Treaty had come to a head. The son of Mahdi al-Khalisi, the chief divine of Kazimain, had been caught red-handed in the bazaar posting up copies of a *fatwá* denouncing the proposed elections as unlawful; the young man had been taken into custody and the father deported to the Hijaz. The principal prelates of Kerbela and Najaf had thereupon set out ostentatiously in a convoy of cars for Persia as a gesture of protest, but the Government had taken the wind out of their sails by having them intercepted, put on a special train under guard, and bundled over the frontier at Khanaqin.

Shaikh Mahmud too had not been idle. His minions had entered Sulaimani town hard on the heels of the retiring British column, though he himself did not arrive until the 11th July. Salih Zaki had been succeeded in command of the 'Kurdish National Army' by Majid Beg Mustafa, a former Ottoman officer of outstanding ability and energy, who was destined in later years to become a successful Mutasarrif and eventually a Minister of the Iraqi Crown. With Mahmud's re-appearance it became urgently necessary to define his position in yet another official pronouncement, but when I flew to Baghdad on the 17th I found that the affair of the Mujtahids had completely eclipsed the Kurdish question as the principal preoccupation of Government circles: the expulsion of the divines had been taken calmly, almost with indifference, in Iraq; but there was some excitement in Persia, and aircraft of No. 8 Squadron had flown to Tehran to bring down the British Minister, Sir P. Loraine, for consultations. It took me, in consequence, three days of importunity to obtain approval for a letter to Shaikh Mahmud, which I had drafted, in the following terms:

H. E. The High Commissioner has heard that you have returned to Sulaimani and has ordered me to inform you that he has made arrangements for the administration of the qazas of Ranya, Qala Diza, Chamchemal, Halabja, Qara Dagh with Sangaw, and for the nahiya of Mawat and that you must not interfere in any way with the above mentioned districts, or with the villages appertaining to the Saiyids of Sargelu. If (which God forbid) you act against these instructions and interfere in the said districts or intrigue against the Government in other ways, the most drastic action will be taken against you. For the present, provided that you do not interfere with the above-specified districts and provided that you do not commit hostile acts, His Excellency does not intend to take action against you.

The new policies having been thus launched I left Kirkuk for Khanaqin on the 23rd, hoping to get away early next morning by hired car, and to reach Karind on the Persian plateau that evening. But a series of vexatious, if unintended and perhaps unavoidable, delays, first on the frontier and then at Qasr-i Shirin, obliged me to stop the night at this, the first town on the Persian side. Of all the drab, dusty places I had ever seen the terra cotta of Qasr, built round two hills and dominated by the castle of Jwamêr, the celebrated Hamawand leader, struck me as the most parched and forbidding, until quite unexpectedly, at the foot of the slope, I came upon a broad, fast-flowing river, the Alwand or Hulwan (on which Khanaqin also stands), the far bank green with a thicket of reeds and willows. I noticed great building activity, the population having risen from 1,000 to 4,000 in the past two years in consequence of the cessation of Persian trade with Russia and the diversion of commerce to this route.

I was received hospitably in a little tea-shop down at the water's edge by the Director of Customs, an Iraqi Christian named Naum, whom I had known many years before at Bushire and who told me that, after a life-time spent in the Persian service, he had just received a notice of dismissal under a new law prohibiting the employment of foreigners in the civil service. We were soon joined by the agent who was supplying the car for my onward journey, a voluble little man named Agha Mahdi. After holding forth for some time, in characteristic Persian fashion, on the decay of his country and its lack of a 'master', he turned to the Americans, whose interest in the

country was then comparatively new (this was the time of the Millspaugh mission), accusing them of working above all to obtain concessions for themselves; 'but,' he concluded philosophically, 'in this world, of course, everybody works for himself—even God Almighty, when he sent the Prophet, upon whom be Peace, did so as part of his plan for forwarding his own ends.' It was late by the time the customs and passport formalities were completed, and I was taken by Naum to spend the night as the guest of a Russian doctor who had stayed behind after the break-up of the Imperial armies; his attempts to set up in practice at Qasr had not been a success and he was thinking of moving on to Senna to try his fortune there.

In connexion with this journey I had an interesting experience of the confusion that may be caused by the different meanings which are sometimes given to the same Arabic word in Turkish and Persian. I had been anxious to let it be known that I was going away on leave and that no political significance should be attached to my visit to Persia. Persian being then still my strongest oriental language I had informed my Iraqi colleagues and friends that I was going for *murakhkhaṣí*, the rather clumsy word ordinarily used by the Persians for 'leave'. Now the Arabic verb *rakhkhaṣa* means 'to allow'; the passive participle *murakhkhaṣ* is naturalized in Persian with the meaning 'allowed to go', and is the word also commonly used by a superior dismissing an inferior—'you may go'; the word I used is the abstract noun formed from the participle. But *murakhkhaṣ* is naturalized in Turkish with the meaning 'deputed to go', 'delegate'. So when I said I was going for *murakhkhaṣí* everybody in Kirkuk understood that I was going on a special mission, the exact opposite of what I had wished to convey.

I did, however, have one political conversation on the way up, at Karind, where I had been stopped at one of the barriers installed at the entrance to nearly every village to hold up the traveller for the inspection of his passport or the collection of a most vexatious transport tax called *naqlíya*. The soldier who had taken my passport came back to say that the Captain requested my presence. The officer did not rise to receive me as the old-fashioned courtesy of only two years earlier would have demanded, but his conversation was in marked contrast to the bumptiousness of his reception. He wished to ask my opinion

on a confidential matter: the Imperial Bank of Persia was sending up from Qasr 1 million tumans in specie, the road was unsafe owing to the presence of Shaikh Mahmud near Quratu on the frontier, and what was he to do? I was able to reassure him regarding Mahmud's actual whereabouts and his capacity for mischief so far afield, but added the obvious advice that in view of the sum involved he would be wise to send down as large an escort as he could spare from his small command. He professed himself eternally grateful for this sage counsel and accompanied me back to the waiting car, thus reversing the character which the Persians commonly give themselves: *khyush istiqbál u bad badraqa*, gushing to the arriving and surly to the departing guest.

At Hamadan I spent a delightful three weeks as the guest of C. T. Beale, who had served from 1918 to 1920 as an A.P.O. in Kurdistan and was now manager of the Ottoman Bank, at his charming house, or 'garden' as the pleasant Persian usage has it, above the town at an altitude of 7,000 feet; but it would be beyond the scope of this book to describe the several expeditions we made in the environs (including one to the summit of Mount Alvand, 11,600 feet), or the many interesting conversations I had with the Governor, the General Officer Commanding the Western District, other officials and notables, and shopkeepers in the bazaars. It was a particular joy to talk the language again with real Persians, for it had been my first love among oriental languages and, correctly as most educated Kurds of Sulaimani spoke it, their speech was stilted, lacking in modern idiom, and not at all musical to the ear.

The diplomatic history of the Mosul Question has already been sketched down to the point where, on the 4th February 1923, agreement was reached to exclude it from the programme of the Peace Conference at Lausanne and to give the parties a year to come to an amicable agreement by direct negotiation. The talks were accordingly resumed on the 23rd April (the day after our re-occupation of Ruwandiz) and led to the signature on the 24th July (five weeks after our evacuation of Sulaimani recorded in the last chapter) of the Treaty of Lausanne, the relevant part of Article 3 of which read:

The frontier between Iraq and Turkey shall be laid down in

friendly arrangement to be concluded between Turkey and Great Britain within nine months. In the event of no agreement being reached between the two Governments within the time mentioned, the dispute shall be referred to the Council of the League of Nations. The Turkish and British Governments undertake that, pending a decision to be reached on the subject of the frontier, no military or other movement shall take place which might modify in any way the present state of the territories of which the final fate will depend upon that decision.

The effect of this official and bilateral document once more proclaiming that the future of the Mosul wilayat was still uncertain was, of course, to hinder rather than to help us in dealing with our local problems.

My first preoccupation after my return to Kirkuk on the 16th August was the matter of the elections which, not surprisingly, was now not going at all well. On the 21st the Mutasarrif and I had a difficult interview with a deputation of leading citizens; but after much heated argument, plain speaking and recrimination an unpromising situation was saved by Abdullah Safi, who intervened at precisely the right moment; finally agreement was reached on the composition of the Inspection Committee, which would have the key function of supervising the various preparatory stages and the ballot itself. Violent anti-election and anti-British pamphlets were broadcast in the town that night, but the Committee as agreed upon was duly elected the next day, and the *fait accompli* was gradually accepted. Our report caused great relief in Baghdad, as was shown by the telegrams we received, followed by a personal letter from Cornwallis: 'It was very good work getting Kirkuk to come into the elections and I congratulate you heartily, and also Miller of whose work you speak so highly; it is much appreciated here.' It is interesting to recall that in the subsequent preparation of the revised electoral roll it was with the Arab tribe of Ubaid, under their senile Shaikh Husain al-Ali, that we had the greatest difficulty; it was only after we had sent out Qustantin Efendi, the Christian merchant, with Murad that the suspicious old man was induced to instruct his tribesmen to register. This was a good example of the great influence frequently acquired in Ottoman times by Christian and Jewish merchants, by reason of their honesty and fair dealing, over the most

unsophisticated tribesmen for whom they acted as marketing agents and bankers.[1]

As for Shaikh Mahmud, on the very morning of my return his headquarters at Sulaimani had been attacked from the air (the new 220-pound bombs being used for the first time) in consequence of attempts to interfere in the forbidden districts, especially Mawat. There had also been a good deal of brigandage near the high road in sympathy with the Shaikh's aggressive tactics, and Miller had deemed it prudent to arrange for an escort of R.A.F. armoured cars between Kifri and Kirkuk.

We heard later that Shaikh Muhammad Gharib, Mahmud's brother-in-law, had entered Halabja the same day but had been recalled post-haste immediately after the bombing. The Jaf Begzadas, still rent by internal dissensions in spite of their undertakings, had put up no resistance whatever, showing how little they could be relied on; but the sedentary Noroli tribesmen, on their own initiative, had attacked the retreating expedition in the darkness, killing one man and capturing a number of horses and rifles. Halabja was really out of effective reach from our bases in Kirkuk, and for some months we made no serious effort to restore the administration, except in the part of Warmawa south of the Beranan range.

A weak point for the consolidation of the Sanitary Cordon was the perpetuation within the Kirkuk liwa of the Talabani and Zangana tribal enclaves, adjacent, as they were, to Chamchemal and Sangaw. The Mutasarrif and I were therefore not sorry of the opportunity offered by the misbehaviour of members of both ruling families to abolish their privileged position and to revive the old Ottoman nahiya of Gil (modern Qadir Karam). Shaikh Reshid, brother of Shaikh Talib, had made an armed attack on the village of Darbasara on the south bank of the Basira River only eleven miles from Tauq, the Talabani claim to which the villagers had always resisted and the administration did not recognize; Reshid himself had been severely wounded in the thigh,[2] but Fattah Pasha took security from his brothers to produce him on demand and, to make the

[1]Another example was furnished by the Jewish Khalastchi family, long established at Shamiya on the Middle Euphrates.

[2]A few days later Corner visited his village and found his wound festering under a dressing consisting of a dirty piece of goat-skin applied hairy side on; he was just in time to save the leg and no doubt Reshid's life also.

punishment fit the crime, sentenced him to build, at his own expense and to our design, a post to house the police we now proposed to station there. Abdul Kerim and Hama Kerim, the rival Aghas of Zangana, who had been fighting among themselves, molesting the police and otherwise attracting attention, were sentenced to pay blood-money for the deaths and, after short terms of imprisonment, to live outside the enclave until direct administration had been consolidated.[1]

The substitution of direct for irregular tribal administration in this pivotal region might have been expected to appeal to the authorities in Baghdad with their love of centralization and their dislike of tribal privilege, but we encountered some difficulty in putting our proposals through. This was due to the presence on the Palace staff of a busybody who was anxious to justify his claim to be an expert on Kurdish affairs by the creation of a 'King's Party' in the hitherto aloof northern liwas, and thought that the best way to do this was by procuring the reversal in Baghdad of any decisions of the responsible provincial authorities which might be unpalatable to persons of religious or tribal standing. The King himself, when apprised of the true facts, gave no countenance to such manoeuvres; the Mutasarrif, on his part, was able to discourage the complainants by increasing the pressure for arrears of land revenue on the ground that, if they could afford to stay for long periods in the expensive hotels of the capital while they lobbied the Palace and the Ministries, they must evidently have enough ready money to pay their taxes, a line in which he could always rely on the enthusiastic support of the Ministry of Finance. For the first Mudir of Gil the choice fell upon a retired Turkoman official, Aziz Efendi, who had held the same post under the Turks. He set to work with great energy and, within a fortnight of assuming charge at the beginning of November, had collected two years' arrears of revenue.

This emphasis on tax collection perhaps needs a word of explanation. The revenues of the State before the days of oil were derived from two principal sources, customs and the tax on agricultural produce (one-tenth and upwards according to the kind of tenure), which was collected direct. Apart from the

[1]The Jabbari enclave, which had been transferred from Kirkuk to Sulaimani after Noel's first consultation with the Kurds, was restored to Kirkuk (Gil nahiya) in February 1924.

Treasury's need of income the degree of the administration's success in collecting it was a fairly accurate barometer by which to assess its general efficiency; refusal to pay was an act of defiance which, if not taken seriously, could have undesirable repercussions on law and order generally. This, however, inevitably had the unfortunate consequence that many minor officials came to think that revenue collection was the be-all and end-all of their presence and, if fearful of tackling the rich and influential, were inclined to bully the weak and to make no allowances for the poor who really could not pay. The central financial authorities were also slow to sanction reasonable remissions on account of natural calamities or catastrophic falls in prices after the conversion rates had been fixed, so that overzealous officials might force the debtors to sell their animals or their stocks at a loss to pay a tax destined to be remitted. Nor was it always easy for us in the more distant provinces to persuade the Ministries that if we were to demand payment of taxes we ought to be able to offer in return some kind of social service, if only a doctor within fifty miles, over and above police posts and the Penal Code.

XXIV GIL AND QARA DAGH

IMMEDIATELY after the evacuation of Sulaimani in June I had obtained sanction for the formation, in addition to the ordinary establishments required for the various administrative units of the Cordon, of a special mounted mobile force of 120 constables for use at need in any part of the Kirkuk and Sulaimani liwas. By the end of September it was trained, equipped and ready for operations; and early in October I left on a series of round marches, the first two of which took me through the country lying astride the boundary between the two liwas, that is to say the country between the Binzird–Beranan range on the north-east and the Kirkuk–Kifri high road on the south-west. An outline of the principal topographical features has already been given in Chapter II. It was not unknown to the early British travellers; indeed of the first eleven

in my list it will be seen that no fewer than seven passed this way, but that only Rawlinson and Maunsell followed routes other than the main Baghdad–Tabriz caravan track through Ibrahim Khanchi, the Sagirma Pass and Sulaimani.

On each of our tours we received the most cordial co-operation from the R.A.F., and took with us a Popham Panel for visual communication and a picking-up device for written exchanges. The mysterious rites connected with the Panel and the roar of the engines as the machines zoomed down to drop the message-bags with their gaily coloured streamers or to pick up ours combined to enhance the tonic effect of these demonstrations on the political situation, not only in the neighbourhood visited but also farther afield, where the size of the ground force and the numbers of co-operating aircraft were naturally exaggerated several fold. We were not unduly encumbered, for we bought our fodder and meat as far as possible from the larger villages and camps on our route, paying cash or giving receipts against the Government revenue demand.

The mobile force left Kirkuk for the first tour on the 7th October. The party consisted of Murad, Growdon, Sergeant Burgess (all of the police) and myself, with the constables at almost full strength. The column made a brave show with their smart new uniforms and beautifully groomed horses, and my heart swelled with pride as we rode out to the clatter of hooves and the jingling of bits.

Another important member of the party, whom I may now conveniently introduce, was my servant, Hama Ali, a young Kurd from Kifri, who had been strongly recommended to me by Douglas when he left the country. Hama Ali remained with me for the next twenty-two years, accompanying me on all my journeys until I married when, in no wise disturbed by the changed conditions, he settled down to run the establishment as major-domo in charge of the other servants, the silver, and the house generally; he learned to lay the table faultlessly and to wait on a dozen guests through a five-course meal with complete self-possession. I can conscientiously aver that throughout these twenty-two years I never once missed a coin or the smallest trinket, nor do I think that I was overcharged for the daily purchases in the bazar. He knew what property I possessed far better than I did myself, distinguished those articles

which dated from my bachelor days as 'ours', and could say exactly how or when almost every object had been acquired. There is often something rather attractive about the relations between master and servant in the countries of the Middle East. Quite apart from the deference normally shown by a younger to an elder brother, or by the younger generation to the older, it is not uncommon for the head of a senior, and therefore probably a more prosperous, branch of a family to have a minor relation to wait upon him and perform other menial offices. It follows that there is no necessary social gulf between master and servant and the servant is received, when the master himself is not in the room, with all the consideration due to an honoured guest. Hama Ali was of a class to be so received, and it was of great value to me to be able to make discreet inquiries or to convey tactful hints of my wishes through a man whom tribal chiefs and others both respected and trusted.

Our first objective was Chamchemal, but rather than follow the familiar motor road we took the old caravan track a few miles to the north along the broad bed of the Khasa between low, muddy looking cliffs, the route recommended for tobacco-smuggling by Shaikh Riza in his poem. There was a surprising amount of water for the time of year, and opposite each village, in the shingly bed, were extensive melon patches. We camped before noon at the small village of Goran (tribally Shuwan-Sarkhasa), situated at the junction of the main stream and the tributary ravine of Shiwatakht coming in from the south-east.

The next morning we followed the Shiwatakht to the crowded village of Sati (also Sarkhasa), built picturesquely to overlook a reach of tangled fig orchards and spreading planes enclosed between cliffs green with the moss of many springs. Here we struck over the downs until we reached the end of Shuwan territory and looked down on the broad plain with the mound of Chamchemal standing out about six miles away and, beyond, the long line of the Qara Dagh with the two *darbands* of Bazyan and Basira clearly distinguishable.

There was a good deal of political and police business to be transacted at qaza headquarters, where Wahhab Beg had recently taken over as Qaimmaqam, and we stayed two nights. On the second day two aircraft came over and landed on the small airfield near the mound; one of them broke a telegraph

pole as it came down, but fortunately there was no more serious mishap.

Our usual routine was to mount early so as to get our day's march over and our camp pitched by noon at the latest, for the season was still unpleasantly hot. We were accordingly in the saddle before six o'clock in the morning for our next stage and, with our party swollen to well over 200 by the presence of a large contingent of Hamawand horsemen (all, of course, with rifles slung over their shoulders and festooned with bandoliers), we rode southwards first across the plain and then through typical foothill country down a broad watercourse called the Shiwasur, the Red Ravine. Leaving Talaban, the village which gave its name to the famous family, on our right we reached the Tainal River, here called Basira, the boundary between Chamchemal and Sangaw, having been riding for just three hours. We forded a little up-stream of the village of Qirkh (Hamawand-Sêtabasar) and in another hour and a quarter reached the salt works officially known as Qum Mamliha[1] on the southern slopes of the Aj Dagh.

The salt works consisted of a large number of springs in the mountainside, from which the brine was conducted to two fields of shallow evaporating pans. There was a large warehouse dating from Ottoman times with living accommodation for the official in charge (for salt was a Government monopoly) or the publican (*multazim*) to whom the exploitation had been farmed out. This system was favoured in areas where the administration was not strong and, after taking over Sangaw, I had confirmed the lease granted by Shaikh Mahmud (on very favourable terms) to a minor relation of his own, subject of course to the condition that future instalments would be paid into the Kirkuk Treasury. Hitherto, however, he had paid nothing, replying to all demands that, far from making a profit, he was seriously in deficit and quite unable to find a penny. We had now been joined by Shaikh Awul, the new Qaimmaqam of Qara Dagh, with sixty more horsemen. If the police paid for their fodder and food the Hamawand and Qara Dagh tribal contingents did not. To entertain such a large party for one night would not tax the *multazim's* resources unduly; but to

[1] I think Qum was an attempt to represent the Kurdish *gom* meaning 'pool'; *mamliha* is an Arabic word meaning 'place of salt'.

prolong our stay by holding out longer would have been bad business, so a first instalment of Rupees 2,500 (£200) was quickly produced,[1] with promises of future regularity.

The following day we rode for an hour and a half south-eastwards between the Aj Dagh and a satellite ridge called Bask-i Zanur (which marked the boundary between Gil and Sangaw) and then turned north-east up a steep and rocky path over the Aj Dagh until from the crest, at about 3,000 feet, we looked down into Sangaw proper, well named 'Stone and Water', and across to the cliffs of the Qara Dagh only eight miles away. Another hour brought us to Gök Tappa, the headquarters of the nahiya, whence, after a halt for lunch and communication by Popham Panel with the daily aircraft, we pushed on another six miles across the valley to the large and prosperous village of Kirpchina, where Shaikh Abdul Kerim of Qadir Karam was waiting to join the party.

Kirpchina was the seat of a Barzinji Shaikh of some eminence, another Abdul Qadir, of whose death in the previous year Shaikh Abdul Kerim told us an interesting story. He had gone to the Hewraman on a visit and was in perfect health. One evening, without warning, he sent for his sons, gave them his testamentary instructions and, transferring his own turban to the head of one of them, nominated him to be his successor in charge of the family *takya*. To their puzzled questions he replied simply that death must come at some time to every man and the fancy had taken him to explain his wishes then and there. He then slept for an hour, rose, performed the ablution, recited the prayer of dawn, ascended the pulpit of the mosque where he was lodging, made the confession of faith 'There is no god but God and Muhammad is the Prophet of God', and finally, with the name of God thus on his lips, sank to the ground and died. This saintly picture by his kinsman and professional colleague hardly coincided with the old man's reputation with us as a turbulent and dangerous agitator, but *Alláhu a'lam*, God knows best.

At Kirpchina we had the good fortune to lay hands on an absconder badly wanted by the Kirkuk police for arson; he joined a small party of other malefactors who had been rounded

[1]The lease given by Mahmud to his kinsman would have been for far less than the Rs.50,000 for which, according to a note I have preserved, the works were farmed out in 1927.

up as we marched and were accompanying us until they could be safely sent with a small escort to some regular lock-up to await trial.

The path from Kirpchina to the Sagirma Pass is shorter but more difficult than the main track direct from Gök Tapa. It took us just an hour and a half to reach the top (about 5,000 feet). The mountain was now heavily wooded, and we were glad to sit in the shade by a spring while the Shaikhs' servants unloaded samovar and tea-glasses from the fast-walking mule which travellers of the better class always take with them.

The nahiya of Qara Dagh, which we were now about to enter, occupies that part of the valley between the Qara Dagh and Beranan[1] ranges which lies to the south-east of the Basira Gap; it adjoins Bazyan on the north-west and is separated from the Sirwan by the leg of Warmawa already described. An internal watershed (highest point 4,000 feet) crosses the valley opposite the Sagirma Pass and separates the basin of the Tainal (Basira) from that of the Diwana, the Madman (so called from its sudden and violent spates), which flows to the Sirwan. The valley on the south-eastern side of the watershed is divided in length by a short limestone uplift (highest point 4,600 feet) called Kalosh. From Sagirma to Zarda, a high and prominent point (5,900 feet) ten miles from the Sirwan, the Qara Dagh range, like Charmaban in Surdash but on a larger scale, splits into a double range, presenting to the north-eastern side a rugged wall intersected by a series of clefts that give access to, or at least views of, a wooded upland called Qopi between the two knife-edges. The principal clefts from west to east are known as the *darbands* of Sagirma, Jafaran, Goshan, Dar-i Zard, Wushk, Astêl, Gawr, Takya, Barawlê, Mamsha and Masura; corresponding to most of these there are goat tracks leading over the other knife-edge from the Qopi into Sangaw. The villages, not very numerous, are mostly situated on the slopes on either side, and the valley between is a great park of grassland dotted with oaks and intersected by the white pebbly courses of mountain brooks.

For forty minutes after we had resumed our march the path down the far side of the Sagirma Pass was deceptively easy, until we came to the cleft in the north-eastern wall, a narrow

[1]Here called 'of Gawra Qala' and 'of Darmazala'.

and precipitous gully, twice spanned by log bridges of village design.[1] Another fifty minutes brought us to the village of Jafaran. The headman, Sa'id Agha, was an old friend, who still treasured a gold watch and a 12-bore gun presented to him by the Civil Commissioner for his support in the troubles of 1919. He derived the name of his village from Jaf, the tribe, and *rhan* meaning 'flock', but he had long severed all connexion with the main body of the Jaf-a Rheshka in Marga. The villagers had not yet returned to the mud houses which, like most Kurds, they had abandoned to the fleas in the spring, and the Agha received us in a long booth of oak branches erected just above the uppermost line of roofs, which formed a broad terrace in front. Huge trays piled with grapes and other fruits were brought for the whole party. Our host was an expert on viticulture, and I took down from his dictation a list of twenty varieties of grapes, eleven white and nine black, 'mauve' or 'red'. There was nobody whose Kurdish gave me greater pleasure to hear, lively and idiomatic as it was with never a foreign word.

At the headquarter village of Qara Dagh, about four miles farther on, the whole population had turned out to meet us. On the fringe I noticed a little group of six whom, from their gentle expressions, limpid eyes, and sombre clothing, as well as the crinkly beards of the two older men, I had no difficulty in recognizing as Jews, the remnants of a far larger colony which had survived until comparatively recent times,[2] here as in many other remote market villages in Kurdistan, probably since the Babylonian exile, which followed the destruction of the First Temple by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.

A boar hunt had been organized by Sa'id Agha for the following day. All the dogs from the neighbouring villages, not quite so big as the great sheep-dogs bred by the Pizhdar and Bilbas farther north but nevertheless powerful and savage looking animals, arrived early in the morning in the charge of agile *shikarchis* beating small kettle-drums to keep their packs together. We started out on horseback but dismounted after an hour to scramble up a goat-track, not through one of the *darbands* but up the cliff and over the knife-edge, into the thickly

[1] J. B. Fraser, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 167–70 gives a vivid description of his crossing of the Sagirma.

[2] J. B. Fraser, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 163 says that of the 150 to 200 families two-thirds were Jews.

wooded Qopi. Even our Kurdish companions seemed to be exhausted. After a short rest Sa'id Agha conducted us to a point of vantage towards which the dogs were expected to drive the quarry, but in the end nothing turned up; the dogs had killed one young pig themselves, but there was no other sport. We ate our midday meal at a spring, called Kani Imarat from the traces of a completely collapsed ancient building near by, and opposite a pinnacle of rock standing out from the main ridge below which, my companions assured me, the walls of a ruined castle still stood to a height of eight or nine feet, with a well inside.

The Kani Imarat was one of several springs of which I made a list on another occasion rather earlier in the year (August 1936), when I entered the Qopi by the Darband-i Jafaran and rode along it for several miles in the course of a search for suitable sites for governmental summer stations. The best of the springs was Kani Zard (4,850 feet); the place had been rendered attractive by the erection, again under Sa'id Agha's auspices, of a number of booths (*chardax*), and by a succulent meal of spitted fowl, egg-plant stuffed with tomatoes, and freshly gathered grapes, of which I found the one variety described as 'purple' (*morh*) particularly delicious. I nevertheless formed the opinion that the place would not be capable of development into a hill station: the springs, which were being used for the irrigation of small tobacco fields, were not very copious though they might perhaps have been opened up to yield more; even so the air, under a leaden sky that day, was dry and hot, the sun shone down upon it from the moment it rose until late afternoon, and the heat seemed to be redoubled by reverberation from the wall of limestone behind; when I went to bed, under the stars of course, I could not bear more than a sheet over me, though I was glad to pull up a light blanket towards dawn.

From Kani Imarat the bulk of the party returned to Qara Dagh by the shortest route, but I persuaded Sa'id Agha and one or two others to accompany me back by the Darband-i Gawr. The word *gawr* is the Kurdish form of the word *gabr* applied by Persians at the present time to the Zoroastrians and is commonly used by the Kurds to describe anything pre-Islamic or pagan; and persistent reports had led me to believe that I should find there some kind of rock carving.

I was not disappointed. The relief is well inside the gap on

the cliff side and not at all easy to approach or to photograph. The principal figure represents a bearded warrior looking to his left and, as I judged, about ten feet tall. The helmet or cap is round and fits closely to the head. The beard is curled close to the chin and then falls in wavy lines almost to the level of the left hand which is bent back horizontally across the body just above the girdle to grasp a bow. The tunic is cut low round the neck. The pectoral muscles and those of the shoulders and upper arms give the impression of great strength and vigour. The girdle at the waist is of four parallel strands and suspends what looks like a kilt. The right hand grasps a sword or mace-handle. On each wrist is a bangle or perhaps the representation of a ruff at the end of the sleeve. The right leg is rigid, the left raised at the knee as if the figure is marching up hill. The rock below the hem of the kilt has been worn away by the action of water, but under each foot is a sprawling figure, about a quarter of the size of the other, with arms and legs outstretched and a plaited pig-tail hanging from the head. The whole relief is most impressive by reason of the tremendous vitality which the sculptor had imparted to his work: I could see no signs of a cuneiform inscription.

My photographs were reasonably successful, and Mr. Sidney Smith of the British Museum, then Director of Antiquities in Iraq, identified the relief as the prototype of the celebrated 'Stele of Victory' erected by Naram-Sin of Akkad (as appears from the inscription) to celebrate his victory over Satuni, King of the people of Lullu, in about 2400 B.C. Apart from the intrinsic artistic merit of the sculpture this discovery served to fix the location of the Lullu country, theretofore the subject of some controversy, and to throw new light on the significance of certain of the conqueror's military expeditions.[1]

This description of the Qopi brings me to the 'Avroman Parchments' to which I referred in an earlier chapter.

[1]My first report on this rock relief was published in *G.J.*, Vol. LXV, No. 1, and is referred to in Sidney Smith's *Early History of Assyria*, p. 96. Naram-Sin's 'Stele of Victory' was discovered by the French Archaeological Mission at Susa, whither it must have been carried off as a trophy of war; a photograph forms the frontispiece of L. W. King's *History of Sumer and Akkad* (London, 1910), where it is described as 'one of the finest pieces of Babylonian sculpture that has yet been discovered'; it was found in a part of the site where there were other captured Babylonian monuments, notably the stele bearing the law code of Hammurabi; some of the trophies bore triumphal inscriptions added by the King of Elam who captured them. (G. G. Cameron, op. cit., p. 109.)

These three parchments, two (I and II) in Greek and one (III) in Parthian, were brought to England in 1913 by Dr. Sa'id Khan Kurdistani and were acquired soon afterwards by the British Museum.[1] According to Dr. Sa'id Khan they were found in a cave in the mountain called Kuh-i Salan, near the village of Shahr-i Hewraman. They had been preserved carefully sealed in a jar and may have formed part of a larger collection, the rest of which has disappeared. One of the Greek manuscripts has on the back a short endorsement in Parthian, which is hardly legible but seems to be a *précis* of the text on the obverse. Each of the three documents is a deed of sale of half a vineyard (apparently the same property in each case). Each of the Greek deeds, in accordance with a not unfamiliar ancient practice, has two versions: one (*a*) in the upper half of the parchment which had been rolled up tightly, tied with string passed through two holes at each end, and sealed; and a second (*b*) in the lower half, which would have been accessible at all times for reference. In both deeds, however, there are some discrepancies between the upper or 'closed' and the lower or 'patent' versions. Parchment I is dated in the year 225 of the Seleucid Era (88–87 B.C.),[2] that is at the end of the reign of Mithridates II of Parthia, and II in 291 Seleucid Era (22–21 B.C.) during the reign of Phraates IV. The Parthian deed, III, is much shorter than the others and in worse condition; if there was a second version it has been torn off; the date is 300 Seleucid Era (13–12 B.C.) in the same reign.

Four place names are given in each of the Greek contracts, those of the vineyard itself, the village (*kōmē*), the hyparchy or administrative district, and the stage-post (*stathmos*) at which the deed was signed in the presence of witnesses;

[1]The summary given in this and the following paragraph is based on the original article describing the find, 'Parchments of the Parthian Period from Avroman in Kurdistan' by Professor E. H. Minns of Pembroke College, Cambridge, published in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1915, and another on the Parthian mannscript only entitled 'The Pahlavi Documents from Avroman' by Dr. H. S. Nyberg in *Le Monde Oriental*, 1923. The Greek texts throw light on many points of great historical, legal and linguistic interest; until their discovery the fact that Greek was used in the first century B.C. in this region for ordinary legal documents was not known or even suspected. Here I am only concerned with the place names. Dr. Sa'id Khan belonged to a leading aristocratic family of Persian Kurdistan; he became a Christian but nevertheless continued to practise in Tehran as a highly respected member of the medical profession and of Tehran society; a son was commissioned in the Royal Engineers and served with us in 'Norperforce'.

[2]As calculated by Minns.

the Parthian contract gives only the name of the vineyard:

Deed	*Vineyard*	*Village*	*Hyparchy*	*Stage*
I A	Dadbakanras	Kōpanis	Baiseira	Baithabarta
I B	Ganzakē	Kōpanis	Baiseira	Baithabarta
II A	Dadbakabag	Kōphanis	Basiraora	Dēsakdis
II B	Dadbakabag	Kōphanis	Basiraora	Dēsakdida
III	Datbakan belonging to Ganjakan	—	—	—

The final syllables of the names given for the vineyard, -ras and -bag mean respectively 'vineyard' and 'orchard' (modern Persian *raz*, *bágh*, Kurdish *rhez*, *bax*), would therefore have been interchangeable, and are not integral parts of the name; they are not inflected as Greek words; the name of the vineyard in III explains the discrepancy between IA and IB (in modern Kurdish *ganjakan* (*gencekan*) means 'treasures', especially 'buried treasures'); place names compounded with *ganj* are very common wherever Persian or Kurdish have been spoken. All the other names except Dēsakdis in IIA are inflected, Ganzakē in the accusative singular, Kōpanis and Kōphanis in the dative singular, and the rest in the dative plural.

The occurrence in the Qara Dagh, a region already rich in historical associations, of a pair of place names, Qopi and Basira, so closely resembling the Kōpanis, Kōphanis, Baiseira, Basiraora of the parchments is interesting, and several other considerations incline me to believe that the property forming the object of these transactions was situated here and not in the Hewraman where the deeds were found.

1. Dr. Sa'id Khan knew of no place names in the vicinity of the discovery resembling those of the parchments, nor do I find any in my own list of the villages of the tribal area, or in the latest surveys (1942).

2. In the Greek texts the name Kōp(h)anis is declined and, although allotted to a different declension, is treated like the familiar geographical names of the *-anē*, *-ēnē* type; the *-an-* in these Greek forms has been thought a proof that such names refer to administrative divisions which originated under Seleucid rule and survived into Parthian times,[1] so that the syllable

[1]W. W. Tarn, 'Seleucid-Parthian Studies' in the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, Vol. XVI.

-an would not be an essential part of the original native name.

3. Sagirma, the point at which the important north and south route between Baghdad and Tabriz crosses the Qara Dagh, and at which a traveller from the south would enter the Qopi, is about fifty-five miles west of the Kuh-i Salan; the peak of this mountain (8,500 feet) is between five and six miles east-north-east of the crest of the Hewraman at its highest point (9,800 feet) and across the Sirwan, which has here just made an abrupt hairpin bend round Salan to change direction from north-west to south-east but still on the eastern side of the *chaîne magistrale* of Zagros; the Hewraman is today, and must always have been, a place of refuge for fugitives from Shahrizur and the Qara Dagh region.

4. Any administration would naturally place a stage-post near this difficult pass on an important road, on one side or the other or on both (perhaps at the modern administrative centres of Gök Tapa and Qara Dagh); the difference in the names given in I and II need raise no difficulty since the name of such an establishment might easily have changed in the sixty-six years which elapsed between the signature of the two contracts or, of course, the parties might have attended at different posts on the two occasions.

5. Sagirma is less than fifty miles from Kifri in the plain, where the route from the north joins the highway from Mosul, Arbil, Kirkuk and Tauq, and is thus just about 150 miles from Baghdad; the district would have been far more accessible for Greek influences based on Seleucia (eighteen miles south of Baghdad) than the remote and rugged country lying behind the huge barrier of the Hewraman.

If the name of the hyparchy is in fact preserved in 'Basira' my surmise (based, in the absence of other contemporary evidence, on considerations of geography and my own experience of administering the region) would be that it comprised at least the qaza of Bazyan as it was organized in Ottoman times (the present nahiyas of Aqjalar, Chamchemal Headquarters, Sangaw, and Bazyan) plus the nahiya of Qara Dagh and the adjacent villages of Warmawa, making an administrative unit about eighty miles long and twenty to twenty-five miles wide, bisected in length by the Qara Dagh ridge, which is itself divided into two almost equal parts by the Basira Gap. There are reasons for

believing that the major subdivisions of the old satrapies in Seleucid and Parthian times was the eparchy[1] and that the hyparchies were secondary subdivisions, but even so this seems rather small. I therefore incline to suggest that the hyparchy more probably comprised the whole of the present liwa of Kirkuk plus the first valley beyond the Qara Dagh up to the Binzird–Beranan range (precisely the area we were administering from Kirkuk at this time), and that Tauq, which is more central than Kirkuk and was the more important place in early Muslim times, may mark the site of the administrative headquarters.[2]

From Qara Dagh we rode through the park-like country on the southern side of Kalosh to the prosperous village of Sêw-sênan, where Kökha Najm, another faithful heart of 1919 and close ally of Sa'id Agha, entertained us lavishly before we marched on another three miles to Aliyawa, where there was a good camping ground. A Kurd, as I have already mentioned, is seldom at a loss to suggest an ingenious derivation for any name. That given me for Najm's village was Sêy-we-sê-nan, 'the Saiyid and the three Loaves', from a holy man who never had more than three flaps of bread in his house but nevertheless was always able to feed any number of guests with plenty to spare, just in the manner of the miracle of the loaves and the fishes. Another example of popular etymology given me on this journey was for Basira: *ba*, 'wind', and *sirhe*, the verbal noun from *sirhiyn*, 'to wipe'—the rubbing noise made by the wind as it rushed through the gap!

I must have spent several hours all told discussing with the Shaikhs not only matters connected with the administration of the new qaza but also the problem of Shaikh Mahmud and Kurdish politics generally. Ever since the middle of June, while I had been busy organizing and consolidating the Cordon, Mahmud had been no less active trying to break out. There were times when his stock appeared to have sunk so low that I felt that one more push would topple him over. At others, owing, as I saw it, to our lethargy, the pendulum would swing

[1]Tarn, loc. cit.

[2]My article 'The Place Names of the Avroman Parchments', published in the *B.S.O.A.S.*, 1952, Vol. XIV/3, was written in rather a hurry to be in time for a volume of studies presented to Professor Minorsky on his seventy-fifth birthday. The suggestion here made regarding the extent of the Basiraora hyparchy represents my second thoughts.

violently the other way. I frequently begged for air action, or even for the reoccupation of Sulaimani by the Iraqi Army, the only force unlikely to be hurriedly withdrawn once it was there, in order to give the *coup de grâce* or to stop the rot as the case might be. But the High Commissioner preferred his Fabian tactics; the wider considerations dictating them were unknown to me, and several entries in my diary that autumn attest my youthful impatience of what I called 'Dobbs's supineness'. Throughout this period Mahmud was bombarding both the High Commissioner and myself with letters protesting his innocence, past, present and future, of any evil intentions, and complaining of being misunderstood. With the Kurds around him his favourite line of propaganda was to the effect that the pronouncements made and the action taken against him had all been for purposes of international tactics, and that he was going to be restored to authority in due course. I had therefore felt that the authorities in Baghdad, both British and Iraqi, had shown themselves far too forthcoming by receiving two deputations, which I myself had refused to see in the conviction that to do so at that juncture would fit in suspiciously well with this line of propaganda and so weaken morale both in the Cordon and in Kirkuk itself. My conversations with the friendly Shaikhs quickly confirmed the impression which had led me to select Gil and Qara Dagh for my first tour in force, namely that, convinced of the imminence of Mahmud's restoration, they were anxious to safeguard their own position by acting as mediators. Abdul Kerim, especially, tried to make my hair stand on end by urging, with a sapient air of mystery, that the Russians were now taking a hand in the game through Simko, and that we should be wise to use Mahmud as a bastion to consolidate our position. At Qara Dagh, no doubt on a hint from my companions themselves, I received letters from Mahmud and Riza Beg (my old friend of 1919 and therefore a clever choice) asking for an interview; but I still considered it expedient to refuse.

On the other hand I was delighted to welcome to our camp Mahmud's brother, Shaikh Qadir. In spite of the political intrigue just described the preparation of the electoral rolls had been going forward satisfactorily; that for the Qara Dagh nahiya was already complete with 4,000 names, good progress

had been made in Sangaw, and several hundreds from the unadministered districts had already applied for registration. After some persuasion Qadir agreed to accept nomination as a candidate for election and later on, in an international forum, his membership of the Constituent Assembly of Iraq provided a valuable piece of evidence to rebut the claim that the recalcitrant 'King' really represented Kurdish opinion.

The Shaikhs had returned from Sêwsênan to their respective homes, and that night at Aliyawa we were all glad to relax. Quite a number of the constables fancied themselves as vocalists, instrumentalists, serious actors or knock-about comedians, and we had an excellent concert. Such camp-fire entertainments, with increasingly ambitious programmes, became quite a feature of our tours and helped to cement a feeling of *cameraderie* and *esprit de corps* in the mobile force. The co-option of local talent from the village or camp helped to promote friendly relations with a people who saw far too little of the benefits and too much of the less pleasant side of the administration's activities.

From Aliyawa we took a stony but not very difficult path along the slope of the Qara Dagh below the high point of Zarda up to the top of the Paikuli Pass, whence, looking across the valley northwards over the Diwana, we could pick out the three passes of Solê, Gawra Qala (the Pagan's Castle, from an ancient ruin near the summit) and Pasharhê over the Beranan range.[1] The first groups of Gelali Jaf were crossing Paikuli on their southward migration, their oxen and donkeys laden with black tents, poles, reed screens, huge cooking-pots, skins of *rhon*, cradles and babies and, before we left, had bivouacked at the southern foot, hard by the monument of Narseh. Here I noticed that many of the blocks had been disturbed (by Herzfeld) since my visit of 1919, and I spent some time taking photographs and making the notes which I have already used in Chapter XII. We then followed a rough path high up on the flank of Zarda to Chicha Qala, a celebrated dervish centre and, after a halt to communicate with aircraft, pushed on to Tapa Garrus, a village of sedentry Roghzadi Jaf.

The next morning we marched due west across the Sangaw Valley to a gap between the Aj Dagh and its south-easterly

[1]This end of the range is usually referred to as the mountain 'of Gawra Qala'.

prolongation called Bargach. As we approached the gap the rock below our horses' hooves sounded strangely hollow, and a strong smell of sulphur arose from numerous pot-holes. Within the gap two winterbourns unite, one from the north-west and one (called Taftaf) from the east. They were then (17th October) dry, and two copious springs each issuing from beneath a near-by horizontal stratum of rock, one on each side of the gap, and about 120 yards apart, must be reckoned the perennial sources of the Aw-a Spi. The milky water of both smells strongly of sulphur; its greenish tinge that day may have been due to the blue sky above. Close by is another spring of clear water called Tirshaw (Bitter Water), which I think is a solution of sulphuric acid. The sulphur spring on the Aj Dagh side forms a large pool at once, and we felt it incumbent upon us to bathe in what we assured ourselves must be health-giving waters. It was pleasant and refreshing, but rather spoilt by the patches of oil that stuck to our bodies when we emerged.

This region was at one time the habitat of the Dilo tribe. The story of their expulsion, placed by various informants at anything between forty and a hundred years before the date of our visit, is as follows. The Zangana, in prosecution of a long-standing feud, one dark night effected a surprise raid on the Dilo, and with a ferocity quite unusual in tribal warfare, perpetrated a large-scale massacre. The Dilo having buried their dead in a common grave, proceeded in a large deputation to Kirkuk to lodge a complaint and demand redress. The Zangana took advantage of their absence to remove the bodies and fill the pit with all the dead dogs, mules and camels they could collect, and then hurried after the complainants to demand from the authorities a thorough examination of the monstrous charge preferred against them by their hereditary enemies. Examination of the grave having proved the case in favour of the Zangana to the satisfaction of the investigating magistrate the Dilo were forcibly removed to the Kifri district and beyond. The word *zengene-baziy*, Zangana trickery, then passed into the language to denote sharp practice of any kind.

The next day we followed the left bank of the Aw-a Spi south-westwards and, after crossing three broad, shingly watercourses (Mamran, Lahêz and Mirdolat) descending westwards from the Dar-i Khila ganglion, reached the famous caravan

stage of Ibrahim Khanchi; here we had a delightful bathe in a large pool of the river, which by now had lost all perceptible trace of sulphur and oil. There were two villages, about half a mile apart, belonging to the rival Zangana Aghas, Hama Kerim and Abdul Kerim, both of whom were still detained in Kifri on security. Their sons, however, were present and on duty, competing for the privilege of entertaining us. We therefore camped between the villages and accepted the midday meal from one and dinner in the evening from the other.

From Ibrahim Khanchi an uninteresting march by way of the Zangana village of Aw Barik brought us to Ferhad Beg, the village of Shaikh Jelal Talabani. He had recently visited Baghdad to petition against the formation of the Gil nahiya, and had taken the opportunity of visiting one of the quack dentists who were doing a roaring trade persuading rich tribesmen to have all their teeth, good and bad alike, fitted with gold crowns, with disastrous results to their teeth and their general health. His campaign against my pet project of administrative reform in no way affected the warmth of our meeting, and he greeted me with great effusiveness, kissing me on both shoulders. In such circumstances I generally found that the parental hurts-me-more-than-it-hurts-you-but attitude was the most effective. My experience among Persians, Arabs and Kurds alike has been that when a man knows in his own heart that he has been at fault he generally bears no ill will against the authority who inflicts an appropriate punishment, though he may do so against one of his own kind who, he thinks, may have given him away or otherwise landed him in the trouble; on the other hand, if he really feels that he has been the victim of a deliberate injustice, he may go to any length to satisfy his outraged feelings.

After dinner Shaikh Jelal was in great form with stories of an enormous cave in the Aj Dagh, which was reached by a long arched passage from the entrance near Qum Mamliha and which contained a considerable town with what had evidently been streets, cisterns, houses and bazaars; there were even trees. One of the company went farther, alleging that in one of the shops he had placed his hand on what appeared to be a roll of cloth, which fell to bits as he touched it, and that he had seen in the middle of this underground city a spring from which

three rivers took off (the Aw-a Spi south-eastwards, the brine stream of Mamliha north-westwards, and the Aw-i Qaitul south-westwards), any of which could have been diverted into another with a single brick. Another claim that there was also to be seen the clear and undeniable print of an Ifrit's foot, however, brought a sharp rebuke from the Shaikh, and the competition came to an end. Fantastic as these popular stories are I think that the Aj Dagh is honeycombed with caves which might prove of interest to an expert spelaeologist. I should have liked to dally longer to investigate, but it was evidently blowing up for the first heavy rain of the autumn and I felt that I must make sure of getting back to Kirkuk the next day before the track from Lailan, where my car was awaiting me, became impassible.

There was nothing of interest about the familiar march from Ferhad Beg to Lailan, but to complete my description of Gil I will just add a word about another visit I made to the same region in the second half of November.

At Qadir Karam I witnessed an interesting spectacle. I was sitting with Shaikh Abdul Kerim in his verandah when we heard a confused sound as of drumming and chanting, first in the distance and then coming nearer and nearer, until a motley crowd of villagers and dervishes (the latter distinguishable by their wild looks and long unkempt hair) appeared over the brow of a low ridge close to the village. Of the two drummers at the head of the procession one was performing on a tambourine and the other was banging a much larger instrument carried on the back of a comrade. Forming a circle in the space before the tomb of Shaikh Muhi-ud-Din, my host's father, they continued their chant, jerking their heads backwards and forwards with a violence that, one would have thought, must scramble their brains. It appeared that they were Murids of that Shaikh Abdul Qadir to whose death I have referred earlier in this chapter; the bereaved family had recently returned from the Hewraman, and the party were on their way to Kirpchina to visit his son and successor.

A day or two later I was again at Aw Barik, about fourteen miles to the south, and took the opportunity of visiting a place of which I had often heard, Khwar-na-wezan, Where-the-Sun-never-Shines. It proved to be a small gully descending from

the north into the Aw-a Spi at a point about four miles south of the village, where the river, flowing westwards between cliffs of conglomerate, breaks through a low north-to-south ridge called Mazukh. From the river bed we climbed up through a tangle of figs, pomegranates and sumach into a narrow cleft, the sides green with moss and ferns. It ended in a perpendicular wall with a sparkling little waterfall issuing from a spring near the top and falling with a melodious splash on to pebbles brown as if from iron. The air was sweet with the scent of mint and other fragrant herbs. Such a place would hardly attract attention in the highlands farther north, but here in the parched and desolate foothills it seemed a place of singular charm, and might well have been a sacred grotto in pagan times.

After spending a day and a night in the enclave of Dauda villages, curiously called Dauda Kurdistan, in order to investigate a land dispute between the original inhabitants and some comparatively new settlers from the Roghzadi Jaf I turned back westwards and recrossed Mazukh about four miles south of Khwar-na-wezan. The altitude at the top was about 2,000 feet, 800 feet above the level of the river and sufficient to give an uninterrupted view north-eastwards over the foothills to the Qara Dagh and the Persian mountains, and to the west down the Aw-a Spi as it flowed across the broad plain of Dasht-i Pataki to the gap in the first low range near the high road at Tuz Khurmatu. Hereabouts we came upon two villagers who had just succeeded in capturing a silver fox by smoking it out of its hole. That night and the next I spent at Chawri, in the plain near the river, as the guest of Aziz-i Abbas, one of the three principal Aghas of the Dauda; we had an excellent day with the partridge, and thereafter the old man showed himself far less shy than he had been of setting foot in any kind of government office.

From Chawri an easy road across the plain brought us to the gap and to the brine springs which give Tuz Khurmatu its name (*tuz* being the Turkish for salt) and some of its importance. Before returning to Kirkuk by car I ran down to Kifri to meet Major Alec Holt, R.E., who had just arrived to start work on the railway extension from Kingirban to Kirkuk; he completed the task many weeks ahead of schedule and thereby rendered a service not only of economic value to Iraq but also, as will



13(*a*) THE SAGIRMA PASS



13(*b*) ROCK RELIEF OF NARAM-SIN



14(*a*) QADIRI TAKYA AT ABDALAN



14(*b*) IN QARA DAGH

be recorded in due course, of some political significance in the diplomatic struggle that lay ahead.

XXV JAF AND HALABJA AGAIN

It was now time to pay more attention to the south-eastern part of the Cordon, with the limited objective of consolidating our control up to the line of the Beranan range at the Sirwan end. This involved firstly the re-establishment of the machinery of administration in the nahiya of Warmawa, and secondly the vindication of Government authority over the Jaf nomads, who were now all down in their winter quarters, by the collection of arrears of sheep-tax, the completion of a new count for the current financial year, and the arrest of certain individuals wanted by the police. For Mudir of Warmawa the choice had fallen on Husain Beg-i Hasan Beg, head of the youngest branch of the Kaikhusrau-Begi family who, as a property owner there, could count on local support and who, moreover, had alone of the Begzadas shown up well in the affair of the 16th August. For the post of Agent for the Jaf Kerim Beg, as the senior Begzada resident in the south, was still the best candidate. At Halabja, in spite of the hurried withdrawal of Mahmud's garrison in August, the situation was thoroughly unsatisfactory; so much so that, at the very moment when I was maturing my plans, the leading Begzadas, including Ahmad, Izzat and Hamid, paid a visit to Sulaimani to make submission to the 'King'.

Accordingly, on the 7th December, I again left Kirkuk with the full strength of the Mobile Force. Murad and Burgess were of the party as before, but Captain S. White, an Australian, had replaced Growdon as I.O.P., and I also took Captain E. C. H. Alban, who was acting at Kifri for Chapman, absent on leave. Kifri was to be our advanced base and, rather than follow the motor road, we marched there in three stages by the shortest road inside the first range, through Lailan and Chawri, crossing my previous routes at several points and meeting much the same people.

At Kifri I received from the High Commissioner a telegram

saying that, in view of Mahmud's many violations of the terms imposed upon him and of the accumulating evidence of his aggressive intentions, His Excellency proposed to move the A.O.C. to bomb him again at Sulaimani, of course after the usual warning. I naturally concurred enthusiastically with a decision which I considered was long overdue; but in the meantime there was no reason to modify the plans already made for the tour of the Mobile Force.

Having replenished our stores at railhead, on the 12th December we marched out through the gap in the ridge just north of the town and then turned south-east to camp at Shakal which, owing to the extension of cultivation round Qara Tapa, had now been established as the southern limit of Jaf migration. The usual arrangements had been made by the R.A.F. for frequent visits by aircraft, and the next day at Kelar Flight-Lieutenant Eric Routh of No. 30 Squadron made a sporting landing in a field of stubble near Kerim Beg's house. The D.H.9 A's were then not fitted with self-starters, and all of us who had occasion to fly fairly often became quite proficient in the somewhat hazardous business of 'swinging the prop' to start up the engine; the most expert would actually give the swing, while three or four others formed a chain to impart more weight to the movement and at the same time pull the expert well out of the way before the propeller could hit him.

While still at Kelar I received letters from Halabja. It appeared that Ahmad and Izzat Begs had heard of my proposed tour while they were actually in Sulaimani bowing the knee to Mahmud; they had hurried away and now begged to report that they had gone only because they had been informed that I myself was there. The Lady Adila also wrote to say that she would be coming to Faqê Jina at the southern foot of the Pasharhê Pass over the Beranan, the headquarters of Warmawa nahiya, to meet me.

Our first three marches from Kelar took us northwards through the broken country west of the Sirwan, along or close to my routes of 1922. It was represented by a blank on the maps, but just before we started the R.A.F. had produced a tolerably good air survey; this was a great help and we, for our part, were able to add the names of the hills, watercourses, and villages.

The first night was spent with the Shatri at Kani Chakal (Jackal's Spring) near the mouth of one of the broad, shingly torrent beds that descend from Dar-i Khila, the second with the Haruni in the broad plain of Pêwaz (then in Warmawa), and the third with other Haruni at Karêza a little farther on. The weather was kind and, as long as we were travelling northwards over the rolling downs, splendid views beckoned us forward—the gorge of Darband-i Khan where the Sirwan breaks through between the Beranan and its continuation, the great hog's back of Khoshik and Bamo gashed with mighty scars, the neat table-mountain of Bawa Yadgar, Dalaho and the Kalhur hills which lit up to a bright rose at sunset, the whole panorama moving round from north-east to east and south-east as we advanced—while immediately on our right the river bed was bright with the autumn tints of willow and tamarisk.

Each morning as we were striking the tents women and children would invade the camp, not only to receive back any cooking-pots, water-skins and other property we might have borrowed, but also in the hope of finding empty tins and bottles, for receptacles of any kind are always in great demand among nomads. The costume of the women consisted generally of large, roomy trousers of blue or other dark material taken in near the ankles so as to fall over like Whitechapel plus-fours, one or two long shirts of the same material, a bolero jacket, several silk squares tied scout-wise over the shoulders, a dark or coloured turban according to the age of the wearer, and around the waist a belt with a heavily bossed silver buckle; the younger girls wore brightly coloured skull-caps with fringes of silver coins instead of a turban.

I was surprised to find how far from water Jaf camps often were. Where time is no object animals can of course be driven or ridden to the nearest stream or spring, and females of all ages are always in good training to hump wet water-skins considerable distances in quantities sufficient for drinking, the summary ceremonial ablutions before prayer or a meal, and some washing of utensils. But for us this was most inconvenient, and more than once we were obliged to change our plans so as to camp, not with the section we had intended, but with another nearer the river.

Our business was not all pleasant. The Haruni in particular

were truculent about the little matter of revenue arrears until several of the more obstinate Kökhas had been arrested to be taken along with us. All outstandings had been duly paid or guaranteed before we returned to base.

The third evening the weather broke and in the morning as we rode over Tun Bawa Umra, a minor hog's back (highest point 3,650 feet) running parallel to the Qara Dagh, the whole landscape was shrouded in very wet Scotch mist. I had, of course, intended to go on to Faqê Jina, the headquarters of the nâhiya; but Shaikh Mahmud was reported to be in south-eastern Shahrizur, and I decided that it would be wiser not to cross to the north of the Paikuli Pass lest he should slip over the Pasharhê unannounced and try to secure the interview which I had already refused and which would be doubly embarrassing at a time when I knew that he might be bombed at any moment. I had therefore sent a message to the Lady Adila expressing my regret that I should not have the pleasure of meeting her. But she was not to be thwarted and, in spite of the appalling weather and her sixty-eight years, she crossed both the Pasharhê and the Paikuli Passes and rode at noon into Pisakan, two or three miles south of the monument of Narseh, escorted by her sons and a *posse* of retainers; I noticed that she had not neglected to make up in advance of her arrival.

The sons, who had lost no time in changing from their mud-bespattered clothes into their expensive silks, were evidently ill at ease as they sought to explain and justify their recent performance. Their mother, alternately coy and shrewd, left them to do most of the talking, backing them up from time to time with exclamations of '*Be xwa, wehaye—ary w'ellhah, ary w'ellhah*, By God it is so—yes indeed by Allah, yes indeed by Allah', until they gradually passed from excuses for the past to boasting about the wonderful things they could and would do from now on. They pressed to be appointed, with the appropriate salaries, to the posts for which they had been cast at the time of the evacuation of Sulaimani, but were not really surprised at my refusal; I made it clear that the Mudir of Warmawa, with whom we were leaving a dozen uniformed constables to reinforce his own tribal resources, would be reporting not to Halabja but to Kifri.

The next morning, after a final interview with the Lady and

her sons, we left Pisakan for Bakirbayef, another of a group of eight villages belonging to the Shaikhs of Solê. The whole country was still wrapped in thick mist and it rained continuously. Visibility was down to a few yards, and it was quite impossible to make topographical observations of any value as we picked our way up and down the slippery paths. I know of few more unpleasant tasks than pitching wet tents, under torrents of rain, on ground that is already a sea of mud. We used our own tents but billeted the constables and the horses in the village.

When all were settled in we felt that we had earned a good hot grog and, the last of the bottles of whisky brought from Kirkuk having been exhausted the night before, I bade Hama Ali open the new case we had taken on at the NAAFI canteen at railhead. A few minutes later he came back with his eyes starting out of his head as if he had seen a ghost: '*Sahib, wysky niye, part-e!*' It was the custom of the NAAFI to make up the consignments of stores ordered by the various messes in any suitable box available; the supply of port ordered for Christmas by our mess secretary had been packed in a whisky case, and this had been issued to us by inadvertence instead of the real thing. Port is no doubt an excellent beverage at the right time and place, but for travellers in our situation it was a very poor substitute for John Haig or Black and White.

Most ex-Ottoman officers in the service, as I have already mentioned, enjoyed an occasional convivial evening, prizing the *kaif*, the feeling of exhilaration induced by the alcoholic content of wines and spirits, rather than the bouquet or taste; the first glass or two, which only laid the foundations, could therefore be regarded as wasted unless followed by others sufficient for this purpose. Murad at that time (he gave it up entirely soon afterwards) was no exception and, rather maliciously perhaps, we had brought a supply of the local spirit called '*araq*, hoping that his less fastidious taste would consent to use it and so help to eke out more precious supplies on a journey far from any centre where they could be replenished. So far we had not had much success, but I now assured him that wine would be quite valueless to one used to a more fiery potion. He insisted, nevertheless on having '*dhâka 'l-aḥmar*, that red stuff', like the rest of us, and fond as I was of him, I could not repress

a groan as I watched the vintage product, which was to have put the crown on our Christmas dinner in a week's time, coursing down what I am afraid was a quite undiscriminating gullet.

It poured in torrents all night, and striking the sodden tents was almost as unpleasant as pitching them had been the night before; but the sky cleared as we marched north-westwards. For lunch we halted at the tents of some Roghzadi Jaf. The Kökha, Ahmad-i Shasuwar, seemed terribly frightened when we arrived, but soon cheered up; a nice old man, he received us hospitably in a clean, well-sited guest-tent, fed the police generously, and undertook to pay up his arrears of tax within a fortnight. We then pushed on through very broken country, much of it in the form of small grass-flats between the upturned ends of sandstone strata, to a Mika'ili camp on the southern flank of the Bargach ridge, not far from the sources of the Aw-a Spi and back in Sangaw.

The following day we continued in the same direction for a time to visit other Mik'ili camps close under the Aj Dagh, and then turned south-west to spend the night near the village of Koyik (Gil) on the Aw-a Spi at the camp of Rustam-i Hasan-i Hajji Qadir,[1] the most important and the most prosperous of the Mika'ili Köklıas. A handsome man, he dressed in expensive silks like the Begzadas but wore his beard shaved under the chin and below the ends of the lips and carefully trimmed in the fashion of those of the ordinary clansmen who paid much attention to their personal appearance. Here, in response to an urgent appeal picked up the previous day, the liaison aircraft dropped two bottles of whisky, each wrapped up in a sack stuffed with hay; one fell safely, but a tin of fifty cigarettes had been put in the second sack and we found the bottle smashed.

Our next was a long march due south over the Kewarhê, a long spur thrown out westwards from the Dar-i Khila knot, and then across the heart of the most forbidding and desolate part of the foothill country to Nawa; the weather was once again glorious, but it was not surprising that the aircraft should have failed to find us, long as our column was, in the baffling maze.

Soon after leaving Nawa we turned aside to visit another interesting person, Sulaiman 'Khan', a Kökha of the Roghzadi,

[1]This is a good example of the mention of both father and grandfather to ensure against any mistake of identity.

who had settled and prospered some years in Persia near the summer pastures of his clan but, having fallen foul of the authorities there, had recently resumed the nomadic life. I have already remarked that in the frontier region the ancient culture of Persia often seemed to impart to those who came in contact with it, whether in the realm of letters, architecture, or even the routine of daily life, a polish denied to those who had been subject only to Ottoman influences. Sulaiman Khan was a good example of this: the tent was spread with the finest carpets, the quilts and cushions were covered in silk, a superb samovar was steaming in the corner, and the tea-glasses were of unusual shape and quality, and held in little frames of the finest silverware of Isfahan.

That night, the last of the tour, was spent at a Shatri camp near Umar Mil, about ten miles from Kifri. It was now the 22nd December, but the warmth and sunshine of the last day or two had obliterated the memory of our earlier discomforts. I gave the police a short lecture on the objects of our tour and the results achieved. They on their part were in high good humour and organized the most ambitious *al fresco* concert we had yet had. Even the prisoners, from their place of honour in the front row, seemed to forget their temporary loss of freedom and the prospect of having to disgorge the taxes which they had almost certainly collected from their clansmen but had hoped to keep for themselves.

At Kifri I learned that Christmas Day had been selected for the bombing of Mahmud, and left at once by car for Kirkuk. The greatest secrecy was being maintained, and the aircraft were to operate not from Kirkuk but from Arbil. Once again we had an anxious morning. Two machines were lost. The first made a forced landing just outside Sulaimani itself, near Sarchinar, and Sir John Salmond (pilot Squadron Leader Jones-Williams[1]) himself landed beside it with another craft to bring off Routh and his mechanic. A second came down at the foot of the Tasluja Pass on the Sulaimani side, but here too the pilot and mechanic were successfully picked up. One or two other machines had to turn back owing to engine trouble, and in the end only about half the scheduled number of bombs was

[1]Squadron Leader Jones-Williams, 'John-Willy' to his friends, one of the finest pilots of those days. He was killed in 1930, when he ran into the Atlas range near Tunis at night in the course of an attempt on the world record for long distance.

dropped; Kinkead was however able to claim a direct hit on Mahmud's front door. I saw the A.O.C. on his return from the raid and arranged to get out at once fresh orders to be dropped on Shaikh Mahmud making him responsible for protecting the two aircraft until they could be salved. This he duly did for the first, but the second had already been destroyed by Kerim-i Fattah Hamawand, who had been in the vicinity.

That night 'the Political' and the R.A.F. combined for a fancy-dress Christmas dinner at the airfield mess, which lasted till three in the morning. There was nearly a mishap when one reveller put a match to the cotton-wool beard of another; the beard went up in an alarming flare, but willing hands quickly extinguished the flames and the victim escaped with nothing worse than singed lashes and eyebrows. We, the Political party, had come prepared to sleep where we dined, and after a hearty Boxing Day breakfast on Prairie Oysters, we all demonstrated by a successful shoot that our eyes had not been adversely affected by any surfeit of turkey and plum pudding the night before.

January, February and March 1924, were on the whole uneventful. The raid of Christmas Day, if it had achieved nothing else, had served to demonstrate the falsity of Mahmud's propaganda to the effect that Government was on the point of coming to terms with him, so that several of his townsman supporters, like Riza Beg and Abdur Rahman Agha, decided to leave him. The bombing was followed by frequent air demonstrations when the memory, or the appreciation of the significance, of that operation seemed to have become blunted. My diary shows that I was frequently on the move, by air or by road, visiting various parts of the liwa or of the Cordon; but only one or two incidents are worth recording.

One night towards the end of February I had gone to bed early and was asleep in the verandah when I was awakened with a start by the crack of a rifle. This was followed by another and another, increasing to a sharp fusillade. For a second or two I thought that a party of Shaikh Mahmud's rebels must have managed to enter the town under cover of night, and my first reaction was a feeling of chagrin that he should have successfully stolen a march upon me, for I flattered myself that my system of intelligence was very good. I was

quickly reassured, however, when I distinguished in the din the unmistakable clang of trays and other utensils of tin or copper. I looked up, and there, sure enough, in the cloudless sky was the full moon with a small dark chunk already bitten out of it. The whole town was dealing with the eclipse in the time-honoured way with a view to making the dragon disgorge the luminary he was trying to swallow. I was amused to learn some days later that Shaikh Mahmud, in his house on the northern outskirts of Sulaimani, had been caught napping in exactly the same way, and had called for his fleetest mare in order to make good his escape over the Goyzha before he had realized what the firing was.

About the same time there was a storm in a tea-cup provoked by the busybody at the Palace whom I have already mentioned. I suddenly began to receive letters and memorials, bearing scores of seals, signatures and marks, protesting against the appointment of Ja'far Sultan, chief of Hewraman-i Luhun, to the post of Qaimmaqam of Halabja. This outburst puzzled me considerably for, in view of the improvement that had followed the air operation of Christmas Day, the tour of the Mobile Force among the Jaf, and the successful completion of the sheep-count that followed, my proposals for the re-establishment of the administration there had been sanctioned, and I was on the point of sending up a party of officials and police to work under Ahmad Beg who, in spite of his exhibitions of faint-heartedness, remained the only possible choice for the senior appointment. It appeared that a meddlesome cleric from the Hewraman named Mulla Hasan had gone down to Baghdad and obtained from his counterpart in the Palace, on official Palace paper, a document purporting to appoint himself as Mufti and Ja'far Sultan as Qaimmaqam. A greater solecism could hardly be imagined, for Ja'far Sultan was a Persian subject resident in Persia, and in any case the appointment of a Hewrami chief to rule over an almost entirely Jaf population could only lead to bloodshed. The appointments were of course repudiated as soon as the facts had been elucidated.

In the middle of March one of three aircraft demonstrating over the district of Shamiran, situated on the left bank of the Zab south-west of Halabja and then part of the Warmawa nahiya, had its petrol tank pierced by rifle fire and was forced to land

in the depression close by the river. Kinkead and Flying Officer W. ('Monkey') Sherlock made brilliant landings alongside and brought the pilot, Flying Officer R. D. Wheelan, and his mechanic safely home. I was to have been a passenger in one of those machines but had been detained at the last moment on the airfield by the arrival of Hearson, who had flown up on behalf of the A.O.C. to discuss policy.

At the end of March the situation on the Kurdish side of my province seemed sufficiently stable to allow me to carry out a long-cherished scheme of making a round tour of the Ubaid and other Arab tribes between the high road and the Jabal Hamrin. The Ministry of the Interior decided to take the opportunity offered by the presence of a large force of well-disciplined police to impose a settlement of a long-standing feud between the Ubaid and the Azza, a tribe belonging to the Diyala liwa on the other side of the Jabal. It would be beyond the scope of this book to describe this most interesting journey, which lasted three weeks. I will only mention that on the 30th, at Hawi al-Maita on the Adhaim River, about half-way between the Jabal and the Tigris, we were surprised to see the A.O.C.'s personal aircraft, distinguishable by its red colour, circle above us and then come down to land. Sir John Salmond had been doing the round of the R.A.F. establishments before relinquishing his command and, learning our whereabouts from Kinkead who had visited us earlier in the day, had characteristically come out of his way to include us in his farewells.

We returned to learn that things had taken a turn for the worse at Halabja. Shaikh Mahmud had reacted to the arrival of the civil officials and police by invading the qaza and defeating a party of Jaf horsemen sent out by Ahmad Beg. It seemed certain that all the official representatives of Government (except those of Warmawa) were confined to the town, but beyond that we had little information. I was due to proceed on leave on the 26th April (for 1924 would have been my third successive summer in the country), but I felt it my duty, before going, to fly up to Halabja myself (on the 21st) to see what the situation really was. The flight, which took just an hour, was especially interesting, now that I knew the country so well on the ground: first the broken Jabbari foothills looking less forbidding than usual in their spring coat of fresh grass, Bask-i

Zanur, the Aj Dagh and the sources of the Aw-a Spi, the Sangaw Plain, the Zarda hump of the Qara Dagh and the Paikuli Pass, Diziyayish, the broad, green expanse of Shahrizur extending to the mighty wall, now marbled with all that remained of the winter snows, of Hewraman.

We had arranged that Kinkead only should land with me in the first place and that the other two machines should circle round until we could make sure that Halabja was still in friendly hands. There had been little animation in the town when we first looked down, for it was the fasting month of Ramazan and many of the people were doubtless enjoying a *siesta* after having been up all night. In a few minutes after our landing, however, the whole population was streaming down to the airfield, prominent among them, on horseback, the Lady Adila herself, radiant in fresh paint and a spring frock of pink with green spots. Thus reassured we signalled 'all well' to the others. The airfield was very small and on a slope and, owing to the strange currents set up by the proximity of the mountains, landing was not always easy. The next aircraft seemed to be coming down much too steeply, and we watched with horror as it crashed into the ground, stood up on end, and broke in half with a sickening crunch. We raced to the spot expecting to see flames shoot up from the wreckage. Fortunately this did not happen, and we extricated the occupants with nothing worse than slight concussion for Sherlock and an injured shoulder for his rigger. In the meantime Flying Officer J. L. Airey had landed safely with the third machine on the other side of the ground. The crowd was remarkably disciplined and lined up some distance from the fairway. After making the rigger's arm comfortable in a sling we rode up to the Lady's house. This was the first time that British officers had been seen in the town since the great débacle nineteen months before and, as we passed through the streets and the bazaar, we were received with every sign of respect and pleasure, the men without exception standing and salaaming while women and children lined the roofs and greeted us with the shrill trilling associated with festive occasions. At the house Adila Khan's maids, their bright clothes and pretty made-up faces set off by the kerchiefs of white muslin thrown over turban and shoulders, made little effort to hide themselves as we crossed the verandah

into the dining-room, where the promises I had made to my companions about the fare they might expect from the Lady's famous kitchen were amply fulfilled.

The political situation I ascertained to be this. Since his reverse at the hands of Mahmud's lashkar a fortnight earlier Ahmad Beg had remained at Halabja with all the officials and police who had been sent up to him in March. He was supported by the majority of the Noroli, whose villages ringed Halabja about on three sides and formed a natural buffer for the town. The enemy had been prevented from following up their success in the first place by the exhaustion of their ammunition and later by the arrival, in response to the Lady's urgent appeal, of Ja'far Sultan with several of his numerous sons and other relations and a contingent of riflemen; fear of tribal complications with Hewraman-i Luhun had been, and continued to be, a powerful deterrent to any would-be aggressor. The Sultan was present on the airfield and at the luncheon party: he assured me that he had had no knowledge of Mulla Hasan's clumsy intrigue on his behalf; it would never occur to him to attempt to supplant the representatives of Usman Pasha in their rightful position in Shahrizur, and he was prepared to stay and support the Lady as long as Government wished. Halabja itself was thus safe for the time being; but Mahmud's *lashkars* were still in occupation of Khurmal and Warmawa north of the Beranan, and administration was at a standstill. Adila Khan and her son, much heartened by our visit and Ja'far Sultan's undertaking, thought that they could preserve the *status quo* for a month or so, but hoped that Government would not delay too long in taking radical steps to put an end to an intolerable situation.

We took off for the return journey with two passengers in each of the rear cockpits made for one. Sherlock and I were a tight fit and, neither of us being featherweights, made the machine unpleasantly tail-heavy for Kinkead; as was usual in the afternoons the air was full of pockets, and the constant bumps added to our discomfort. Remembering my own anxious vigils on the roof of the serai I could not help wondering, as we came in sight of Kirkuk, what the feelings of our friends on the ground might be when they picked out only two aircraft coming in over the foothills, and I felt a curious glow of satisfaction

in the superior knowledge, shared only with five others, that all was well.

While problems connected with the Jaf and Halabja had been almost monopolizing my attention there had been two other developments of more general and more lasting importance.

On the 12th March the elections were duly completed. Under the law all adult males duly registered were qualified to vote as 'primary electors' for the choice of the 'secondary electors' who did the actual voting for the deputies, quite a good system in a country where communications were poor and the majority of the electorate illiterate. Deputies were allotted to the various liwas in proportion to their supposed population. Parties and declared policies being unknown, most of the secondary electors, the tribal representatives among them almost without exception, applied to official sources for guidance as to how they should exercise their novel rights. The consequence was that both Kirkuk and Sulaimani sent good representative groups including: Salih Beg Naftchizada (Kirkuk notable), Jemil Beg Baban (Kifri notable), Shaikh Habib Talabani and Dara Beg Dauda (leading tribal chiefs), and Ishaq Ifrayim (Jew); Shaikh Qadir, brother of Mahmud(Barzinja Shaikhs), Ahmad Beg-i Taufiq Beg (Sulaimani notable related to Pizhdar), Izzat Beg son of the Lady Adila (Jaf), and Mirza Faraj, a leading merchant. No pressure was brought to bear on the secondary electors, but in later years the precedent thus set came to be more and more abused until 'the elections' came to be Government nomination open and unashamed, and failure to secure a result with 'no surprises' was as much as the Mutasarrif's place was worth.

It was in the middle of March also that we first learned, with astonishment and incredulity, that the Turkish Grand National Assembly had enacted a law (on the 3rd March) abolishing the Caliphate. Hitherto the propaganda which had kept Kurdistan seething like a volcano on the point of eruption had relied primarily on the superstitious reverence of the Kurds for the Supreme Pontiff of their religion. That the Turks should have cut the ground from under their own feet in this way seemed too good to be true. We did not fail, of course, to try to exploit the new situation; but it took some time for the significance of

the event to penetrate the dull wits of the majority of the rural population, and the ancient prestige of Turkey as the seat of the Caliphate died hard.

At Baghdad, when I passed through on my way home, I found an atmosphere of general gloom. The parliamentary debates on the Treaty were going very badly. Many influential politicians and the principal lawyers were busy working up popular opposition; there had been ugly demonstrations near the Parliament House; a tribal deputy from the Euphrates who had come out uncompromisingly in favour of ratification had been shot and lamed for life; and there had been other attempts. In British circles the extent and success of the agitation were being interpreted as a blow for the prestige of the King who was committed to the policy embodied in the Treaty, but there were not lacking those who whispered that His Majesty, with an eye to future modification of some of its terms, was not an entire stranger to it. Of the principal British sponsors of the policy which had brought Faisal to Iraq Cornwallis was looking unusually grave and Gertrude Bell positively ill, with dark rings round her eyes. On the other hand I found Sir Henry Dobbs, at whose door any failure of the policy of His Majesty's Government would no doubt have been laid, light hearted and debonair. There was a puckish streak in his Irish make-up, and in conversation with me he was speculating, not without a trace of *Schadenfreude*, to whom he would have to hand over charge if the Treaty were rejected and the Government at home decided to pull out—to the King or to a Turkish general. What interested me most, however, was to find that everybody was banking on a solid vote in favour of ratification from the seventeen representatives from the predominantly Kurdish liwas of Sulaimani, Arbil and Kirkuk to make sure of the necessary majority.

Part 4

XXVI THE MOSUL COMMISSION—I

It will be remembered that under the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne, signed on the 24th July 1923, the parties were given nine months within which to settle the Mosul dispute by 'friendly arrangement' between themselves. Negotiations to this end were formally opened on the 5th October with a British note to the Turkish Government, and it was agreed that the nine months should be reckoned as from this date. For a variety of reasons, however, the actual discussions were not begun until the 19th May 1924 when a British delegation arrived in Constantinople, headed by Sir Percy Cox and including Captain R. F. Jardine, the Assistant Administrative Inspector of the Mosul liwa, who had served there since 1919 and had made a special study of the geography and populations of the frontier region.

A serious preoccupation of the British authorities at this time was the problem of the future of the Nestorian Christians, generally known as the Assyrians, from the mountains of Hakâri, the wilayat on the north. In the spring of 1916, at the instigation of the commander of an invading Russian column, these warlike highlanders had risen against the Turks; the subsequent Russian retreat had left them exposed to the reprisals of their lawful Government and with little choice but to make a fighting withdrawal with their families to Persia. They continued to fight under Russian command until on the break-up of the Imperial Army they remained stranded with no means of subsistence. Under the protection of the British forces still in Western Persia some 35,000 souls (the majority from Hakâri, a few hundred from the Amadiya district on the Mosul side of the wilayat boundary, and several thousand Persian subjects from the villages of the Urmiya Plain) were evacuated to a great camp at Ba'quba, thirty miles north of Baghdad, in Iraq. Between 1919 and 1923 most of those of Turkish nationality had been resettled, 7,000 or 8,000 of them actually over the border in Southern Hakâri, where there was no vestige of *de-facto* Turkish authority, and others on the Iraqi



15 THE MOSUL COMMISSION

(*standing, l. to r.* ——, Fattah, Badri, Kramers, Charrère, Roddolo, Pourtalès, Weber, Piggot, —— *seated, l. to r.* Nazim, Edmonds, Jewad, Paulis, Wirsén, Teleki, Jardine, Sabih, Kamil)



16(*a*) ROBB, TELEKI, AND AUTHOR



16(*b*) RESIDENCY HOUSE PARTY

(*l. to r.* V. Holt, Sir H. Dobbs, Lady Loraine, Miss G. Bell, Sir P. Loraine, Lady Dobbs, E. Ouey)

side. A large proportion of the adult males had been recruited for service under British officers in the Iraq Levies.

When the conference assembled the Turkish representative renewed his Government's demand for the retrocession of the whole wilayat of Mosul. Sir Percy Cox, on the other hand, put forward a claim for a line well north of the wilayat boundary, a line which would leave in Iraq, not indeed the whole of the ancient Assyrian home-lands, but that part of them which had already been re-occupied, a claim which, it must be admitted, went beyond any proposal made at Lausanne. Again neither party would budge an inch from its position, and on the 5th June the conference dispersed. On the 6th August, just a month after the expiry of the nine-months period, His Majesty's Government referred the question to the League of Nations.

In the meantime, owing to the impossible situation created by Shaikh Mahmud's active policy of interference in the districts forbidden to him, the High Commissioner had come round to the view that Sulaimani must once more be occupied by ground troops. This was done in the middle of July by a column of the Iraqi Army supported by police, a detachment of Assyrian Levies, and the R.A.F. Chapman was put in charge of the administration, with the style of Mutasarrif under the Iraqi Government, but for the time being he was to report to and take his orders from the High Commissioner.

Early in August the Turks, who had on several occasions protested to the League against our various air operations and the military movements to Ruwandiz and Sulaimani, themselves decided to reassert their authority in Southern Hakâri; but they suffered a set-back when their Wali was intercepted and captured by the recently re-established Assyrians on the road between his headquarters at Julamarg (Colemerik) and the small adıninistrative centre of Chal (Çal). Immediate steps were taken to have him released, but the Turks reacted by assembling a force at Jezirat-ibn-Umar and crossed the Hêzil River into Iraqi territory a few miles north of Zakho; though constantly harried by the R.A.F. they marched for several days through the mountains on the Mosul side of the wilayat boundary before crossing back into the Chal district and driving out the 8,000 Assyrians, who thus once more found themselves refugees in Iraq.

The dispute itself and the protests addressed to the League by each party against the military activities of the other came up for consideration at Geneva in the autumn, and on the 30th September the Council adopted a resolution recording that both parties had undertaken in advance to accept the decision of the Council on the question referred to it and in the meantime to abstain from any military movement designed to alter the *status quo*; it further decided to set up a special Commission to study the problem on the spot and so help the Council to find a solution. The undertakings regarding military movements had the familiar consequence of starting a new dispute as to what *status quo* was to be observed, that of the 24th July 1923 (as claimed by Great Britain), or that of the 30th September 1924 (as claimed by Turkey), and further whether the reoccupation of Ruwandiz and Sulaimani by the one side and of Southern Hakâri by the other involved in each case an alteration to the prejudice of the opposite party or whether it was an internal police operation. An extraordinary session of the Council was convened at Brussels to consider the renewed protests, and eventually, on the 29th October, both Governments agreed to withdraw to their respective sides of a new line proposed by the Belgian Rapporteur, M. Branting; this line for much of its length followed streams rather than the crests of hills but otherwise corresponded fairly closely with the old wilayat boundary between Mosul and Hakâri. With this decision the way was cleared for the Commission of Inquiry to start work.

Baghdad also had a stormy summer. The debates in the Constituent Assembly on the Treaty were protracted through May in the same atmosphere of secret intimidation and overt demonstrations of vicious hostility by the riff-raff of the city. His Majesty's Government announced that failing approval by the 10th June other arrangements would be made for the carrying out of the provisions of the Covenant of the League relating to Iraq. At the last moment sixty-nine of the hundred members of the Assembly were induced to attend a final session and a few minutes before midnight, when the period of grace was due to expire, the necessary resolution was adopted by thirty-seven votes to twenty-four, with eight abstentions. The deputies from the three liwas, reinforced by two from the Kurdish districts of Mosul, had refused to be intimidated and accounted for more

than half the majority votes. The resolution included a rider that the acceptance of the Treaty would be null and void if the British Government failed to safeguard the rights of Iraq in the whole of the Mosul wilayat. The Assembly then passed the Organic Law and the Electoral Law, and having thus fulfilled its mandate, was dissolved. The Treaty was ratified in due course, by King George on the 10th November and by King Faisal on the 12th December 1924.

At Kirkuk there was one unfortunate incident during my absence. On the 4th May, following an altercation in the bazaar over the price of some trifling article in which two or three of their number were involved, two companies of Assyrian Levies (who had replaced the Sikhs in the previous autumn) ran amok and, using their machine-guns, killed fifty of the townspeople and wounded many more before they could be brought under control by their British officers. Fanatical elements among the outraged Muslim population retaliated the next day on the ancient community of harmless Chaldean Christians, looting their houses and killing several. It was unfortunate that the subsequent Court of Inquiry failed to bring home to any individual the responsibility for any of the actual deaths on the first day, and the Iraqi Government and public alike remained convinced that the guilty Assyrians were being shielded. The 1st Battalion of the Royal Iniskilling Fusiliers was flown up from Baghdad to meet the emergency; the Sikhs, it will be remembered, had been ferried by air from Kifri to Kirkuk in January 1923 but it is claimed for the Iniskillings that this was the first time in history that troops were flown to a scene of trouble ready to go immediately into action.

I returned from leave (as I had gone) by the new trans-desert motor mail from Beirut through Damascus and Ramadi. I reached Baghdad on the 15th November and at the Customs found a note from Lady Dobbs inviting me to stay at the Residency. Sir Percy Loraine, the British Minister in Tehran, and Lady Loraine were in the house party. He had come south in an effort to arrange a *modus vivendi* between Riza Khan, the Persian Prime Minister (who was to be proclaimed Shah a month later), and the Shaikh of Muhammara, the semi-autonomous feudal Arab chieftain in whose territory the

Abadan refinery of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and many miles of pipe-line were situated; and had then come on to Baghdad to discuss frontier relations and other problems affecting the two countries which British good offices might help to settle.

After a delightful week of the Dobbs's charming hospitality I left for Kirkuk, having been absent from my district for just seven months. Trains were now running to Tuz Khurmatu and construction of the new line, under Alec Holt's vigorous direction, was already nearing Kirkuk, but I preferred to transfer to my waiting car at Qaraghan Junction on the border of my own liwa. The onward journey by road (unmetalled, of course) was made in an appalling sand-storm; there was a following wind which smothered us in our own dust, visibility was down to five yards, and the slower we went the thicker became the enveloping cloud. The rains had not yet begun, and we picked our way over miles and miles of tawny plain with not a speck of colour to afford relief to the eyes. The contrast to the smiling countryside of England which I had so recently left could not have been greater, and I felt not a little depressed.

I was quickly consoled, however, by the warmth of the welcome awaiting me all along the road. The traditional courtesy of *istiqbál* continued to be observed in the northern liwas long after they had gone out of fashion in the more sophisticated south: the officials from Kifri, Tuz and Tauq all braved the storm to meet me at the boundaries of their respective districts and at Taza, twelve miles from Kirkuk, I found Mejid Ya'qubi (who had succeeded old Fattah Pasha as Mutasarrif) at the head of a group of officials and townsmen, British and Iraqi.

The whole of No. 30 Squadron was now stationed at Kirkuk under Squadron Leader (now Air Chief Marshal Sir James) Robb. I had known and flown with him before, when he had come up on special operations to reinforce the permanent flight, but from now on our contacts were of course far more intimate. We quickly established the same cordial relations which I had enjoyed with Kinkead, and the *entente* between the R.A.F. and 'the Political' was further consolidated.

Chapman, who since his installation as Mutasarrif of Sulaimani had been dealing direct with the High Commissioner, now came again under my orders; and I therefore lost no time in

arranging to fly there to see the situation for myself. For the first thirty-six hours after my return I had had a strange feeling that everything about me was unreal; but when, on the second morning, I found myself in the air circling over Kirkuk waiting for five more aircraft to take off and gain height and then heading eastwards—over the plain and the mound of Chamchemal, over the Qara Dagh with the Bazyan Pass down on the left and the dark gap of Basira on the right, over a camp of Assyrian Levies on the Tainal and a camp of the Iraqi Army at the top of Tasluja, and on to Sarchinar—I might never have been away. Sir Henry Dobbs had himself spent two days in Sulaimani during the previous week and had satisfied himself that air action must be taken against Shaikh Mahmud, who was lurking in Sitak just over the Azmir in Shar Bazhêr; this was the mission of the six aircraft. The majestic scenery of the Qala Chuwalan Valley looked if possible even finer from the air than from the ground, and in the crystal clear light I was able to pick out and name many landmarks which had remained fixed in my mind's eye since my visits of 1919. The practice at Sitak was good; the high-explosive bombs were followed by the new incendiaries which I had not seen before, and I watched fascinated as the dropping of each canister was followed a few seconds later by constellations of twinkling lights and then, perhaps, smoke. The operation completed, we landed at Sulaimani.

Although the town had been reoccupied and 'bullet-proof' Mudirs of varying competence and reliability (among them Sulaiman Khan Roghzadi in Tanjaro) had been put in charge of the nahiyas of the Sulaimani Valley to create a façade of administration, the political situation as reported by Chapman was in many ways even less satisfactory than it had been in the spring. Shaikh Mahmud's rebel bands from their bases in Shar Bazhêr and Pênjwin were raiding impudently up to the outskirts of Sulaimani itself; the administration of Halabja owing to the internal quarrels of the Begzadas, was all at sixes and sevens; Shaikh Awul in Qara Dagh was doing openly what I had suspected even before I left and was extorting blackmail from caravans; the Jaf had come from their summer pastures over the border in defiant mood, looting and plundering along the broad front of their downward migration. The Iraqi Army

had come off second best in several brushes with hostile parties, and the R.A.F. (who had a flight of 'Snipe' single-seater fighters permanently located there) had been frequently in action.

My first two months were therefore spent in the familiar way. Of the sixty nights I was away from Kirkuk on no fewer than thirty. I was constantly in the air, very often with Robb and sometimes with Airey, visiting Sulaimani and Halabja or accompanying bombing raids and demonstration flights. More than once I was obliged to stay for several days at Kifri, the nearest base to the most serious excesses of the Jaf in Gil, Pêwaz and Warmawa; here I was free of much of the routine work which crowded upon me at headquarters and in company with the officers of the R.A.F. Armoured Cars stationed at Kingirban I managed to fit in some delightful shooting in the village orchards round about where, in addition to the usual black partridge and snipe, woodcock were by no means rare.

Only one event during this period deserves particular mention, the first visit paid by King Faisal to Kirkuk since his arrival in the country nearly four years earlier. He was making a grand tour of the northern liwas with a view to rallying sentiment before the arrival of the League Commission. On the 19th December, the day before His Majesty was due, we had what the Kurds call the *pelhe*, the first heavy rain of the winter that wets the soil to a depth of not less than four inches. In all the countries of the Middle East where precipitation is limited a good fall coinciding with the arrival of a prominent personage is ascribed to his *qudúm*, his auspicious steps, and brings him great prestige. The lateness of the *pelhe*, now nearly two months overdue, had been causing grave anxiety and His Majesty could not have come at a more appropriate moment.

The Clerk of the Weather had evidently decided not to do things by halves. On the morning of the 20th I set out by car with Miller and several other officials, intending to meet the King at Altun Köprü, on the liwa boundary. At the village of Yarwali, four miles out from Kirkuk, where the motor road crossed the Khasa, this stream was rushing down in a great flood of chocolate foam. My driver, Khalil, precipitately attempted to take the car across at the usual place, but it quickly sank to the axles in the sand; the water surged over the bonnet,

extinguishing the engine, and I had to wade out thigh deep. The other cars, taking warning, stopped on the near bank and we sent back to Kirkuk for all available taxis in case the royal party might have to be transhipped. They were not due for another two or three hours and we took shelter in Yarwali, sallying out from time to time on horses borrowed from a contingent of Hamawand *suwars* who had also sought refuge there, to see if the waters had fallen and to look for a ford with a firm bottom. Just half an hour before the convoy came into sight we had found a suitable place and ridden over to the far side to be ready to guide the cars across. The hero of the occcasion was undoubtedly Miller, who, as I have mentioned, was far too heavy to ride a horse; planting himself firmly in the middle of the still rushing torrent he constituted himself a human beacon, beckoning each car first up to himself and then giving the driver his onward direction to the other bank. The King was both amused and impressed, and often referred to the incident in later years. We had just got the whole convoy safely across when the rain came on again in torrents. However, a large and representative *istiqbál* of notables and the populace had already assembled on the outskirts of the town and combined with contingents of Levies, police and mounted tribesmen to ensure quite an imposing entry. The Iraqi flag was hoisted over the serai for the first time in honour of the occasion and the practice was continued, with nothing said, after His Majesty's departure.

The deluge continued till nightfall and all the next day, so that when the programme of receptions and banquets was completed the Tauq Chai, the Aw-a Spi and another smaller but notoriously treacherous stream, the Quru Chai, nearer Kifri were all in spate. The road to the south was effectively cut; and more rain on the following days delayed the royal party, without too much sense of anti-climax, until Boxing Day when, encouraged by more favourable reports, the King decided to take a chance. It was snowing when we left, but we got the cars over the Tauq Chai by the new, and still incomplete, railway bridge and found a good ford across the Aw-a Spi just before a fresh downpour of rain turned the whole landscape into one vast lake.

I put up with the R.A.F. Armoured Car Company at what was still officially rail-head at Kingirban and woke up in the

morning to find the station yard and the special train under a three-inch blanket of snow. The King with his suite and the Iraqi officials had spent the night as the guests of various notables in Kifri. They came down at about eight in the morning and with the Mutasarrif I had a final long talk with him in his carriage. His Majesty was delighted with the success of his visit, said so, and promised to ginger up his Ministers to put through our various proposals for consolidating the administration and conciliating popular sentiment. Snow is a rare occurrence in the plain even as far north as Kifri, but, though I have no note of it in my diary, I seem to remember that it snowed that night at Baghdad for the first time, it was being said, for ten years. The snow was followed by several days of hard frost, and the Khasa at Kirkuk was frozen over.

The situation at Sulaimani was, of course, still far too unstable to allow of a visit by the King. Indeed, in view of a series of anxious telegrams from Chapman, I felt it my duty to forego the revels planned for New Year's Eve and to try to get there by road, all airfields being out of action. I set out early on the morning of the 31st with a British officer of the Assyrian Levies and two Ford cars. There had been a slight thaw and the road was in a terrible state. We pushed the cars by brute force over two steep hills not far out and were stuck on a third when it came on to snow again. We had taken several hours to do ten miles, and there being no hope of making even Chamchemal that night, we decided to turn back. After more pushing and floundering we got in about sunset to a Kirkuk again under two or three inches of snow. I was just enjoying the best cup of tea I have ever had when a bullet crashed through the window and buried itself in the leg of the table near my knee. It was not followed by another, so I was not particularly disturbed. It appeared later that the shot had been fired from the house opposite by the Mutasarrif's son, then a precocious and rather ill-disciplined lad of about sixteen, who had been playing with his father's revolver abstracted from a drawer.

Early in January the Roghzadi Jaf disgraced themselves by looting a caravan on the Ibrahim Khanchi road. Our punitive air operations were successful, and I had gone down to Kifri to receive the submission of the guilty sections and to arrange for

restitution when, late on the night of the 20th, I was handed a clear-the-line telegram from Cornwallis:

Please fly here tomorrow. Bring as much kit as possible as you may be required to accompany Commission to Mosul.

In order to make sure of closing the affair at once I wrote out fresh instructions for Kerim Beg and the other local officials concerned modifying considerably the rather stiff penalties it had been intended to impose. I left for Kirkuk before dawn by road to collect my things and, on the 22nd, flew down to Baghdad.

The Commission appointed by the League of Nations had arrived on the 16th. It consisted of Mr. Af Wirsén (Sweden), Count Paul Teleki (Hungary) and Colonel A. Paulis (Belgium), with Signor Roddolo (Italy) and Count Horace de Pourtalès (Switzerland) as Secretaries. Wirsén was a senior Minister in the Swedish diplomatic service and had been elected President by his colleagues, presumably because he represented a country which had remained neutral in the war; he was not such a vigorous personality as the other two and, like many internationally minded persons, could be expected to be interested less in the merits of a case than in openings for compromise. Teleki, in contrast, was a very live wire; in his own country he had been one of the leaders of the counter-revolutionary movement which in 1919 drove out the Communist Government of Belá Kun, had been Prime Minister from July 1920 to April 1921, and was now Chief Scout of Hungary:[1] he was principally interested in the geographical and ethnical aspects of the Mosul problem, and a story had preceded him (whether it had any foundation in fact I have no idea) that he was a prominent member, if not the president, of some Hungarian 'Pilgrims' society formed to foster friendship with Turkey on the basis of the remote common ethnic origin of the Turk and Magyar peoples; this story, combined with his ex-enemy nationality, filled the Iraqis with forebodings which seemed to find even further corroboration in the fact that his name, when written in Arabic character, was identical with the Turkish for 'fox'. Paulis too was a thruster with long experience of big business and administration in the Congo; his interest was chiefly

[1]Poor Teleki became Prime Minister again in February 1939 and in April 1941 committed suicide rather than acquiesce in Hitler's demand for the use of Hungarian territory by the German armies.

economic. Roddolo was a Counsellor or junior Minister in the Italian diplomatic service, seconded to the League of Nations. Pourtalès belonged to the Swiss branch of that wide-spread family; he spoke English extremely well, and I think I remember his telling me that he had been to preparatory school in England and that later, in accordance with an old family tradition, he had served before the war in some crack Prussian cavalry regiment; he was not a regular member of the League Secretariat but was selected from time to time by Sir Eric Drummond, then Secretary-General, for special assignments of this kind. The Secretaries were assisted by an accountant and a clerk, both Swiss, and Teleki's own valet, who was put in charge of the messing. The Commission was later joined by J. H. Kramers, a young Dutch orientalist, as interpreter; his principal language was Turkish and, whatever his academic attainments, he made no claim at that time to be proficient in spoken Arabic or Persian. In addition to Pourtalès Teleki spoke English well, Wirsén a little (but preferred French), and Paulis and Roddolo not at all.

The Turkish delegation, which arrived with the Commission, was headed, with the style of Assessor, by General Jewad Pasha, Inspector-General of the Army on the Jezira front and (as we learned later) Commander-in-Chief designate in case of operations against Iraq; he was one of the nationalist leaders arrested at Constantinople in 1920 by the Allied High Commission and had been deported to Malta. He had brought with him as 'Experts' Major Kamil Bey for Mosul, Nazim Beg Naftchizada for Kirkuk, and Fattah Efendi for Sulaimani; there was also a young A.D.C., Lieutenant Badri Bey. Kamil was a good type of Turkish officer, knew Northern Kurdish well, and carried out his difficult task in a manner which was at the same time both competent (as far as we could judge) and correct. Nazim, the same who had absconded from Kirkuk two years earlier, and Fattah, who was a brother-in-law of Shaikh Mahmud, had both been active in the cold war of propaganda that had preceded this mission; and Nazim had actually served as Political Officer with the Turkish column which, in the previous August, had marched through Iraqi-administered territory on its way from Jezira to Chal.

For the post of British Assessor the choice had fallen on Jar-

dine who, it will be remembered, had accompanied Sir Percy Cox to Constantinople in May. He was to be assisted by a representative of the Iraqi Government in the person of Sabih Beg Nash'at. Sabih was a good *raconteur*, always bubbling over with fun and nonsense of some kind, and his French being a good deal better than the smattering that generally passed among former Ottoman officers for a knowledge of the language of diplomacy, he could be counted upon to establish himself as a favourite with any group with which he might be called upon to work.

After seeing Cornwallis I lost no time in reporting to the High Commissioner. He said that he found himself in something of a quandary: Jardine had carried out all the local studies and had, moreover, already been introduced to the League and to the Commission as British Assessor; on the other hand he was young and had had little or no experience of dealing with foreigners of the calibre of the Commissioners[1] and the Turkish Assessor; it seemed unfair that he should be called upon to face such heavy artillery aided only by Sabih; I, if only three or four years older, had studied on the Continent, knew French, German, Italian and some Turkish, and moreover, had had in Persia international contacts of a kind denied to most of my colleagues who had served only in Iraq or India; he would like me to join the Anglo-Iraqi delegation, but was troubled by the question of seniority.

I replied that Jardine was a good friend of mine, that the last thing I should wish to do would be to challenge in any way his right to the position he had earned by his specialized researches, and that I was prepared to serve in any way in which he might feel I could be of use. After some discussion it was agreed that I should be attached to the Commission as 'Liaison Officer'; in this capacity I could always be available to talk over problems with Jardine and Sabih; at the same time, since the contacts of a Liaison Officer with both the Commissioners and the Turks could be more informal, and my approach to any difficulties could be, in manner at any rate, more detached than those of the Assessor or his Experts charged with defending *à outrance* the vital interests of their side, I might be able to

[1]From now on it will be convenient to use the word 'Commission' for the whole party and the designation 'Commissioners' for the three neutrals charged with reporting to the League.

contribute to the smooth discharge by the Commission of its very delicate task.

That we were now engaged upon what was for Iraq a life-and-death struggle we none of us had any doubt, for we were convinced that Basra and Baghdad without Mosul could, for economic and strategic reasons, never be built up into a viable state. Although the world press was wont to represent the battle as part of a gigantic struggle for the control of oil it is interesting to look back and recall how very little oil figured in our calculations, at my level at any rate; I do not remember a single document in which oil was mentioned as a factor of outstanding importance, as distinct from the general pattern of trade, both import and export, which made the three wilayats a single and indivisible economic unit. Many expert memoranda were exchanged, both in advance of the arrival of the Commission and during their investigations, but the case was admirably summed up in a single sentence of an eloquent memorandum which King Faisal himself drafted and presented to the Commission: 'Therefore I consider that Mosul is to Iraq as the head is to the rest of the body, and it is my unshakeable conviction that though the question is only one of fixing a boundary between Iraq and Turkey it is nevertheless, and in fact, the question of Iraq as a whole; accordingly, the happiness or misery of four millions of human beings is placed in the hands of your honourable Commission.'[1] There was one other consideration which influenced us comparatively junior British District Officers, who were in the happy position of seeing, I still think rightly, no distinction between the ultimate interests of Iraq and the immediate interests and prestige of our own country: it went against the grain to contemplate the surrender of a right acquired in a manner which our elementary studies told us was still good in international law, the right of conquest. More idealistically, though we might not have said so, I think we were all inspired by something of the same vision which Layard had seen so prophetically eighty-five years before:

The unequalled position and resources of this region between the East and the West, with its great navigable rivers almost uniting the

[1]Quoted at p. 7 of the *Report on the Question of the Frontier between Turkey and Iraq* (League Document C.400 M.147, 1925, VII). In the pages that follow this will be referred to for convenience as the Wirsén report though he probably had far less to do with its compilation than either Teleki, Paulis or the self-effacing Roddolo.

Mediterranean with the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, must in the course of time again render it as rich and populous as it was when it formed the most important portion of the Babylonian, Assyrian and Persian Empires, and of the dominions of the Caliphs; but a great change must take place, and a considerable period of time must elapse, before the havoc and devastation caused by oppression, misgovernment, and neglect can be repaired; I trust that it may be the destiny of England to bring about that change, of such vast importance and of such incalculable benefit to peace, commerce and civilisation.[1]

The Commission had no sooner arrived than there was a breeze. The Iraqi Government had been gravely annoyed by the unannounced return under the cloak of diplomatic immunity of Nazim and Fattah, whom they regarded as fugitive traitors; furthermore, as I had seen for myself on the way down, their arrival had given rise to bitter resentment, not unmixed with trepidation among the faint-hearted, in their home liwas. A vigorous protest had been lodged through the High Commission with Wirsén and in the meantime, while the Commissioners and Jewad Pasha were being entertained as honoured guests at the Residency, the three Experts had been lodged at a military cantonment outside the city in what the Turkish Assessor complained was an 'entrenched camp'. This was certainly rather overdoing it, and on Wirsén's representations they were transferred to a small house near the Residency. The Commissioners, while maintaining that once in the disputed territory all members of the Turkish delegation must have complete freedom of movement, agreed that the Experts should stay indoors until we all left for Mosul.

I met all the members of the Commission several times at conferences, dinners and official receptions; and on the 26th, before catching the night train, we all dined together at the Residency. Nazim and Fattah were in the party at dinner. The former, looking a sorry figure of woe in his ill-fitting European-style clothes, smiled sheepishly when I told him how hurt I had felt that, after our many frank and friendly conversations at Kirkuk, he should have thought it necessary to abscond furtively in the way he had, and mumbled something about the call of patriotic duty. Fattah I had never met before—a stolid,

[1]Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 347.

thick-necked bullock of a man with no attractive points that I could see at all.

The whole country was now in the grip of the severest winter it had known for many years, and at night the thermometer was showing several degrees of frost. It was bitterly cold in the train, which was unheated, and neither Littledale (now Inspecting Officer of Police for Kirkuk, Arbil and Sulaimani), who shared the carriage with me, nor I had a wink of sleep. We reached the new rail-head at Sharqat, about fifty-five miles beyond Baiji, at noon and had a good view of the huge mound covering the ruins of the ancient Assyrian city of Ashur. Here we were greeted by the Mutasarrif, Abdul Aziz Beg al-Qassab, the head of a prominent Baghdad family, who had had long administrative experience in the Turkish service, and by Major H. I. Lloyd, the Administrative Inspector. After the necessary introductions and exchange of courtesies we motored on the remaining sixty miles over crackling snow to Mosul, where a ramshackle building, known as the 'Royal Palace' from the fact that King Faisal had stayed there on his several visits, had been placed at our disposal.

Very shortly after our arrival Lloyd rang me up to say that feeling in the city was already running high, and that Abdul Aziz and he would like to see the President without delay in order to discuss the orders they had received from the Ministry of the Interior to facilitate the work of the Commission in every way and in particular to ensure the protection of the Turkish party from insult or injury. To my request for an early appointment Wirsén replied that he would wish to confer with his colleagues before discussing business with the local authorities but that, in view of the anxieties they had expressed, he would see Jewad at once and ask him not to go out into the town in the meantime.

I had hardly got back to my room on the ground floor when Abdul Aziz burst in, blazing with indignation and excitement, to complain that Jewad had gone out with Teleki and that the streets of the city were in an uproar. I drove out at once with Jardine and, sure enough, we soon met Teleki and Jewad, the latter in full general's uniform, stalking back towards the Palace, surrounded by a clapping crowd while another crowd, cheering for Iraq and Faisal, was bearing down upon them from

the starboard beam. Two or three policemen were endeavouring, not very successfully, to keep order.[1]

These were the opening shots in a skirmish for position which was to hold up the work of the Commission for another fortnight and for which, I think, both sides were almost equally to blame.

This was the first of several investigations affecting Iraq which were undertaken by the League between the years 1925 and 1935, and in which I was called upon to play a part. On each occasion I was quickly made conscious of a deep psychological gulf between our insular selves and continental politicians and officials, even those who might be expected to be quite friendly, and especially those hailing from small countries. If they had had no previous dealings with us they invariably seemed to enter upon their task with the deepest suspicions of our morality and our motives, and with a do-or-die determination not to be imposed upon by these bullies from across the Channel. They were generally without experience of the countries of the Middle East, and in the early stages of every such mission there was a period devoted to the eradication of prejudices, preconceived notions and fixed ideas, or to the correction of false emphasis, until we got back to the point at which we ought to have started. Eventually, when we got to know each other and mutual confidence had been established, work would go forward at a spanking pace and our colleagues would upbraid us for not having made clearer from the beginning the facts and points of view, the correctness of which they were now fain to admit.

On this occasion there was no denying that as between the Turkish delegation and ourselves (by which I mean the representatives of the British and Iraqi Governments acting jointly) the scales of tactical advantage were to all outward appearance heavily weighted in our favour. We were in control of the administration, including the police, and were thus presumably in a position to bring pressure to bear on any and every element of the population. We had access to the latest and most accurate information of the kind that might be required to make a convincing case, and those who had prepared or helped to prepare

[1]Teleki's own account of this incident is reproduced in the Wirsén report (p. 9), together with the Commissioners' version of most of the other incidents mentioned in the text.

the memoranda setting out our claim and our answers to the questionnaires were present in the person of the Assessor himself and the officials administering the territory in dispute. On the Turkish side there was in the delegation no one who had taken a hand in preparing their case as hitherto argued, itself a miserable presentation based on such old and faulty records as were available in Istanbul (as Constantinople must from now on be called) and perhaps the cloudy memories of officers and civil servants who had served in the wilayat many years before; neither the Assessor nor the Experts combined both the education and the right kind of knowledge to prepare new statements or to refute those put in by their opponents.

On the other hand everything that has gone before in this book will have shown how precarious the position of the administration in many parts of the country really was. The prestige of the Power that had ruled the country for centuries was still high and had been enhanced by the spectacular successes of Mustafa Kemal. Turkish propaganda foretelling their early return and the punishment of all traitors had been incessant, and had kept the population in a continuous effervescence of hope for some and of terror for others. There were many trains of combustible material a spark on which might blow the powder mine sky high, taking with it questionnaires, memoranda, administration and all. Herein lay the best chance for the Turkish Assessor. We knew of plans for the distribution of thousands of Turkish flags to appear overnight in the windows of Mosul and other towns visited; and the choice of Nazim and Fattah showed that reliance was being placed on propaganda and intrigue rather than on academic argument. The insistence of the Turkish Government on the importance of a plebiscite was in the same order of ideas, for nothing could contribute more effectively to undermine the authority of the administration over a population, the large majority of which was illiterate, ate and slept with rifles handy and had little respect for human life, than the presence of a body representing itself as supra-national and asking them whether they were satisfied with, or would like a change from, their present governors, who might be pressing them for taxes or might have punished their brothers and cousins for murder and highway robbery.

The Turkish Government had concluded their main memo-

randum with a peroration well calculated to appeal to the citizens of small states charged with a task under international auspices:

For the first time since the foundation of the League of Nations a dispute of considerable importance between a great Western Power and a Near-Eastern State regarding the final destiny of an oriental people has been brought before the Council of the League. Feelings of good will and mutual confidence between East and West, and the faith of oriental peoples in the new era for which the League of Nations stands, will depend very largely on the solution your Commission may advocate, after a thorough investigation of the question. The Government of the Republic is convinced that your Commission sincerely desires to contribute to the creation of mutual confidence between these two parts of the world, which would be so desirable a result, and will wish to ensure the triumph of justice by recommending that the Council should allow the population of the wilayat of Mosul freely to determine its own fate.

The mission of the Commissioners was thus one of great difficulty and delicacy. They were determined, very properly, that the authority in *de-facto* control of the disputed territory should not be allowed to bottle either themselves or the visiting delegation. But none of them had had any real experience in the Middle East; our strong objections to anything like a plebiscite, as well as the genuine anxieties of the Government and the local authorities regarding the maintenance of public order and the protection of the Turkish party from molestation, were taken as corroborative evidence of their preconceived suspicions and as devices intended to prevent them from ascertaining the truth and our adversaries from obtaining information or demonstrating where the sympathies of the population really lay. Their annoyance over what they considered the obscurantist and obstructive tactics of the host-Government was still further exacerbated by two real mistakes on the Iraqi side, the first deliberate and foolish, the second due rather to inexperience.

The internal situation of the liwa of Mosul differed materially from that of Kirkuk, Arbil and Sulaimani, and the position of the Mutasarrif, the A.I., and the local Police was far more difficult than ours in the other three liwas. Mosul itself was not only the second city of Iraq but, having been less permeated by

Ottoman influence, was perhaps even more Arab than the capital itself. It had many important aristocratic families which both dominated local politics and were well represented in the Cabinet and other high offices of state. Certain classes may have felt that their economic interests were bound up with Aleppo rather than Baghdad. Of the 600,000 inhabitants of the liwa about 200,000 lived in the city, and the Kurds, although they constituted about a half of the remainder of the population, were far from the centre and, unlike their brothers farther south, were politically inarticulate. Shortly before the Commission was due to arrive word had gone forth from Baghdad that Committees of National Defence were to be formed in all parts of the country to stir up patriotic feeling with a view to the manifestation, by meetings, demonstrations, memorials and telegrams, of the unalterable determination of the nation to defend the sacred patrimony to the last. In Mosul, where there was considerable indignation that the Arab character of even the city should have been questioned, these instructions had been acted upon with enthusiasm, and prominent Mosulawis had come up from Baghdad to take a hand. But the Commissioners were no fools, and once they got down to work it did not take them long to find out that the Committees of National Defence, in addition to genuine Iraqi patriots, harboured a good proportion of restless persons, of a kind always present in the countries of the Middle East, inspired by common anti-European xenophobia or its handmaiden, religious fanaticism. More often than not these elements, when asked in secret for their preference, replied, not in favour of the Iraq they were so noisily defending, but of Turkey; and two of the Commissioners themselves witnessed a stabbing affray between a fiery young patriot from Baghdad named Ibrahim Kemal (who later became an excellent Minister of Finance and, but for his premature death, must have eventually become Prime Minister) and another prominent Arab citizen.

The consequence was that every statement made in the name of a Committee of Defence was discounted in advance and did far more harm than good. During the first week of the Commission's work at Mosul the Committee, chagrined by the Teleki-Jewad incident of the first day and determined not to be caught napping again, organized bands of students and others

to hang about within sight of the Palace and to descend upon any member of the Commission, senior or junior, who showed his nose outside the gate, with all the motions appropriate to a patriotic demonstration. I myself was, of course, as complete a stranger in Mosul as any of the visitors, and on one occasion a bevy of callow youths surrounded me waving flags and shouting slogans until a volley of my best colloquial Arabic reduced them to sheepish silence. The Mutasarrif was in a most difficult position: when advised that this infantile behaviour was doing a great deal of harm to the Iraqi case he endeavoured to forbid further demonstrations, but succeeded only in provoking a mass meeting of protest against a craven attempt to suppress the right of free speech on a matter that vitally affected the integrity and the future of the country.

The second mistake was due to the fact that the provincial police in Iraq at this time were organized more like a gendarmerie than as a civil force as understood in Europe, and were quite untrained in such refinements as the art of discreet surveillance, whether for purposes of observation or of protection. The arrangements we found at the Palace could not have been clumsier. A tent had been pitched by the front door with a telephone, and every movement out of the building was followed by a ring and a report, presumably to the nearest police station. Worse still, the President, a bad sleeper, complained that he was being kept awake by muttered conversations that continued all night in the guard-tent under his window (though the police themselves claimed that the actual noise that produced this complaint was made by one of his own clerks from Geneva, who was returning in boisterous mood from one of the less reputable quarters of the city). There was also a mysterious person who occupied a room under the stairs and was always getting in everybody's way. One day Teleki's valet represented to me that, there being no other suitable place in the building, he would be glad of the room for his stores. Taking the man for the watchman normally left in charge when the Palace was vacant, I instructed him to find accommodation elsewhere while the Commission was in residence. He replied with a succession of winks, to make each of which he shook his whole head violently up and down, so proclaiming to the meanest intelligence what he was supposed to be doing there. The tent was moved and

the under-stair sleuth was ejected in spite of his winks, but the mischievous impression thus created could not be entirely obliterated.

For several days the Commissioners refused to start work until the questions of procedure and protection had been settled. Their preconceived suspicions had rendered them unreceptive of our suggestions on both points. It also appeared that they had referred to Ankara certain proposals for discreet surveillance to which Jewad Pasha had agreed, and felt that they must await the answer; this, when it came, was not very helpful since it stated that the Turkish Government must hold the British Government responsible for the safety of their party. From about the 31st January, however, they began to relax and to receive deputations: the Liwa Administrative Council, the Municipal Council, the leading Muslim and Christian dignitaries, the Chamber of Commerce, the doctors, the lawyers, and eventually individuals introduced by the Assessors.

I think that Paulis was the first who, impressed by the weight of the economic arguments, began to think that there might be a genuine pro-Iraq feeling after all. But the others remained deeply suspicious of the evidence put forward by official bodies, and seemed to feel that if only they could break through the dark smoke-screen surrounding them into the bright sunshine beyond they would find something quite different from what they had hitherto been allowed to see. This led to a series of mistakes of *savoir faire* which in turn gave rise to complementary suspicion on the Iraqi side: furtive visits were paid to persons of low social standing or positive bad character before the visits of the leading members of Mosul society (many of whom, of course, were members of the official bodies) had been returned, the Apostolic Delegate in Mosul, a French Bishop, received a very early call while the Mutasarrif, who was the senior representative of the King and the Government and who had himself come down to Sharqat to welcome the Commission, was ignored until I myself brought the omission to the President's notice, and so on.

The idea of a plebiscite died hard, and at one point Teleki suggested that the garrisons should be evacuated from certain areas to enable the Commission to have a test consultation. This was quickly seen to be impracticable; but suddenly, on

the 6th February, the President announced that on the 8th the Commission proposed to break up into three Sub-Commissions, and to proceed to destinations which would not be divulged beforehand; he asked that twelve cars should be made ready for an early start on that day.

In spite of all these strains and stresses our personal relations with the Commissioners and the Turks (except Nazim and Fattah who kept very much to themselves) remained excellent. This was largely due to the fact that we all messed together. At Beirut on their way through Roddolo had engaged a first-class cook, who had served the German Emperor on the occasion of his flamboyant visit to Syria and Palestine before the war; more important, he had brought a large stock of excellent wines. All three Commissioners seemed to like their stories broad and, whatever the events of the day, the evenings generally ended in an atmosphere of genial *camaraderie.*

In contrast to the mess upstairs my own quarters in the Palace were not particularly comfortable. I had a large room on the ground floor, and this tended to become the conference room for our delegation, the local administrative officials, and our unofficial visitors. For heating there was, here as in the other rooms, a large iron stove burning wood; but there was something wrong with the chimney which the local Public Works Engineer was quite unable to diagnose and cure. At night I could let it out and sleep with coats and dressing-gowns piled on top of the ordinary bedding, but during the day the cold was far too bitter to allow us to do without a fire. Ordinary prudence required that we should keep our voices low, and I often thought that our huddled, over-coated group, seen across the acrid clouds of billowing smoke in the already dim light of the primitive Mosul electricity supply, must look very much like the traditional picture of Catesby and his accomplices of the Gunpowder Plot and that, if one of the Commissioners were to come in unannounced, he might be excused for taking what he saw as convincing confirmation of his deepest suspicions.

The whole of Northern Iraq was still under snow and it was freezing hard every night. If indoors or in the shade it was bitterly cold, out in the sun the dry, sharp air was like a bracing tonic. I had had my horses sent up from Kirkuk, and was often

joined by Roddolo for a ride through the orchards surrounding the city.

Both Jardine as British Assessor and I in my less formal capacity were in constant touch with Wirsén over the various procedural difficulties as they arose, both sides having recourse to written memoranda (or, in the diplomatic parlance introduced by the Commissioners, *notes verbales*) when it seemed desirable to reinforce or place on record any particular expression of views or complaint. We also had frequent talks with Teleki and Paulis on questions of substance. Roddolo was always most helpful: experienced, calm and shrewd, he had a great admiration for his chief, Sir Eric Drummond, and was quite free of the obsessions that seemed to cloud the judgement of his temporary principals; I got the impression that he disapproved of the temperamental way in which they had tackled their task but, in perfect loyalty to them, he was always at pains to present any eccentricities as devoid of the sinister designs which our side was perhaps too ready to attribute to them; and I had no doubt that he was performing a similar service for us in the converse direction. A word to him was often sufficient to have the pettier causes of friction, such as the matter of the calls, quickly put right.

The proposal that the Commission should suddenly scatter to undisclosed destinations in a country with no hotels and no European amenities of any kind, and that in the middle of the severest winter the land had known for many years, seemed to us to be carrying to fantastic lengths this longing of the Commissioners to by-pass the administration; quite apart from the grave political objections, such procedure would cut across the tentative arrangements which I, as Liaison Officer, had already made for the good ordering of the work of the Commission and the precautions I had taken to ensure that the mistakes made at Mosul should not be repeated elsewhere. We therefore agreed that Jardine should fire in a *note verbale* objecting to this procedure, and that we should telegraph to the High Commissioner (who had offered to come up himself if at any time we thought he could be helpful) saying that we felt that 'the time has come for your intervention and an effort to get the Commission to work on more sober and less theatrical lines'.

The weather broke that night and we spent an anxious two

hours in the morning when we heard that, in spite of the heavy snowstorm, Sir Henry Dobbs was already on his way by air. Both he and the accompanying aircraft did in fact crash on landing, but fortunately nobody received injuries more serious than slight bruises. Even before he arrived there had been a radical change in the situation. Jewad Pasha had addressed a letter to the President accepting for himself 'responsibility for the personal safety of members of the Turkish delegation in case of acts of violence' and concurring in 'the discreet precautions (previously) proposed by the High Commissioner which, if fairly applied, will not damage the prestige or susceptibilities of the Turkish delegation, and will enable it to accomplish its work'. The Commissioners, whether on maturer reflection or as the result of our representations, had abandoned the idea of the break-out to undisclosed destinations and, going to the other extreme, made the suggestion, only to abandon it very quickly, that they should be accompanied on their *déplacements* by ceremonial escorts of regular troops.

Sir Henry Dobbs spent the morning with the Commissioners and the Assessors and had two hours in private with the President in the evening. After some plain speaking on both sides complete understanding was reached, and a programme was agreed to. On the 11th February the Commission would divide into four Sub-Commissions: the President and the Assessors would stay in Mosul and continue the inquiry in the districts of the plain; Teleki and Kramers would go with Nazim to Arbil, where Lyon would join them as British Expert; Paulis with Sabih and Kamil would take on northern Kirkuk; and Pourtalès with Fattah and an Expert to be designated by us would tour the Kifri district. The whole Commission would reassemble at Kirkuk and then, in view of the importance of this centre of Kurdish nationalism, proceed in full strength to Sulaimani; from there we should return to Mosul to pursue the inquiry, again together, in the mountainous Kurdish districts of that liwa adjacent to the wilayat boundary.

XXVII THE MOSUL COMMISSION—II

In the three north-eastern liwas the situation was, as I have said, entirely different from that obtaining in Mosul. The high officials were all local men, non-Arabs; they realized quite as well as we, the British element, that it would be fatal to try to base our defence on any attempt to work up an artificial enthusiasm among populations which, after an original refusal to come into the Kingdom at all, had only recently been coaxed into flying the flag and participating in the elections. We had therefore decided that our best hope was to work the economic argument, which was really unanswerable, for all it was worth, and to cash in, where possible, on satisfaction with the existing régime under its hierarchy of leading local citizens in the official posts and its strong British influence, contrasting as it did so favourably with memories of the last days of Ottoman rule. Even licensed demonstrations would constitute relaxations of public discipline, and malcontents would take every advantage of them to play the one game which, as we have seen, could benefit our opponents. In all three liwas, therefore, we had set our faces firmly against the instructions to form Committees of National Defence; and in Kirkuk we had bundled out, by the first train back from railhead, two agents who had been sent up from Baghdad to organize them.

I left Mosul by air early on the morning of the 11th February for Arbil, where I was able to have a short talk with Lyon before he left to meet the Sub-Commissions at the liwa boundary on the Great Zab, and a longer discussion with the Mutasarrif, Ahmad Efendi. All our experience at Mosul had shown that the policy we had previously decided upon for the three liwas was the right one to follow and that it would fit in admirably with the procedure which, after much trial and error, the Commission itself had hammered out for its future work. Previous instructions for the suppression of every attempt at demonstrations either way would be repeated and confirmed; our lists of witnesses to be interviewed would be based purely on the representative standing of the persons named (as indeed they

had been at Mosul); we should point out that in the three liwas the officials were themselves chosen for their local prestige and influence and that their views should not be dismissed as the mechanical utterances of the servants of the present administration; so far from attempting to conceal any pro-Turkish sentiments we should actually direct the Commissioners' attention to the persons holding them, with explanations of the reasons which were probably influencing them; and the police would be kept well out of the way.

So effective were the steps taken by the Mutasarrif of Arbil that in the afternoon, when I accompanied Paulis and Pourtalès through the bazaars and the mound quarter, we encountered a quite uncanny silence; shopkeepers and craftsmen were bending over their wares or their tasks with rare concentration, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that they could be persuaded to look up and name the price of various articles that interested the visitors.

That evening the four neutral members of the Commission and I dined with Lyon and Littledale at their house outside the town, while the Turks were entertained by Ahmad Efendi. I am not sure whether Lyon is actually an Irishman, but he had grown up in an Irish vicarage and had acquired, together with the brogue, many of the engaging qualities associated with those who have made the pilgrimage to Blarney. Both he and his colleague were no respecters of persons, and the guests were evidently puzzled to know how to take, and what to make of, the two irrepressible L's of Arbil. For the next fortnight Lyon and Teleki were constantly together, travelling about the liwa, and came to know and like each other well. Teleki, whose family crest was an ibex rampant on a crown, was most anxious to take home a head of the Asiatic variety; work was therefore interrupted for twenty-fours hours in the middle of the period for a visit to the Sifin, a fine hog's back in the Khoshnaw country (highest point 6,500 feet) some twenty-five miles north-east of Arbil; but unfortunately the Count missed a magnificent animal to which Lyon had led him. Teleki was not strong; his health broke down under the strain of winter travel in Kurdistan, and he never got to Ruwandiz.

On the 12th I accompanied the Kirkuk Sub-Commission to Altun Köprü; complete calm prevailed in the little town, and

we attracted no attention as we passed through the bazaar to the serai, where arrangements had been made for the hearing of evidence. This was the first time that I had been actually present at such an interrogation. I thought that Paulis conducted it quite fairly and in a manner suited to the intelligence of the witnesses. The Turks had no list of persons to be interviewed so seven names were chosen at random from the Iraqi list. Sabih and Kamil were asked to interpret in turn and to check each other's translations. After explaining the reasons for the Commission's visit and the function of each of those present in the room he asked the witness a number of simple questions: race, religion, occupation, means of transport, markets for buying and selling, and so on; finally he invited each examinee to state, after everybody including the interpreters had withdrawn, whether he would prefer to be under Turkish or Iraqi rule, pronouncing nothing more than the word 'Turkiya' or 'Iraq'. This 'petite question', as it came to be called in the Commission, was not quite such an absurd oversimplification as it may appear at first sight, where ordinary villagers were concerned; it was sufficient for the interrogator to form a general opinion as to the emotional loyalties, which were only one of the factors to be taken into account, and did not prevent the more sophisticated witnesses from explaining the reasons for, or any conditions they might attach to, their expression of preference. Köprü being predominantly Turkoman and an emporium for the *kalak* trade with Baghdad, the factual answers followed much the same pattern. From the demeanour of the witnesses and what I learned later of their characters I judged that five had probably voted for Iraq and two for Turkey, a very fair representation of the views of the people as a whole, and in view of the race of the inhabitants, a satisfactory result for Iraq.

After lunch I pushed on to Kirkuk with Pourtalès, leaving Paulis and the Experts to continue their investigations at the various villages near the road. It so happened that the car containing Kamil and Fattah had a puncture and became separated from that containing Paulis and Sabih. At two of the halts the Turkish-speaking villagers, mistaking Sabih (who, of course, talked the language like an Istanbuli) for the Turkish representative, spoke up feelingly in favour of Turkey and called

down blessings on the puppet Padishah and the non-existent Caliph. Paulis was delighted with the honesty of Sabih who, with nobody to check him, gave a faithful translation of this unfavourable evidence; but he told me in the evening that he was appalled by the filth and squalor of the villages and the mean intelligence of the peasants which, he said, compared very unfavourably with those of the most primitive natives of the Congo; he was forced to conclude that this method of village interrogation was quite valueless and he now recognized the *bien fondé* of our attitude to the proposal for a popular consultation; nevertheless it would be necessary to continue, if only to satisfy the Turkish Government that the Commission had done everything possible, short of holding a formal universal plebiscite, to ascertain the wishes of the people.

On the 17th I flew to Sulaimani to confer with Chapman. The country I knew so well was looking particularly lovely in the clear frosty air: the choppy sea of the Shuwan and Chamchemal foothills now flecked with white horses, the Qara Dagh, Beranan, Pira Magrun and Azmir deep in snow and gleaming with countless diamonds, the Hewraman ahead a great white wall, and away to the north-east, rising above more confused masses of snow, the clear outline of the peaks of Qandil.

I found Chapman in good heart. We had urged some weeks before that an Iraqi Mutasarrif in the person of Ahmad Beg-i Taufiq Beg should be appointed before the arrival of the Commission; but, Ministers having another candidate whom we considered unsuitable and had opposed, no orders had yet come through. We thought that it might cause unnecessary suspicion and misunderstanding to make the change now at the eleventh hour, and I therefore telegraphed to Baghdad proposing that Chapman should continue in office until after the Commission's visit. The three leading citizens whom I had time to see, Ahmad Beg himself, Shaikh Qadir (Mahmud's brother) and Hama Agha-i Abdur Rahman Agha, were full of fight: no sheep-like submission to interrogation or furtive answers to the 'petite question' for them; they would denounce Ottoman misrule in public session of the whole Commission, cross-question Jewad on his claim to re-incorporate their province in Turkey, and proclaim their determination never again to submit to the masters under whom they had suffered so much.

Paulis remained in Kirkuk a fortnight. Although Sabih was officially our Expert, this was my own district and it therefore fell to me, or during my several absences to Miller, to supply him with all the necessary ammunition. Kamil, on his side, was naturally well served by the Naftchizadas (led in the absence of Nazim by his brother) and by other pro-Turks among the aristocratic families of the town. I had many long and interesting talks with the Commissioner. Being new to the Middle East he was, of course, constantly receiving surprises, and I was able to watch his ideas at first oscillating violently from one extreme to the other, and then settling down to certain convictions which eventually were faithfully reproduced in the report to the League. I got the impression that he was deliberately sharpening his wits on mine and inviting argument to test his views. I have no doubt that he was doing the same with Kamil, with whom also he had long and frequent conversations.

At first (very much to our advantage) he had been inclined to view the problem almost entirely as an economic one, and considered that this part of our case had not been very cleverly presented: he had been surprised to find the extension of the railway from Kifri to Kirkuk so far advanced and thought we might have made much more of that; we had been wrong to seek to prove that the Baghdad and Basra wilayats (with which the Commission was not primarily concerned) could not exist without Mosul, but would have been wiser to emphasize that it was Mosul that could not exist detached from the other two; and similar criticisms. Once away from Mosul it did not take him long to find that even the most uncompromising anti-Turks had very little use for the Baghdad hierarchy; their attitude was rather that they were reasonably satisfied with the existing régime in the three liwas as a stage, perhaps, on the road to eventual autonomy, but that they were nervous about what would happen if the British connexion were to cease at the end of the four years stipulated in the new Protocol to the Treaty. While most of the pro-Turks were swayed primarily by emotion and, when questioned, were quite unable to present a reasoned case for their preference, there were many who held much the same views as those of the anti-Turks, but were so alarmed by the Protocol that they preferred security, even if coupled with the stagnation associated with the old Ottoman

administration, to a gamble on Iraq with all the possibilities of anarchy and a complete break-down. The extreme nationalistic views expressed by the Prime Minister, Yasin Pasha, and other Baghdad personalities, so far from helping the Iraqi case had increased his doubts about the wisdom of detaching the Mosul wilayat unconditionally from Turkey. The more he pursued his inquiries the graver his responsibilities seemed to become; one moment he felt one thing, the next another; he was not exactly spending sleepless nights, but he now realized that this was an affair of conscience. It had been suggested that it was no business of the Commissioners to ask what was going to happen when the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty expired; but he felt that it was very much their business, for it would be manifestly absurd for them to make recommendations which would have the effect of plunging the whole wilayat into chaos three years later.

I did my best, of course, to calm his fears regarding the results of a decision in favour of Iraq. The awakening of the East was a very real thing that could not be ignored, and colonization on Congo lines was now quite out of the question in Asia. I thought that the short period provided in the Protocol for the duration of the Treaty was really a concession to extremist opinion in both England and Iraq, and that nobody seriously contemplated the possibility that, before the expiry of the four years, the Treaty would not be renewed for a further period.

These intimate discussions, the complete absence of all overt police activity, the Sabih episode of the first day, and the realization that his own inquiries were bearing out the forecast, favourable and unfavourable, which I had given him of what he was going to find, all contributed to dissipate from Paulis's mind the suspicions engendered by the misunderstandings of the first three weeks at Mosul. The Naftchizadas did their best to keep up the mistrust by persuading Kamil to complain of intimidation and to lodge protests, but on every occasion it was easy to show that the alleged victims were persons with criminal records who had been seeking to provoke demonstrations or disorders. Since no kind of pro-Iraq demonstration had been allowed we were, of course, on very strong ground in taking the action we did, and in response to my report on one complaint, I received from the Commissioner a letter which stood us in good stead later on, when the Turkish Government themselves

complained that the Commissioners and their delegation had been bottled up:

J'ai l'honneur de vous accuser la réception de votre lettre de ce jour me donnant, en annexe, les renseignements que je vous avais demandés au sujet de certaines arrestations dans la journée du 14 courant. Les explications me donnent entière satisfaction. Je me plais à reconnaître l'efficacité des measures prises par l'administration de la ville de Kirkuk à l'effet d'empecher toutes manifestations dans la rue, dans un sens, comme dans l'autre. J'ai été heureux de constater également comment, dans cette ville, toute liberté a été donnée à quiconque de me faire connaître son opinion.

We had indeed travelled a long way from the mutual bombardment by *notes verbales* of the early days at Mosul.

Of Kamil, too, I saw much more than before, and I came to respect and like him. He worked exceedingly hard to make the most of the favourable factors present in Kirkuk; but, though the Naftchizadas were continually at his elbow, he never allowed himself to be deflected from the correct and tactful behaviour that came naturally to him. I was anxious to show him that the official controversy in which we were engaged in no way affected my personal regard, and Robb played up splendidly by inviting him as a comrade in the honourable profession of arms, with Paulis, to a guest-night at the R.A.F. mess.

All in all I felt that things in Kirkuk, the old centre of Ottoman influence and power in the Mosul wilayat, had gone far better than we had had any right to expect. The Commissioner now realized that if the urban populations were predominantly Turkish the vast majority of the people of the liwa was Kurdish, and that on a count of heads even the Arabs, represented by the Ubaid and the tribes of Malha and Qara Tapa, outnumbered the Turks. Thanks largely to the good work of the Ya'qubis even the witnesses of Turkish speech had been fairly equally divided. Of the Kurds, if the rather primitive inhabitants of Shuwan, Altun Köprü and the villages near the city, influenced by their landlords or religious feeling, had voted for Turkey, Qara Hasan and Tauq, with a good sprinkling of intelligent and important tribal personages, had come out solidly for Iraq. The suffrages of the Christians and the Jews, which would probably be given a weight out of proportion to their numbers, had also without doubt been in our favour.

To rally local opinion in Kifri town, where the leading families were Turkish like those of Kirkuk, we relied on Umar Nazmi Beg, a Kifri man whom I have already mentioned as one of our judges in 1922, and who was temporarily released to us by the Ministry of Justice. But since he knew no English or French he was not qualified to accompany Pourtalès as our Expert, and abusing I fear our friendship, I prevailed upon Corner to undertake a mission which was not at all to his liking. I accompanied him to Kifri and, after a meeting with Pourtalès and Fattah at which we agreed on an itinerary for the Sub-Commission, I assured him that we expected no spectacular political work from him; his knowledge of the country and popularity with the people could not fail to impress the neutral Acting Commissioner, his mere presence would, on the one hand, prevent Fattah from behaving too outrageously and, on the other, would remind the tribal chiefs, and others whom he had treated without asking awkward questions as to how their gun-shot wounds had been come by, of the many benefits they had received from the Mandatary administration; it was not our policy to mark the Turkish players too closely, but if he felt that Fattah was going too far with his propaganda or intimidation he should lodge a protest with Pourtalès.

The Kifri Sub-Commission inspected a good cross-section of the country. They visited the Jabal Hamrin by car, spent a night at Qara Tapa, and, from the 18th to the 22nd February, rode across country from Kifri, spending nights at Ibrahim Khanchi (Zangana), Qadir Karam (Shaikh Abdul Kerim), Chawri (Aziz-i Abbas Dauda), Tuz Khurmatu, and Bustamli (Bayat). In some ways Corner, the layman, had the most difficult task of all the Experts. Nazim at Arbil and Kamil at Kirkuk were both out of their element, but among the tribes of what I once called 'the Kifri powder-mine' Fattah was very much on his home ground; this was, moreover, the only party that spent nights away from administrative centres in the guest-houses of tribal chiefs, where Pourtalès and Corner were sedately entertained in the public rooms while Fattah, as a relation of some of the ladies, could go off to the private apartments and hold long confabulations in secret. Fattah's line was to spread stories, verbally or by letters (of which we intercepted one), alleging that the issue was in fact already settled, that the same Ramzi

who had served as Qaimmaqam of Ruwandiz and Ranya in 1922 would shortly be arriving to take over Kifri, and, during the public interrogations, to make a show of taking notes, with a meaning expression, of everything that was said.

Corner was by nature far too conscientious to be lulled into complacency by my anodyne assurances; he returned to Kirkuk like a man just released from prison and most pessimistic as to the results of his mission. Actually he had done extremely well: at Kelar Kerim Beg and the Jaf had come out openly and energetically in favour of Iraq; of the Kifri Dauda, Aziz-i Abbas (to our surprise) had been equally emphatic and even Rif'at was believed to have given a favourable vote; the Talabani of Gil had disappointed us by displaying a certain timidity, but their statement that they agreed with Abdullah Safi Efendi and the other Talabani of Kirkuk, Qara Hasan and Tauq added their vote, for what it was worth, to our total; Tuz, too, had been satisfactory. If the Turks had had the advantage in the small towns of Kifri and Qara Tapa and among the Dilo tribe, this was not sufficient to neutralize the solid stand of the Jaf and Dauda.

On the 21st I flew to Mosul, where Wirsén, Jardine and Jewad had been pursuing the inquiry in the southern half of the Mosul liwa with varying fortunes. The atmosphere was less highly charged than before, but there had been several incidents, ludicrous indeed, but sufficient to keep alive the suspicions of the President. At Tall Afar, the Turkoman town forty miles west of Mosul, an ill-disposed agitator had outwitted the Qaimmaqam and succeeded in staging a pro-Turkish demonstration of bazaar loafers on the outskirts which contrasted strangely with the quasi-unanimity of the official witnesses on both the Iraqi and the Turkish lists, who had either voted for Iraq or at worst had said that they wished to follow Mosul city. Much the same sort of thing had happened at the all-Kurdish township of Aqra. At Sinjar a doorkeeper, leaning somnolently against the door of the room where the interrogation was proceeding, had fallen headlong in when it was suddenly opened from inside and was, not unnaturally, accused of eavesdropping; it so happened that the man was really stone deaf, but nobody could be expected to believe that. Most irritating of all to the President, a leading member of the

city Committee of Defence, with a beard that would have attracted attention in any crowd, had been most assiduous in visiting every centre just ahead of the Sub-Commission, and *ce sale barbu* seemed to have managed invariably to come face to face with Wirsén as he arrived at the gate of the office where the interrogation was to take place. For the southern half of the Mosul liwa, then, we could hardly hope for more than a fairly equal division of the political suffrages.

When I returned to Kirkuk on the 24th I found Teleki in bed, looking very ill, and on Corner's advice he was evacuated by air to Baghdad the following day. Pourtalès had returned from Kifri with a sore throat, and Wirsén went down with malaria immediately after his arrival on the 25th. It was therefore a very depleted Commission that left for Sulaimani on the 27th, but all those left behind except Teleki rejoined us a day or two later.

Nobody had any doubt that we were now about to enter upon the decisive phase of the whole campaign. Here was a province with no Arab or Turkish element whatsoever in the population; the Kurdish inhabitants had been in almost constant rebellion against the Anglo-Iraqi administration for the last five years; the influential and to all outward appearance venerated leader of the movement had been in continuous touch with the former masters of the country, seeking their support and assuring them of his devotion. No wonder, then, that Jewad's hopes ran high that after the even battles in Mosul, Arbil and Kirkuk he would now be able to claim a resounding victory. No wonder, too, that the Commissioners looked forward to the investigation in a district where they might hope to hear genuine expressions of opinion from a people who had given convincing proof of their independence of mind. For our part we could go in quiet confidence that the result was going to be very different from that expected, if no longer with any certainty by Paulis and Pourtalès, at any rate by the others of the neutral team, and that Jewad was in for the surprise of his life.

The evening before we left for Sulaimani I had a long talk with Wirsén and, in accordance with the policy I had developed with Paulis, give him a forecast of what he was likely to find there: a few extreme Kurdish nationalists, the majority moderate nationalists willing to enter Iraq on condition that officials

continued to be Kurds and that Kurdish continued to be the official language of the administration and of instruction in the schools, the merchants (for whom separation would mean ruin) strongly and almost unconditionally pro-Iraq, and not a single pro-Turk outside a small circle of disgruntled pensioners.

Even before our departure Jewad had begun to flounder. He was supposed to have had a paper thrust into his hand warning him that he would be murdered at Sulaimani, and to have received reports that fifteen Assyrians had been sent there for the express purpose of assassinating him and his Experts. I assured the President and Paulis that, apart from the inherent improbability of the stories about the Assyrians (who would be completely out of their element and marked men in Sulaimani), I knew the place well enough to be quite sure that all the Turkish party would be safe from molestation except Fattah, a Sulaimani man who was regarded as a renegade and a traitor and for whom, according to Chapman's reports, a group of young Kurdish nationalists was preparing the local equivalent of tarring and feathering; I asked that Fattah, and as a precaution Nazim also, should be invited not to go out into the town until I had had time to gauge the situation for myself on the spot. The next day I shared a car with Paulis, the only Commissioner well enough to travel. On the road he gave me a list of bad characters who, Jewad had informed him, had been sent furtively to Sulaimani to agitate, and requested me to have them sent away. The names on the list proved to be those of Babakr Agha, Shaikh Awul of Sangaw, Hajji Shaikh Arif of Sargelu, Ahmad Beg son of the Lady of Halabja, and Kerim Beg Jaf. These (except the last-named on whose position and intelligence Pourtalès had already reported favourably after his Kifri visit) were, of course, some of the most important notables of the liwa and figured high in the list of witnesses already officially put forward, and Jewad's attempt (no doubt made in all good faith, for he was very badly served by Fattah) to represent them as vulgar agitators was very different from our custom of giving complete lists of important personages regardless of their politics. Paulis seemed not sorry to have this material to demonstrate to the Turkish Assessor the absurdity of the cock-and-bull stories with which he had bombarded the Commissioners since his arrival from Mosul.

The advent of our convoy of over twenty cars created no stir at all. Paulis and Kramers, followed closely by Jewad and Kamil, went out almost immediately. They met and went down the bazaar together questioning the shopkeepers but, as at Arbil, they were met with stony indifference and no crowd collected. Jewad and Kamil did not go out again. Fattah and Nazim, who had their own channels of information of what might happen to them, never ventured out at all during our stay. Babakr arrived in the course of the afternoon with a following of about 100 Pizhdar horsemen, all flamboyantly dressed, well armed and well mounted. Paulis himself witnessed the arrival of this picturesque and imposing cavalcade, and recalled with amusement that this was the man whom the Turkish Assessor had been bamboozled by his Expert into misrepresenting.

Jewad Pasha himself seemed to have lost faith in Fattah's ability to help him, and actually applied to me to ask Riza Beg (our faithful friend of 1919 who, it will be remembered, was reported to have become the chief of the pro-Turkish party in the troubles of 1923–4) to visit him to advise him on the ethnographical composition of the liwa, we having challenged the Turkish Assessor to introduce to the Commission the 32,900 Turks mentioned in the official memorandum presented by the Turkish Government. Riza refused point-blank to see the Pasha except in my presence. I replied that this would be quite improper and begged him, as a personal favour to me, to agree to see him alone or at least in the presence of one of the neutral Commissioners; he was in any case free to express any opinion he chose, the fact of his seeing Jewad would not be held up against him, and if (as his present attitude seemed to suggest) he had repented of his recent aberrations, he would be performing a service by showing that the visiting delegation had not been prevented from seeing a man on whose assistance they had relied. But his determination remained unshaken by all my pleading and Jewad, when I told him, asked me not to bother any more about it.

This matter of the racial composition of the population of the Sulaimani liwa was a good example of the fatuity of much of the case put forward by the Turkish Government and the impossibility of the task poor Jewad Pasha had been set. The official

British reply to the claim had stated that there was not a single Turkish resident. When we got to Sulaimani we amused ourselves by sending in to the Commission a *note verbale* apologizing for an error in the statement sponsored by His Majesty's Government: we had found one Turk, a camp-follower of the pre-war garrison who, having married a Kurdish girl, had settled in the town and was now employed as a municipal sweeper.

The inquiry at Sulaimani continued for three days, Wirsén joining Paulis for the second and third. All the leading witnesses were as good as their word and in the public sessions made no secret of their feelings, exactly as they had promised. Denouncing the incompetence and corruption of the Ottoman régime they recalled with boastful delight the several occasions, notably that of the withdrawal of 1918, when the Kurds had defeated and stripped the garrisons sent to hold them down, and adduced the incident of the murder of Shaikh Sa'id, Shaikh Mahmud's father, at Mosul in 1908 as evidence of the secular hatred between the two races. The testimony of witnesses of secondary importance like my sturdy yeoman friends Sa'id Agha of Jafaran and Kökha Najm of Sêwsênan also proved most effective, for they all gave emphatic and well-reasoned answers to the questions put to them.

I did my best to keep out of the way during these proceedings, but Babakr, the Jaf Begzadas and some others insisted on my coming to do the translating for them at one public and all their private sittings. I could see that the Commissioners were greatly impressed by the shrewdness of their answers, especially those of Babakr, to every kind of question, whether on economics, politics or the baffling conundrum of Shaikh Mahmud's place in this surprising state of affairs.[1]

The decisive effect of the victory at Sulaimani appears clearly in the various references to the liwa in the Wirsén report:

With the exception of the liwa of Sulaimaniya there is scarcely a single district containing several contiguous nahyas where anything approaching unanimity in favour of one of the two parties can

[1]Shaikh Mahmud had tactfully kept out of the way during the visit of the Commissioners, who had themselves decided that it would be improper to summon an open rebel to give evidence. After their departure he resumed his harrying tactics, but the progressive consolidation of the administration gradually reduced him to the position of a fugitive dodging backwards and forwards across the Persian frontier, until he submitted in June 1927.

be observed. . . . It was in the liwa of Sulaimaniya that the most definite views were expressed. . . . With very few exceptions the persons we interviewed pronounced in favour of the Iraq Government. . . . The Commission is genuinely convinced that the wishes of the people were fully expressed. . . . We found a Kurdish national feeling which, though yet young, was reasonable enough; for though the people stated that their supreme desire was for complete independence they recognized the advantages of an enlightened and intelligent trusteeship. There is no doubt that the ability and good judgment of the British administrators of this province had a large influence on the state of mind of the people.

Thus, after many days, did the bread first cast upon the waters by Noel on his errand of mercy in 1918, and by Soane during his period of stern but equitable rule, return to us many fold at this critical moment in the life of the infant state of Iraq.

We returned by road to Kirkuk on the 3rd March. I was glad when the President proposed that we should share a car, for hitherto I had had far less to do with him than any of the other neutral members of the Commission. I could see that he had been surprised and stirred by all he had seen at Sulaimani: Jewad (he said), realizing how badly things had gone for him, had alleged that the whole population had been terrorized or bought; this was quite fantastic; one or two people might be bought in a community but not the population of a whole province; one or two witnesses might have shown signs of nervousness but here, far from being cowed, the people had surged forward to thrust their views on the Commission.

After a night at Kirkuk, where Paulis had a last interview with a gathering of Turkish sympathizers, we pushed on to Arbil, stopping for a couple of hours at Altun Köprü to complete the investigation which Paulis had left unfinished three weeks earlier. Here we suffered a minor setback. Our arrival was not greeted by the same appearance of indifference that had marked most of the progresses of the Commission in the three liwas. A line of youths, all of course Turkish-speaking, surrounded the Turkish Assessor who, from his car, addressed them like a father come to seek his prodigal sons, and one of them burst into tears, to give one of those 'touching expressions of their sympathies' which the Wirsén Report says the Commissioners often heard from the poorer classes (who of course

were still confounding the Turkey of Mustafa Kemal with the Ottoman Caliphate), particularly among the Arabs. Several of the witnesses, as they left the Council room, ostentatiously greeted Nazim, and I got the impression that, while our own local authorities had been lulled into a sense of security by the satisfactory result of the earlier visit and the smoothness of the proceedings in the other parts of the liwa, the Naftchizadas from Kirkuk had been very busy, probably with their familiar weapon of asserting that a decision in favour of Turkey had already been taken.

We reached Arbil early in the afternoon and Jewad invited me to go for a walk with him through the town. He started the conversation by saying, what I had already sensed, that his present mission was a most uncongenial one; he had begged to be excused but without avail. It was a great pity that the dispute had not been settled between us directly, without reference to the League. His Majesty's Government had lost a great opportunity by failing to summon Turkey and Iraq to a council table in order to mediate between them in a way that would have safeguarded the rights of Turkey, the aspirations of Iraq, and the prestige of Britain. Surely it would have been possible to find a line which would have given the Turkish inhabitants to Turkey, and to provide for any special arrangements required by the state of Kurdish feeling. Instead of that we had even claimed part of the Hakâri wilayat and so made the situation impossible. Eighteen months ago he had had at Jezira two divisions of infantry and two of cavalry, and the people were clamouring for war. Although the Royal Air Force might have inflicted some damage there had really been nothing to prevent his taking Baghdad itself; but his Government had preferred to seek an amicable settlement. Then there had been the incident of the capture of the Wali of Hakâri and the death of the Commandant of Gendarmerie at the hands of the Assyrians; the Wali had been released and returned, it was true, but such acts of disorder were committed with the hope of support from us; even under this provocation he had confined his action to what we should have done in like case, chastised the guilty tribesmen. Our Turkish colleague then went on to say that there was nothing about the new Turkey inherently hostile to Great Britain. He remembered how, at the time of the Young Turk

Revolution of 1909, the crowd had unharnessed the horses from the British Ambassador's carriage and dragged it with enthusiasm through the streets. British diplomacy had failed to rise to the occasion and had forced Turkey into the arms of Germany. After the war he himself had been obliged, under British pressure, to resign from the Ministry of War, had subsequently been arrested with every unnecessary accompaniment of ignominy, and had been deported to Malta. He remained none the less convinced that friendship and co-operation were the natural and proper policies for our two countries, and like many of his fellow countrymen, he looked forward to the day when the old traditional relationship would be renewed on a basis of mutual respect and esteem.

On the 5th March the Commission returned to Mosul for the last stage of the inquiry. Having nothing special to do for a few days I flew down to Baghdad, where I joined Teleki as a guest at the Residency. A pleasant interlude among the flesh-pots, which included a river picnic (for in the south the spring was already far advanced), a dance at the club, and several dinner and luncheon parties, ended sadly with the melancholy duty of attending the funeral of Major H. C. Pulley, the Assistant Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, a respected colleague rather older than the rest of us. I naturally saw a good deal of Teleki. He was not very communicative but did vouchsafe the opinion that the work he and his colleagues had done before they had begun to understand the country had very little value. He was principally worried by his prolonged absence from work and showed me a telegram he had drafted to the President resigning from the Commission. But he was declared fit to travel on the 11th, and we returned to Mosul by air, he being terribly sick in his machine.

Everybody had now learnt the lesson of the mistakes of the early days; no police were visible at the Palace, the weather was balmy, and there was an atmosphere of complete *détente*. The Commissioners, being anxious to complete their labours in the mountain qazas as quickly as possible, decided to visit only Zakho and Dohuk and to ask for the witnesses from Amadiya and Zêbar to be summoned to the latter place. I therefore left two days ahead of them, again to make sure that the arrangements for the reception of the party should be suitable, and to

give guidance to the officials regarding the procedure to be followed.

I liked the atmosphere of Zakho from the moment I arrived. The population was estimated at about 4,000 of whom one-half were Jews, one-quarter Christians, and only one-quarter Muslim Kurds. The older part of the little town is situated on an island (altitude about 1,450 feet) in the Eastern Khabur River, about seven miles up stream of its confluence with the Tigris and only five from the *de-facto* (and later *de-jure*) frontier. Communication with the right bank was by an old humped bridge of the design always attributed in Persia to Shah Abbas, and with the left by a not inelegant suspension bridge built by our Public Works Department two years before. A neat little avenue leading across an open meadow to the suspension bridge was looking delightful with almond blossom and the tender green of budding poplars. It was Saturday, and family parties, mostly Jews but with a sprinkling of Christians and Muslims, the girls in their gayest dresses and jewellery and the boys in the brightly striped *choghe-and-rhanik* suits for which Zakho is famous, were picnicking on the lawns sloping to the river. The Qaimmaqam, Mahmud Fakhri,[1] a well-educated youngish man from Mosul, who had worked his way up to the top of the Mutassarif's secretariat before his promotion to the executive responsibilities of a qaza, and the Assistant Commandant of Police, Yunis, both struck me as exceptionally good types; they were businesslike and efficient and were evidently on good, even affectionate terms with the various leading townsmen who came to call, Muslims, Christians and Jews alike.

Zakho is an important emporium of the *kalak* trade. On the northern side of the island the foreshore was a hive of industry: ten *kalaks* were ready completed, blown up, loaded with firewood and on the point of leaving for Mosul; others were in course of construction, all useful evidence of economic ties with the south. News was already coming through of the great Kurdish rebellion of Shaikh Sa'id in the Kharput district and the proclamation of martial law in the south-eastern wilayats

[1]Mahmud Fakhri was distinguished among his colleagues for his excellent Arabic, a rare accomplishment at this time when most of the serving officials had been educated in Turkish schools; later, in the Ministry of the Interior, I used to look forward to and delight in his reports for this reason. While still young he reached the rank of Mutasarrif but died prematurely of consumption, a great loss to the administration.

of Turkey, and the local Kurdish leaders were outspoken in their expressions of hostility to the persecutors of their race. The suffrages of the Jews and Christians were of course not in doubt for a moment. On the other hand the principal tribes of the qaza, the Guli and Sindi, were on the horns of a cruel dilemma, for the summer pastures on which their economic life depended were in Turkey and, having more to fear from the Government of that country than from us, their votes might go the wrong way unless they were convinced of their secrecy. Others who were rendered fearful by their close proximity to the frontier were prepared to say that economically they were bound to Mosul and politically they wished to share the fortunes of their brother Kurds of Sulaimani. I therefore looked forward to the arrival of the Commission with confidence.

Zakho is the seat of a Chaldean bishopric. There were only two houses in the place suitable for the visitors, the Bishop's and that occupied by Yunis. Vacating a house for the temporary accommodation of distinguished guests is quite an everyday affair in oriental countries. Yunis accepted the necessity of turning out as a matter of course, but the Bishop, who was rather senile, took some persuading. However Mahmud, with the help of the chaplain, did it very nicely, and the Commissioners had pleasant quarters overlooking the almond meadow.

The streets were quite quiet when the party arrived the next day. Jewad Pasha lost no time in resuming the practice, which he had previously followed in the Mosul liwa (but never in the other three), of going down the bazaar, saluting and salaaming all and sundry, and returning in a good or bad mood according to the degree of his success in getting his attentions returned. The towering temper in which he came back from his first outing and from a visit to the foreshore was an excellent augury, which was not belied, for the consultation in this happy little town.

We were also cheered by the results of a visit paid by Teleki and Paulis on the Saturday to Shaikhan north-east of Mosul. They had verified for themselves that the qaza, so far from being exclusively Turkish as the memorandum submitted by our opponents had claimed, was largely Christian-Arab and Yezidi-Kurdish; they had been impressed by the smartness of the scouts who had paraded for them at the Christian village of

Alqosh and by the scholarly erudition of the monks of the monastery where they had spent the night; and finally they had been deeply moved by the touching earnestness with which the witnesses from these two minorities had begged to be left in Iraq. It was perhaps a sign of the times that in the evening all three Commissioners spontaneously came across to the little house occupied by Jardine and myself to discuss the novel experience of the day.

Against this, we knew that Zêbar, Amadiya and Dohuk were going to be difficult. There was no intellectual class of Kurdish officers and civil servants who might expect the climate of Iraq to be more favourable to their hopes, moderate or extreme, than that of Turkey. Assyrian settlers were in possession of many Kurdish villages which had been abandoned during the war and, encouraged by unwise sympathizers at home in England, were resisting efforts to find them lands elsewhere to make room for the legal owners who now wished to return; others had found refuge in still inhabited villages but, like the camel in the Bedouin tent of the fable, were threatening to oust the original occupants. Owing to the presence of this alien religious and racial minority the administration had been closer and stricter than in certain troublesome tribal districts elsewhere, and the turbulent barons of Bahdinan might well be seduced by visions of a return to the good old days of lax Ottoman control.

On the 16th, a day ahead of the Commission, I returned to Dohuk where our tents had been pitched round a small bungalow, the former residence of the British A.P.O., about half a mile from the town. The political situation here was as rotten as that of Zakho had been sound. Government was evidently unpopular and its authority precarious. The Qaimmaqam, a bovine official now approaching pensionable age, was of the type that regarded anybody not wearing tight European trousers or a dirty linen collar as beneath contempt. A bully towards the Assyrian settlers, he had also managed to set the influential Kurds by the ears by trying to force them to speak to the brief of the Committees of National Defence.

The place was full of tribal leaders with *posses* of armed retainers; and the next afternoon the Commission had hardly arrived when a large crowd, fresh from an indignation meeting against the Qaimmaqam and completely out of control, invaded

the camp. Many of the Aghas rushed forward to kiss Jewad's hand, and the crowd, led by an important Naqshbandi Shaikh, began to chant well-known passages from the Koran. Fortunately the Turkish Assessor overplayed his hand by adopting an arrogant attitude towards the Commissioners and demanding that he should be allowed to take over the administration there and then. This annoyed them not a little, since they were anxious to get on as quickly as possible with the routine interviews and investigations. Jardine, who had served here as A.P.O., of course knew, and was well known by, all the principal demonstrators; and the Commissioners did not fail to note that most of them, after the first impulsive outburst, went across to talk to him (it was to complain of the Qaimmaqam's behaviour) and that it was he who restored order and enabled them to proceed with the business. We had little doubt, however, that to the 'petite question' the majority of the Kurdish answers had been favourable to Turkey.

Except for the interrogation of the witnesses from Amadiya which was left for the next morning, the work of the Commission was now over, and this was to be our last night in the field. After the tenseness of the day, which had exceeded that of any other except perhaps that of the very first day at Mosul, the reaction was sweeping and complete, rather like bump-supper night. We spent longer than usual over the *apéritifs* and by dinner time everybody was in extremely good form. Earlier in the afternoon Sabih had been terribly distressed by the scene in wliich the Turkish Assessor seemed to have scored such a notable success and, when under the influence of a violent attack of malaria and the mixture of French vermouth and quinine recommended by some well-meaning colleague as a febrifuge of proved efficacy if taken in sufficient quantity, had been restrained with difficulty from sallying forth to look for somebody, it didn't much matter whom, and 'flank him a boxe'. Now he was once more his urbane self and resumed the accustomed role, which had endeared him to all of us, friend and foe alike, as the *boute-en-train* of the party. The Commissioners and Assessors, who had already established their reputations as raconteurs, broke all previous records, and even the usually sedate Kramers gave us a surprise. Of all the gems produced that evening I can only remember the most innocuous, one that

was the more amusing for being, to all outward appearance at any rate, quite unintentional. It was by Jardine, whose public-school French was a never-failing source of merriment and who was recalling Sir Henry Dobbs's accident on the occasion of his visit to Mosul in the snowstorm: *Le Haut Commissionaire a craché et il a coupé son lèvre.*

When the Amadiya contingent came down to the camp in the morning there was no repetition of the disorderly scenes of the previous day. The Qaimmaqam, Abdul Hamid Abdul Mejid (whom I did not then know but who later became a great friend), was a first-class man and, although many of the leading tribal chiefs were former insurgents with grievances subsisting even after their pardon, we judged that the political vote reversed the Dohuk result in about the same proportions. In Amadiya there was a number of original Assyrian villages in addition to the recent refugee settlements and this element was of course solidly pro-Iraq.

I myself was not concerned with the actual inquiry in this area and took the morning off to visit the celebrated Assyrian reliefs of Maltai on the northern face of the ridge enclosing the Dohuk Valley on the south. It took me just over half an hour to reach them on foot from the nearest point accessible by car. There are four large panels, measuring perhaps eighteen feet by six feet; there is no inscription but they are attributed to Sennacherib (705–681 B.C.). They are of especial interest because they depict, not battle or hunting scenes like most Assyrian reliefs, but processions of seven gods standing on various kinds of animals, some of them fabulous, with the figure of the king in the act of adoration at either end of each panel.[1]

The whole Commission returned on the 18th to Mosul, where we stayed another five days to enable the Commissioners to check and co-ordinate their statistics and notes, to visit Nineveh on the opposite bank of the Tigris, Sharqat, and other historical sites and, incidentally, to accept an invitation from

[1]The earliest description of the panels by an Englishman is that of Layard, who saw them in September 1846 (*Nineveh and its Remains*, London, 1850, Vol. I, pp. 230–1) and is generally credited with their discovery. F. Thureau-Dangin, however, points out in his article 'Les Sculptures rupestres de Maltai' (*Revue d'Assyriologie*, Vol. XXI, Pt., 4, 1924) that the first recorded visit by a European is that of Rouet, acting Consul of France at Mosul, who described them in three letters dated October and November 1845 and published in the *Journal Asiatique*, tome VII of 1846, pp. 280 et seq.

No. 6 Squadron to a memorable guest-night, to which Jewad was also bidden. On the 23rd, after much photography, exchanging of addresses, and mutual expressions of esteem, we broke up, the League party leaving by car convoy for Dair-az-Zaur and Beirut, and the Turks for Nisibin and Ankara. For all the genuinely friendly feelings with which we parted I think we were all glad to see the last of each other on that particular mission. My own feelings can best be described in the words of my diary: 'Looking back I think it is little short of miraculous that the inquiries of the Commission have passed off without any outbreak or serious incident; . . . that the country, inflammable as it is at the best of times, should successfully stand such a strain would be incredible if it had not actually done so.'

The rest of the story is soon told. The report of the Commissioners, after analysing the cases presented by the two parties and setting out their own conclusions on the various aspects of the dispute, recommended that the Brussels Line should be confirmed as the frontier between Iraq and Turkey subject to two conditions: (1) The disputed territory, that is to say the former Mosul wilayat, should remain under the effective Mandate of the League of Nations 'for a period which might be put at twenty years'; and (2) Regard should be paid to the desires expressed by the Kurds that officials of Kurdish race should be appointed for the administration of their country, the dispensation of justice, and teaching in the schools, and that Kurdish should be the official language of all these services. There was however an escape clause to the effect that in case the Council considered that it would be equitable to partition the disputed territory the best line would be that approximately following the Little Zab.

The report came before the Council of the League in the following September (1925). The Turkish Government having refused to admit the competence of the Council to give a decision binding on both parties, this point was first referred to the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion. On the 21st November the Court gave its opinion that a unanimous decision of the Council (the votes of the parties not being counted in ascertaining whether there was unanimity)

would be binding on the parties and would constitute a definitive determination of the frontier. In face of the Turkish refusal to accept the opinion of the Court a committee of three, under the chairmanship of Sweden, seemed inclined to flirt with the Little-Zab compromise; but finally, on the 16th December, the Council decided to confirm the Brussels Line. The story current at the time, with what foundation I do not know, was that this result owed much to Teleki, who could not be accused of having been unreceptive of the Turkish case but who came out firmly against any proposal to cut the baby in half to please either side.

No time was lost in fulfilling the conditions attached to the award. A new treaty was quickly negotiated, and signed on the 13th January 1926, abrogating the shortened time limit set by the Protocol to the duration of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1923 and extending it to twenty-five years from the 16th December 1925 'unless before the expiration of that period Iraq shall have become a member of the League of Nations';[1] unlike the original treaty the new instrument was accepted by the Iraqi Parliament only five days after the signature and by a large majority. It came before the Council in March and, satisfactory assurances having been given regarding the administration of the Kurdish areas, it was approved.

The Turks, of course, had not been a party to these arrangements but, as the result of direct negotiations conducted with great skill by Sir Ronald Lindsay, His Majesty's Ambassador in Turkey, the Brussels Line, with one small modification, was finally laid down as the frontier between the two countries in Article 1 of a tripartite treaty between the United Kingdom, Iraq and Turkey signed at Ankara on the 5th June 1926. The unnatural estrangement of eleven years was thus brought to an end, and the old tradition of co-operation and mutual respect between Great Britain and Turkey was happily restored.

The decision of the 16th December had been received with great enthusiasm in Iraq. King Faisal telegraphed a moving message of thanks to King George, and the Prime Minister, Abdul Muhsin Beg as-Sa'dun (who had replaced Yasin Pasha), did the same to Mr. Baldwin. In appreciation of the vigorous defence of the interests of Iraq before the League Abdul Aziz

[1] Iraq was admitted to the League on the 3rd October 1932.

al-Qassab, the Mutasarrif, sought and received from his Government permission to name the new municipal garden then nearing completion in Mosul 'Amery Park'. For those of us who had been fighting the battle in the ranks the final victory not only removed the dark incubus that had been hanging over us during the anxious years but came to cement a comradeship of a kind which, to hear the Jeremiahs of today, might never have been thought of before 1945. Jardine and Sabih; Abdul Aziz, Lloyd and Abdul Hamid; Ahmad Usman, Lyon and Littledale; Mejid Ya'qubi, Miller and Murad; Umar Nazmi and Corner; Chapman and Ahmad-i Taufiq; with many more whom I have not had occasion to name, whether Qaimmaqams, Mudirs, police officers or private citizens: my heart warms as I go through the list and recall the life-long friendships then formed.

It was a sad day when the teaching profession in Iraq fell into the hands of men who knew nothing of these things, xenophobe Syrian emigrés and others. A new generation has in consequence grown up in complete ignorance of the fact that the State to which they have been taught to profess devotion owes both its birth and its survival through more than one dangerous crisis to the co-operation of His Majesty's Government with their first king and with the fathers of at least some of them; a generation that has been taught to believe that 'the British Imperialists' have prevented it from attaining a vague, undefined thing called 'its national aspirations' and are even now on constant watch for opportunities to destroy that independence regarding the origin of which it has stopped to ask no question. It was not long, too, before a successor of Abdul Aziz, this one at any rate old enough to know better, was mean enough to change the name of the park from 'Hadiqat Amery' to 'Hadiqat al-Amir', and so obliterate a gesture of gratitude that had done honour to Iraq no less than to the distinguished statesman whose notable service to the country it was to have commemorated. For all that I believe that there is still in Iraq a fund of good will towards Britain which will somehow pass on from the fathers to the children and which may still stand the cause of the peace and prosperity of the Middle East in good stead.[1]

[1]The debt of Iraq to His Majesty's Government is handsomely acknowledged by

The Kurds in general were of course well pleased with the conditions to which the award had been made subject. In a letter to Sir Henry Dobbs, written at the time, describing the splendid way in which Sulaimani had risen to the occasion, I had concluded:

The visit of the Commission has given a new impetus to Kurdish nationalism which has swept into the anti-Turkish camp many disgruntled persons whom even the most optimistic among us had at first expected to declare in favour of Turkey. The longer interviews were almost invariably strongly nationalist but not generally separatist in tone. . . . The Kurds of Sulaimani have struck what may prove to have been the decisive blow in the fight for the preservation of Iraq, and know it. Can the Iraqi Government rise to the occasion and adopt a far-sighted and generous policy towards the Kurds?

The report of the special Commission appointed by the League of Nations had now come to confirm their own feeling that, after having saved Iraq at a moment of perilous crisis by carrying the resolutions approving the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty on that historic night of the 10th June 1924, now, by their stand at Sulaimani, they had once again saved the country from a fatal dismemberment. The leaders of Kurdish opinion were thus in good conceit both with themselves and with the State of which they felt they had shown themselves no mean citizens. It was a great opportunity, but it would carry me far beyond the limits set for this book to attempt to trace the sequel here.

While we were at Dohuk I had received a letter from Cornwallis offering me, and urging me to accept, the post of Assistant

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the Arab Nationalist writer George Antonius in his book *The Arab Awakening*, London, 1938, at pp. 363–7. 'The British contribution to the building up of Iraq is one of the most remarkable instances of post-war reconstruction . . . It can without exaggeration be said that the modern state of Iraq owes its existence largely to the efforts of its British officials . . . By a lucky accident of circumstance Iraq was fortunate in getting the services of an unusually capable and conscientious band of British officials . . . The achievement is all the more striking as Iraq, with its large tribal population, its sectarian divisions and the scarcity of its means of communication in proportion to its size is a particularly difficult country to administer on the usual lines of bureaucratic routine . . . It was fortunate for Iraq that, in many important respects, Great Britain's interests marched with her own . . . The British desire to control the sources of oil in the wilayat of Mosul resulted not only in the incorporation, thanks entirely to British diplomacy, of that province into the Arab State, but also in effective Anglo-Iraqi co-operation towards the solution of the Kurdish problem.

Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior rendered vacant by Pulley's death. My first impulse was to refuse out of hand. I had never concealed my impatience of the control of Messieurs les Ronds-de-cuir (as I had been wont to call them) in the capital, whom I was now invited to join; and I found it difficult to see myself, and to understand how others could see me, settling down to humdrum secretariat routine behind the mountains of files that cumbered every desk I had seen in the Ministries. I was extremely happy where I was with my administrative responsibilities, the openings for diplomacy, and the opportunities for travel, antiquarian research and even exploration, in every kind of scenery and among a simple and hospitable people. I had come to love every stick and stone and indeed, with the exception of those who had descended to murder, almost every man, woman and child in the two liwas; for I seldom failed to find, even in those who had given most trouble, after they had been subdued, some attractive quality to atone for peccadillos which could be ascribed to primitive surroundings and upbringing rather than to sheer wickedness. However, on maturer consideration, I came to the conclusion that, having turned my back on a career in my parent Service, I should be foolish to reject an opportunity for promotion in the more restricted sphere of my choice. So, comforting myself with the thought that instead of two liwas I should now have the run of fourteen, I decided to accept. This was to be the beginning of a happy partnership with Cornwallis for ten years, during which I received from him nothing but kindness and not a little forbearance, until I succeeded him in 1935.

It did not take me long to hand over to Miller, who had deputized for me so often, and, it being Ramazan, the farewell functions were reduced to a minimum. On the morning of the 27th March, as Hama Ali sandwiched himself in between rolls of bedding and suit-cases in the back, I took my place in the front seat of my battered car and, with a thousand strings tugging at my heart, bade Khalil take the road southwards over the Jabal Hamrin to Baghdad.

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Table showing the Administrative Divisions of Northern Iraq with an estimate of the Kurdish population, based on the General Census of 1947.

LIWA OF MOSUL

Nahiya	*Total Pop.*	*Kurds %*	*Kurds Total*
Mosul H.Q.	203,300	5	10,165
Tall Kaif	28,100	5	1,405
Hamdániya	41,600	45	18,720
Shúra	26,000	—	—
Sharqát	23,900	—	—
Humaidát	17,800	—	—
	340,700	—	30,290
Tall 'Afar H.Q.	19,900	15	2,985
'Iyádhiya	13,000	—	—
Zummár	12,700	30	3,810
	45,600	—	6,795
Sinjár H.Q.	20,800	70	14,560
Shimál	11,200	90	10,080
	32,000	—	24,640
Shaikhán H.Q.	13,000	60	7,800
Alqósh	11,700	30	3,510
	24,700	—	11,310
Zákhó	11,400	90	10,260
Slêfání	12,700	95	12,065
Sindí	7,600	70	5,320
Gullí	5,500	90	4,950
	37,200	—	32,595
Dohuk H.Q.	20,300	80	16,240
Dóskí	9,500	90	8,550
Muzúrí Zhêr	10,100	100	10,100
	39,900	—	34,890
'Amádiya H.Q.	23,800	80	19,040
Nêrwa Rêkán	8,100	80	6,480
Barwárí Bálá	17,600	80	14,080
	49,500	—	39,600
'Aqra H.Q.	5,900	90	5,310
'Ashá'ir Sab'a	10,700	95	10,165
Súrchí	7,300	100	7,300
Bíra Kapra	8,500	95	8,075
	32,400	—	30,850

MOSUL LIWA: TOTAL POPULATION 602,000; KURDS 210,970

LIWA OF KIRKUK

Nahiya	*Total Pop.*	*Kurds %*	*Kurds Total*
Kirkúk City	69,000	25	17,250
Kirkúk H.Q.	24,600	30	7,380
Qara Ḥasan	13,800	80	11,040
Altun Köprü	15,100	70	10,570
Malḥa	14,800	5	700
Shuwán	11,100	100	11,100
	148,400	—	58,040
Kifrí H.Q.	5,000	70	3,500
Pêwáz	5,500	100	5,500
Qalá Shírwána	16,200	95	15,390
Qara Tapa	21,100	15	3,165
	47,800	—	27,555

Nahiya	*Total Pop.*	*Kurds %*	*Kurds Total*
Táúq H.Q.	14,600	60	8,760
Tuz Khurmátu	29,800	40	11,920
Qádir Karam	15,000	100	15,000
	59,400	—	35,680
Chamchemál H.Q.	12,100	100	12,100
Aqjalar	9,900	100	9,900
Sangáw	8,300	100	8,300
	30,300	—	30,300

KIRKUK LIWA: TOTAL POPULATION 285,900; KURDS 151,575

LIWA OF ARBIL

Nahiya	*Total Pop.*	*Kurds %*	*Kurds Total*
Arbil H.Q.	26,100	60	15,660
Qush Tapa	42,500	100	42,500
Shaqláwa	17,500	95	16,625
	86,100	—	74,785
Makhmúr H.Q.	12,700	95	12,065
Kandínáwa	17,000	95	16,150
Guwêr	14,400	50	7,200
	44,100	—	35,415
Ránya H.Q.	12,000	100	12,000
Chinárán	4,800	100	4,800
Náwdasht	8,700	100	8,700
Nomads	1,400	100	1,400
	26,900	—	26,900
Koi H.Q.	20,700	95	19,665
Taqtaq	10,000	100	10,000
	30,700	—	29,665
Ruwándiz H.Q.	17,100	100	17,100
Dêra Harír	9,400	95	8,930
Bálik	11,200	100	11,200
Brádóst	3,900	100	3,900
Mêrgasúr	4,400	100	4,400
	46,000	—	45,530
Barzán H.Q.	1,000	100	1,000
Muzúrí Bálá	5,700	100	5,700
	6,700	—	6,700

ARBIL LIWA: TOTAL POPULATION 240,500; KURDS 218,995

LIWA OF SULAIMANI

Nahiya	*Total Pop.*	*Kurds %*	*Kurds Total*
Sarchinár (Sul. H.Q.)	41,100	100	41,100
Tánjaró	10,100	100	10,100
Qara Dágh	10,100	100	10,100
Súrdásh	12,100	100	12,100
Bázyán	4,200	100	4,200
	77,600	—	77,600
Pizhdar H.Q.	22,500	100	22,500
Marga	13,100	100	31,100
	35,600	—	35,600
Halabja H.Q.	23,000	100	23,000
Khurmál	19,500	100	19,500
Warmáwa	6,700	100	6,700
Pênjwín	21,900	100	21,900
	71,100	—	71,100
Shár Bázhêr H.Q.	17,700	100	17,700
Máwat	11,300	100	11,300
Seróchik	9,400	100	9,400
	38,400	—	38,400

SULAIMANI LIWA: TOTAL POPULATION 222,700; KURDS 222,700

LIWA OF DIYALA

Nahiya	*Total Pop.*	*Kurds %*	*Kurds Total*
Khánaqín H.Q.	25,700	80	20,560
Haurain-Shaikhán	6,000	100	6,000
Qúratú	13,100	100	13,100
Sa'díya	12,100	50	6,050
	56,900	—	45,710

Nahiya	*Total Pop.*	*Kurds %*	*Kurds Total*
Mandalí H.Q.	36,100	50	18,050
Balad Rúz	17,200	50	8,600
	53,300	—	26,650

KHANAQIN AND MANDALI: TOTAL POPULATION 110,200; KURDS 72,360

SUMMARY

Mosul	210,970
Kirkúk	151,575
Arbíl	218,995
Sulaimání	222,700
Khánaqin and Mandalí	72,360
Baghdád and various, say	23,400
	900,000

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Personal names are generally given under the family name when this is in common use. Names of tribal personages will generally be found under the name of the tribe, individually or under the sub-heading 'Begzáda' or 'ruling family'. The prefix 'Abdul ('Abdur, 'Abdus, etc.) meaning 'Slave of the' has been disregarded. In Kurdish names the vowels ê and ö are always long; other long vowels are indicated by an acute accent. The 'hard' Arabic letters are distinguished by the usual diacritical marks. The following abbreviations have been used: A = Ághá, B. = Beg, Bey, Ef. = Efendí, Ḥ. = Ḥájjí, Kh. = Khán; M. = Muḥammad (when combined with another name), P. = Páshá, S = Saiyid, Sh. = Shaikh, br. = Bridge, d. = District, m. = Mountain, n. = Náḥiya, p. = Pass, q. = Qaẓá, r. = River or watercourse, tr. = Tribe, v. = Village or small town.

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KURDISTAN
100 50 0 MILES 100 200
International frontiers
Boundary of Kurdistan
BLACK SEA
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AZARBAYJAN
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IRAQ
IRAN
PERSIA
JORDAN
SAUDIA
EGYPT
ISRAEL
LEBANON
CYPRUS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
LURISTAN
HAKÂRI
Tiflis
Batum
Kastamonu
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Rasht
Bitlis
Van
Malatya
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Mosul
Arbil
Sinjar
Tall Afar
R. Great Zab
Bijer
Altun Kupri
Sulaimani
Kirkuk
R. Little Zab
Halabja
Senna
Hamadon
Nihavand
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