

precipitous line, 2,500 ft. high. The valley of the Caubul river separates the Koosh from the Teera mountains, which run in a parallel direction, decreasing in size to the E.; but in their higher parts are covered with perpetual snow, and are certainly as much as 15,000 ft. high. (Burnes, ii, 105.) The Solimann range commences with the Sufied Koh, S. of the Caubul valley; across which it may be considered as connecting itself with the Koosh, by means of cross ranges, causing many cascades and acclivities in the bed of the river. This range stretches from nearly 34° to 29° N. lat., where it becomes connected with the high table-land of Kelat (Beloochistan). It is not so high as the Koosh: its principal points are the Sufied Koh, or 'White Mountain,' and the Tukhte Solimann, or 'Throne of Solomon,' the last near lat. 31° 30' N.; the former is always covered with snow, and the latter so for three months in the year. Between these two points this range decreases considerably in height, especially where it is intersected by the Gomul river. The Solimann chain has several parallel ridges, and gives off many lateral and other ranges, especially a remarkable one to the SW., including the Khojeh Amram hills; a broad range, though of no great altitude, which appears to join the table-land of Kelat. On the E. a high and broad range, abounding in salt, passes off near the Teera mountains, across the Indus, into the Punjab, with a SE. direction. The Paropamisian mountains (for which as a whole there is no modern name) occupy a large space of country, extending 350 m. E. to W., and 200 m. N. to S.; W. of the Koosh, and between the Helmund river and Toorkistan. They are a maze of mountains, difficult of access, and little frequented; their E. portion is cold, rugged, and barren, although nowhere covered with perpetual snow: in the W. they contain rather wider valleys, and are somewhat better cultivated. Their greatest declivity is on the N. side, from which they send off several ranges towards Balkh; the slope of the whole tract is towards the W.

The Koosh, collectively called the Caubul Kohistan, or 'Land of Mountains,' contains, in its higher ranges, a number of narrow valleys; in its lower portions the valleys are of some size; Mr. Elphinstone calling them 'plains.' Many open laterally into the valley of Caubul, which occupies the space between the Indian Caucasus and the Solimann and Teera mountains, and which in some places is 25 m. wide. The narrow plain, or valley of the Swant river, is well watered; yields two harvests of most sorts of grain; and abounds in orchards, mulberry-gardens, and plane-trees; others are by no means so wide or productive, and are often bounded by a number of narrow glens. There are many fertile and well-watered valleys on both sides the Solimann range.

Besides those of the desert, which extend over the S. and W. parts of Caubul, there are many extensive and productive plains: that of Peshawur, about 35 m. in diam., is well watered; its streams fringed with willows and tamarisks; and has numerous gardens and orchards scattered over it: the latter contain a profusion of apple, plum, peach, pear, quince, and pomegranate trees. The greater part of this plain is highly cultivated and irrigated by canals, and the uncultivated parts covered with a thick elastic sod, scarcely equalled, except in England: its villages are generally large, very clean and neat, and surrounded with groves of date, peepul, and tamarisk. The valley of Caubul encloses some small plains, of which that of Jellalabad is the principal. Most of the cities and large towns are in fertile plains; one of

great luxuriance surrounds Herat; and the site of Furrah, and other places in the W., as well as the banks of the Helmund, seem 'rich oases in the midst of a waste.' The desert in Selstan, Gurn-seer, and Shorawuk, has an ill-defined boundary, and often encroaches on the habitable country.

The Indus forms, for a short distance, the E. boundary, and excepting it, there is no river which is not fordable throughout its course for the greater part of the year. The principal of the minor rivers are the Caubul, Helmund, Furrah-Rood and Lora. The only lake of any importance is that of Selstan, or Zurrak (*Aria Palus*), which receives the waters of the Helmund (*Etymauder*).

The Climate varies with the elevation; the temperature is much higher at Peshawur and Candahar than at Caubul and Ghiznee; but, generally speaking, the average heat of the year does not equal that of India, nor the cold that of England. At Caubul the snow lies on the ground for five months, and Burnes found the thermometer stood no higher than 64° Fahr. during the hottest period of the day in the month of May. The prevailing winds throughout Caubul are westerly. The rains brought by the SW. monsoons are much diminished in power by the time they reach the NE. part of the country, where the rainy season is limited to a month of cloudy weather, and occasional showers. At Candahar the influence of this monsoon is not felt in the least degree: at Caubul there is no regular wet season; but showers are frequent at all times of the year, as in England. At Peshawur, by the first week in March, peach and plum trees begin to blossom, and by the end of that month are in full foliage: from July to Sept. the weather is cloudy; the winter lasts from the latter month till Feb. Caubul generally is healthy; the most prevalent diseases are fevers, small-pox, and ophthalmia. Sir A. Burnes found the inhabitants of the Koosh, at 10,000 ft. above the sea, quite free from *goutte*, so common in the lower ranges of the Himalaya.

Geology and Minerals.—A core of granite, and resting on it a deep bed of slate, are the prominent geological features of the Koosh: the slate formation includes gneiss, mica, and clay-slate, chlorite, carbonate of lime, and quartz; gneiss generally occupying the lower portion. The Solimann chain is composed of a hard black stone; its accompanying ranges on the E. of an equally hard red stone, and a friable grey sandstone: the hills between Herat and Dooshak consist partly of a mixed reddish and black rock, streaked with ore, and partly of greywacke slate. Iron, lead, copper, antimony, tin, and zinc are found in various parts of the mountain region, and 10 or 12 lead mines near Baumbian, and elsewhere, are worked; gold is washed down by the rivers that come from the Hindoo Koosh; there are extensive deposits of sulphur in Selstan, at Cohut, &c., coal, naphtha, and petroleum are met with in the latter district; salt in the E. part of the country, both in springs and beds; and saltpetre is procured from the soil in many places.

Many of the forest trees, and most of the finer fruits of Europe grow wild. The timber in the mountain region consists chiefly of pine, oak, cedar, gigantic cypress, and wild olive: the Hindoo Koosh is destitute of wood, and in many places of verdure. Some of the hills produce the birch, holly, hazel, and mastic, the wild vine, berberry, blackberry, and many other bushes bearing edible berries; the valleys abound with extensive orchards, particularly of apricot-trees; the other trees most common on the plains are the mulberry, tamarisk, plane, willow, and poplar. The assa-fœtida plant grows luxuriantly at an elevation of

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