



**PERSIA
ARABIA
&c.**

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SCALE OF MILES
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AFFGHANISTAN AND BELOOCHISTAN.

AFFGHANISTAN.

ASTRONOMICAL POSITION.—Between latitudes 27° 16' and 36° 22' north, and longitudes 59° 19' and 72° 8' east from Greenwich, or 136° 21' and 149° 10' east from Washington.

BOUNDARIES.—Northern: Turkestan or Independent Tartary;—eastern: the Punjab country;—southern: Beloochistan; and—western: Persia.

DIMENSIONS.—The average extent of the country, north and south, is 500 miles, and east and west 580 miles. Area 297,157 square miles.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.—The north-east portion of Afghanistan is covered with mountains, belonging to the central Hindoo-Koosh, and sometimes rises to the height of 18,000 and 20,000 feet. The most elevated peaks are above the line of perpetual snow. The valleys of these lofty regions, however, present a striking contrast to the sterility of the mountains, being stored with the finest fruit trees and clothed with a rich verdure, and the sides of the lower hills are covered with forests of pine, oak, and wild olive. The other ranges that traverse Afghanistan are the West Hindoo-Koosh or Ghoor Mountains, a continuation of the central Hindoo-Koosh, and the Soliman Mountains. The former skirt the north boundary of the territory, attaining no great height, but are rugged and barren, and of difficult access. The latter traverse north and south, parallel with and close to the eastern limit, and are connected with the central Hindoo-Koosh by the Khyber and Salt Hills. There are also numerous minor hills scattered over the various parts of the country, but the most extensive system is found between the 30th and 32d parallels, and between longitudes 66° and 68° east. But although Afghanistan be a land of rocks, mountain, and desert, there are yet many fertile valleys, well-watered and remarkable for their fertility and beauty. In these favored spots grain is grown in abundance and fruits of the choicest kinds. The most extensive of these valleys or plains are those of Cabool and Peshawur, and there is also an exceedingly fertile tract in the vicinity of Herat. A great part of Seistan, in the west, is a mere desert, as is likewise a large portion of the south and south-west district.

MINERALS.—Afghanistan is a rich mineral country. Gold is found in the streams flowing from the Hindoo-Koosh, and in some of the valleys silver, and there are silver mines in the Huzareh Mountains. Copper abounds in many places, but the richest mines of this metal are those south-east of Cabool. Lead and antimony are met with in the Ghoor-bund valley and in the lower part of the Hindoo-Koosh; the latter exists also in the Khyber range. Iron ore occurs in great abundance throughout the Hindoo-Koosh, and coal is found in several districts.

CLIMATE.—This, depending more on elevation than latitude, is various, the cold being severe in the high regions, and the heat extreme in the low lands. These extremes are strikingly illustrated by the presence of snow on the mountains while the heat of the plains is all but intolerable. The south-east is the hottest region, and at Kandahar even the summer heat often marks 110° Fahr. in the shade, and at Cabool the temperature in winter is frequently 5° or 6° below zero. But when the vernal equinox is past, the cold suddenly subsides and a warm spring covers the plains with grass and flowers. The climate in the whole, however, is favorable to health, and in some parts highly salubrious.

BOTANY.—The most common trees in the mountains are pine, oak, and wild olive, and intermingled with these are the cypress, which attains a great size, walnut, birch, and holly. On the lower offsets of the Hindoo-Koosh the indigo plant grows spontaneously. On the plains are found the mulberry, tamarisk, acacias, date-palms, willow, plane, and poplar. The rose, jessamine, poppy, narcissus, hyacinth, etc., are found in gardens, and some of them grow wild. Esculent vegetables are in general of inferior quality; those cultivated are cabbages, cauliflowers, spinach, lettuce, onions, garlic, beets, etc. But it is in the production of fruits that Afghanistan excels, few other places supplying such great variety and abundance.

ZOOLOGY.—Wild animals are neither numerous in species nor formidable. A small species of lion inhabits the hilly country about Cabool, and a degenerate tiger is found in the eastern districts. Hyenas, wolves, jackals, and foxes are everywhere, and bears in the wooded mountains. The other wild animals are the gorkhar or ass, the hog, the porcupine, various kinds of deer and goats, the dog, the ferret, and the hare. Elephants and rhinoceroses, once numerous, are not now found in a wild state. Of birds the number and variety are considerable, including several kinds of eagles, hawks, etc., with herons, storks, cranes, etc.; and partridges and quails abound. Cuckoos and magpies, unknown in India, are numerous in the colder regions. The only reptiles requiring notice are snakes and scorpions; and turtles and tortoises are common. Among the insects may be mentioned locusts and mosquitoes—the latter formidable pests in the hot plains; the former on several occasions have laid whole districts bare and caused famines.

THE PEOPLE.—The population is composed of a great number of different races and tribes, the principal of which are the Dooaraunees, the Berdooraunees, the Ghiljies, and the Caulker tribes, all of which are again subdivided into numerous smaller families or clans. The Dooaraunees are the most influential on account of the extent of territory they occupy. They inhabit the central portion of west Afghanistan, and are partly pastoral and partly agricultural and are very peaceable. Their appearance is prepossessing and their demeanor at once modest and manly. The Berdooraunees occupy the north-east districts and the hill country. They are said to be extremely quarrelsome and of a savage disposition, but are withal brave and hospitable, active, acute, and industrious. The Ghiljies are, after the Dooaraunees, the most eminent of the tribes. The Caulker tribe inhabits the south part of the Khakas country, north-west of Sewestan. The total population is estimated, but from uncertain data, at 6,000,000 souls.

RELIGION.—The Affghans are mostly Mohammedan Soonnees, but all the Persians in the country are Sheeahs, and between these two sects the bitterest animosity prevails. Besides these there are numerous other sects, such as Sooffees, Zukkees, Roushamekas, etc. The first are rather a class of philosophers than of religionists, their leading tenet being that nothing exists but God, all the rest being illusion. No people can be more regular in the performance of their devotions than the Affghans. The mollahs or priests are numerous. They are an influential body, and being composed mostly of active and intelligent men, have acquired an almost unlimited power and authority in the country. The education of youth, the practice of the law, and the administration of justice are entirely intrusted to them.

GOVERNMENT, ETC.—Afghanistan was formerly a hereditary monarchy; but is now divided into three chiefships—Herat, Cabool, and Kandahar. The revenue of the first is about a million dollars a year—half in money and half in produce. Cabool is believed to have yielded, under a system of grinding taxation, about \$1,200,000, and Kandahar about \$400,000. The whole Affghan force, which is chiefly cavalry, amounts to about 16,000 men; they are but imperfectly disciplined, and are embarrassed by the multitude of their arms. The police of the country is very bad; in many parts travelers can be secured from being attacked and plundered only by engaging an escort of the tribe or by paying customs to its chief. In the cities, justice is administered by a cauzee or cadi, and in the country parts by the chiefs of tribes and the priests.

INDUSTRY.—As before stated, the chief wealth of the country is in the flocks and herds. The disproportionate amount of tillable land to the

whole surface is too apparent, and as a consequence agricultural pursuits are essentially local, but as there are two harvests in most parts of the country, a sufficiency is usually produced. One harvest is sown in autumn and is reaped in summer, consisting of wheat, barley, peas, and beans; and the other, sown in the end of spring and reaped in autumn, consists of rice, Indian corn, and maush. The first harvest is generally the most important. Besides these crops there is another comprehending melons, pumpkins, gourds, etc., which is looked upon as a distinct harvest. Wheat is the staple food of the people; barley being generally fed to horses, and turnips are largely cultivated for cattle. Ginger, turmeric, sugar-cane, cotton, madder, etc., are also raised, and tobacco is produced in many parts of the country. The land is always irrigated before being ploughed, and the ploughing is deeper than in India. All seed is sown broadcast.

Manufactures are very unimportant. At Cabool and Kandahar woolen goods, chiefly shawls, are manufactured, but they are inferior to those of Cashmere. The woolen fabrics of the country are rarely exported, as from the scarcity of artificers, the want of machinery, and the great demand, there are not enough produced to supply the home market. At Peshawur a coarse kind of cotton loongee is manufactured, which is exported to Turkestan.

There being no navigable rivers, and the country being but ill adapted to wheel carriages, commerce is generally carried on by beasts of burden, chiefly camels, formed into caravans. The principal foreign trade is with India, Persia, and Turkestan, and consists almost wholly of an interchange of the products of those countries for those of Afghanistan. Slaves are also imported from Arabia and Abyssinia. The internal trade of the country is more valuable than the foreign trade. The principal marts are Cabool, Peshawur, Kandahar, and Herat. The carrying trade is chiefly prosecuted by the Sohanees, a pastoral tribe who occupy the country eastward from Ghuzni to the Indus. Many of these are opulent; they count about 100,000 persons, and take with them 24,000 camels.

PRINCIPAL PLACES.—Cabool, a fortified city and capital of northern Afghanistan, is situated on the Cabool River, in lat. 34° 30' and long. 69° 6'—elevation 6,396 feet. It is inclosed on the north, west, and south by hills, along which run some weak ramparts, and at its east end is the Bala-Hissar (palace of the kings), a citadel comprising the residence of the chief, various government offices, the royal gardens, an inner fort, and a small town of 5,000 inhabitants. The outer town, about three miles in circuit, is entered by four gates, and has two principal thoroughfares running parallel to each other, the northern of which led to the magnificent bazaar destroyed by the British in 1842. The city is subdivided into districts, each inclosed by walls, and capable of being shut off from the rest so as to form a separate fortress, and in the south-west district is a pretty strong quarter inhabited by Persians, of whom there are 10,000 or 12,000 in the city. The streets are intricate, often too narrow for two horsemen to pass each other, and very badly paved. Cabool has an active trade with Russia, China, and Turkestan, and has considerable markets for cattle, corn, etc. Population 60,000. Ghuzni, a famous fortified city 80 miles south Cabool, is built on the west extremity of a hill range, 7,726 feet above the sea-level, and 280 feet above the adjacent plain. Its walls, about 35 ft. high, and flanked with numerous towers, form an irregular square about 14 miles in circuit. In the north-east part of the town is the citadel, with a palace, magazine, and granary; the whole city, however, is commanded by adjacent heights. It has several bazars, and is an entrepôt for the trade between Afghanistan and the Punjab. Population 10,000. Old Ghuzni, destroyed in the twelfth century, lies about three miles south-east; about the beginning of the eleventh century it was the capital of an empire reaching from the Ganges to the Tigris and from the Jaxartes to the Indian Ocean. Its ruins cover a large surface, and here are two fine minarets and the tomb of Mahmood of Ghuzni, whence the famous "gates of Somnauth" were removed in 1842. Peshawur, a frontier city, is 12 miles east of the Khyber Pass, and about 160 from Cabool. It was taken and ruined by the Sikhs during the present century, and has never yet recovered prosperity, much of it still remaining in ruins. The only remarkable edifices besides its desecrated mosques are a magnificent caravansary, now the residence of the Sikh governor, and a fort on the site of its ancient citadel. It is, however, in so good a position for commerce that, under a settled government, it must soon resume its importance. It formerly contained 120,000 inhabitants; now about 40,000.

Kandahar, the capital of central Afghanistan, is built on a fertile plain, in lat. 32° 37' and long. 66° 20'—200 miles south-west Cabool. It is inclosed by bastioned mud walls, four miles in circuit, and by a ditch; and it has a citadel on the north side. Two principal streets, about 50 yards wide, and lined with shops, traverse the interior in opposite directions, intersecting at its centre, where is a kind of circus and a domed market-place. The houses are mostly built of wood, and the city is well supplied with water from canals and public wells. The mosques are mean, and almost the only public building worthy of notice is the tomb of Ahmed Shah, the founder of the modern town. Various manufactures are carried on in Kandahar, and its transit trade is considerable. Population 60,000, mostly Affghans, but also Persians, Tartars, Jews, and Hindoos, which last almost monopolize its commerce.

Herat, the capital of north-western Afghanistan, is situated on the Hurri-Rood, 360 miles west Cabool, in lat. 34° 51' and long. 62° 28'; and is a post of great military as well as commercial importance. It is strongly fortified, and has withstood several sieges by the Persians, but in 1855 was captured. The city is stated to contain 4,000 dwelling houses, 1,200 shops, 17 caravansaries, 20 public baths, some fine reservoirs and numerous mosques, the principal of which is a large structure of the thirteenth century. Population about 40,000. The vicinity is very beautiful and irrigated by numerous canals; and Herat itself has been usually one of the most flourishing places in the East, and a grand central mart for the products of India, China, Tartary, Afghanistan, and Persia. It has also manufactures of carpets, sheepskin caps and cloaks, shoes, etc. Most of the wealthy merchants are Hindoos.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.—Of the early history of Afghanistan little is known—a circumstance less to be regretted that its interest commences only with modern times. In 1713 Nadir Shah conquered the country. Ten years afterward he was murdered by the Persians, and was succeeded by Ahmed Shah, the founder of the Dooaraune dynasty, who was crowned at Kandahar in 1747. His reign, which continued 26 years, was occupied with wars external and internal. On his death his son, Timur Shah, and after him Zemaun Shah, reigned. The latter was displaced by his elder brother Mahmoud, by whom he was imprisoned and deprived of sight. Mahmoud was subsequently dethroned by another brother, Soojahool-Moolk, who imprisoned him. In the course of the intrigues and convulsions which succeeded, Mahmoud obtained his freedom, re-appeared in arms and recovered his throne—Soojah having fled and found a retreat in the British territory. In the year 1837, the British government thinking it advisable to establish a friendly alliance with the ruling powers in Afghanistan, restored Soojah to the throne; but though engaged in maintaining the rights of a legitimate prince, the British troops were ultimately (1842) driven out of the country. This defeat, however, was amply avenged in the same year by the return of the British forces, who retook Cabool and re-established the prestige of their name in this part of the world.

BELOOCHISTAN.

ASTRONOMICAL POSITION.—Between latitudes 24° 12' and 30° 24' north and longitudes 58° 12' and 69° 38' east from Greenwich, or 135° 11' and 146° 40' east from Washington.

BOUNDARIES.—Northern: Afghanistan;—eastern: the province of Scinde;—southern: the Arabian Sea; and—western: the kingdom of Persia.

DIMENSIONS.—The greatest length, east and west, is about 600 miles; and the greatest breadth about 380 miles. Area 182,910 square miles.

PHYSICAL ASPECT.—The sea-coast from Cape Monze to Cape Jask is of remarkable uniform outline, about 620 miles in extent, and has several well-sheltered roadsteads, particularly the bays Soumeanee and Choubar, but no good harbors. The general surface of the country is rugged and mountainous, with some extensive intervals of barren sandy desert. The general parallelism and uniformity of the principal ranges is remarkable, one system having a north and south inclination and another more palpably an east and west direction. Of the latter, one vast chain stretches along the coast, and is apparently a continuation of the great mountain systems of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and Laristan, which, uniting at Shiraz, hold on their course in a single range to the valley of the Indus. Parallel, and at a distance of 70 miles, another well-defined chain stretches from about long. 60° to near Beila. A third range, a hundred miles north from the last-named chain, forms part of the north boundary. The other more remarkable chains are the Bushkurds, stretching south-west and north-east, or between Cape Jask and Sibbo, and forming the south-east boundary of Kohistan; the Sarawnee Mountains, stretching generally in the same direction, between lat. 26° and 28° 50' and thence to 30° in a north-north-east direction; and the Hala Mountains, forming part of the east boundary, and connecting with the elevated region of Afghanistan. Many of these mountains are of great height and capped with snow. The mineral wealth of Beloochistan is believed to be considerable, including gold, silver, lead, iron, copper, tin, antimony, sulphur, sal-ammoniac, and many kinds of mineral salts and saltpetre. Rock-salt is common in Kohistan.

RIVERS, ETC.—Throughout Beloochistan there is a great deficiency of water, particularly in summer. The largest streams are the Dustee or Bhugwar, the Bunth, the Sudgee, the Siroo or Tank, the Aghor, the Kurmut, and the Pooralee, all of which fall into the Arabian Sea. In the north are the Bolan and the Molloh, which are ultimately lost in the sands of Cutch Gundava. Their courses form the celebrated passes of the same names, leading from the valley of the Indus.

CLIMATE, SOIL, PRODUCTS, ETC.—The climate in the higher parts is extremely cold, particularly in winter; while in the plains and valleys the summer heat is oppressive. Some parts in the south-west are said to be the hottest localities in Asia. Snow falls from October to the end of February; and in some parts remains continuously on the ground for two months. In February and March a good deal of rain falls; from the latter month to September is the dry season. The soil is not in general fertile, but patient industry has rendered the plains and valleys productive in wheat, barley, and millet. The other chief crops are madder and various kinds of pulse and oil seeds. Cotton is grown in the east; and in the low lands and hot regions rice, maize, indigo, and tobacco. Esculent vegetables are abundant, and the gardens and orchards in the vicinity of towns produce the finest fruits. On the sides of some of the mountains, and in the jungles which generally cover the wide beds of the rivers, trees are numerous, consisting of the juniper, cedar, tamarind, tamarisk, mango, walnut, sycamore, fig, and willow. The oak, ash, and fir, common to temperate climates, are unknown. Leopards, wolves, hyenas, jackals, tiger-cats, and foxes are found in the jungles; but, except on the east borders, lions and tigers are seldom seen. Reptiles and insects are not very common, but birds of almost every description are in infinite variety and numbers. Geese, ducks, and turkeys, however, are not found in the country. On the coasts, fish are caught in great quantities. The domestic animals are horses, mules, and asses; camels and dromedaries; sheep, goats, cows, and buffaloes.

GOVERNMENTS, ETC.—The Belooche government is despotic, the khan having unlimited power over life, person, and property. He usually resides at Kelat, but his rule is almost confined to the immediate province around it, the greater part of the country being held by tribes who acknowledge subjection only to their own chiefs. He has no standing army, but all the heads of tribes are bound to furnish contingents of men in case of war as well as to pay tribute.

TRIBES, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, ETC.—The inhabitants are divided into two great branches, called Belooches and Brahoos, differing in their language, figure, and manners, and each subdivided into a number of minor tribes. The Belooches are tall and well-formed, and have small bones, long faces with prominent features, a dark complexion, and black hair. They are indolent, dissolute, and vindictive. The Brahoos, so-called from the words "bah-roh" (on the waste), are much shorter and broader than the Belooches, and have large bones, round faces, and flat features, with frequently hair and beard brown. Many of the females are pretty. They are most numerous in the province Jhalawan and the north and west parts, but are found everywhere. Both races are pastoral—both hospitable, brave, and enduring, and live in tents. They are of the Soonnee sect of Mohammedans. Neither race possesses a written language, and their early histories have not been preserved. The Belooche language resembles the modern Persian; the Brahoos the Hindoo. The other inhabitants are few in number, and consist principally of Hindoos, who are found in all the towns, Dehwars or villagers of Persian descent, who are engaged in agricultural or other settled pursuits, and Jets, of Indian origin, and who form the population of Cutch Gundava. The whole population does not exceed 2,000,000.

PRINCIPAL TOWNS.—Kelat, the capital, is a walled town on a hill 600 feet above sea-level, in lat. 28° 52' and long. 66° 33', and with its suburbs contains 12,000 inhabitants. It is fortified and commanded by a large citadel. As a town it is ill-built; but is well supplied with wares and provisions, and has some transit trade, with manufactories of muskets, swords, and spears. Gundava, 115 miles east Kelat, is the usual winter residence of the khan, and has about 17,000 inhabitants. Sarawan is the principal town in the province of the same name. Kelje, on the Dustee River, stands at the foot of a rock crowned by a strong fort, and had formerly 3,000 houses and an extensive trade, but has fallen into decay. Beila is built near the Pooralee River, and consists of about 800 houses, chiefly mud, and contains about 4,000 inhabitants. Gwadel, Gwuter, Choubar, etc., are maritime towns, but of little importance. Jask, a little north of Cape Jask, is a frontier town of Persia, but is intimately connected with Beloochistan in a commercial point of view.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.—About the middle of the last century Beloochistan was made tributary by Nadir Shah, who bestowed it on Nasir Khan, with the title of Beglerbeg. The latter greatly extended the Belooche dominions, and on his death, 1795, the country was left in a comparatively prosperous condition. Since 1809–10, however, it has suffered much from intestine wars and rebellions, and its boundaries have been greatly curtailed. In November, 1839, Kelat was taken by the British, and Mehrab, the khan, slain and his army captured. In 1840 the Belooches recaptured Kelat; but in the same year the capital was again occupied by British forces, and in 1841 Mir Nasir the son of Mehrab, was recognized as ruler.