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THE GEOGRAPHICAL JOURNAL

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

(For Details, see over.)

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JOURNEYS IN NORTH MESOPOTAMIA.*

By MARK SYKES.

The region which I hope to make more familiar to the readers of this *Journal* is one that, although to-day but little known, was in former ages a closely contested frontier which occupied the attention of the world for a longer period, perhaps, than any other in history, and it is a zone which to-morrow may engross the whole attention of Europe —I refer to that region which the classicist might call Mesopotamia, and which Arabs, in the present as in the past, term the Jazirah, or Peninsula. The Arab name is significant and useful, and although for the base purpose of engaging attention I have planned that the title should mention that blessed and soothing alternative, now that I have entrapped the reader I propose to avoid it, and make use only of that used by the Arabs.

The name Peninsula, or Jazirah, takes its rise from the fact that the region in which we are interested is almost surrounded and cut off, as it were, by two great rivers—the Tigris and the Euphrates—for the lands which lie between them are generally known by that name.

The general physical features of the Jazirah are simple in the extreme, and it will not take long to make a brief survey of them. To the north we have a fairly continuous range of mountains stretching in an unbroken line from Jezire-ibn Omar to the western slopes of the Karaja Dagh (a mountain which I might say until lately was represented as a solitary and stately peak, but has on later maps subsided into several of a more probable and less singular shape). Beyond the western slopes of the Karaja Dagh there is an apparent hiatus in this highland limit, which is in reality only an easing of the rising

* Read at the Royal Geographical Society, March 11, 1907. Map, p. 356.


Karaja Dagh
HARADUM KURDS
MILLI KURDS
RISHAM KURDS
SHAMMAR
TAI ARABS
NORTHERN SHAMMAR
SOUTHERN SHAMMAR
ADWAN ARABS
BEDUL ARABS
ACAILIL ARABS
SHERAGIN
BLACK SEA
ASIA MINOR
Sketch Map of
NORTH MESOPOTAMIA
to illustrate the paper by
MARK SYKES.
The Contour Portion compiled by the Author.
Nat. scale 1:1,500,000 or 1 Inch = 23.67 Statute miles
Author's Routes
proposed Baghdad Rlwy as proposed engineered
Deviation of Route as suggested by Author
Telegraph Lines
Heights in Feet (approximate)

a shaykh. 'Go,' he said. 'I will go with you. Go on quickly; you will bring trouble to us if you stay, and trouble to yourself. Mount and be off.' We took the fellow's advice and started away, the shaykh accompanying us.

"As we passed a second encampment, a strange-looking creature came out towards us, shouting, 'Khoweh! khoweh!—Tax! tax!' He seized the bridle of one of the horses, and stopped the caravan. The people were streaming from the encampment, whistling a signal to others, who came running from the fields. 'Pay him,' said the shaykh; 'there is danger!' With great reluctance we gave the brute some money, and rode on as quickly as we could. Nor did we draw rein until we reached the camp of Khalil Agha, a chief of some note amongst these people. Khalil Agha, a man with a strange and evil countenance, received us with a chilly reserve that gave us but little encouragement after the preceding events. As I sat in the Agha's tent, scores of his white-robed henchmen came in and glared at us in grim silence. Strange-looking fellows were these Yezidis. Their features are so small and pinched that their faces have an appearance almost ape-like. Their expression is predatory and vindictive. The fact that their noses being generally neither straight nor hooked, but pointed and turned downwards, so as to press down on to the upper lip, adds to the unpleasantness of their countenances. Their voices are shrill and fierce, their manners brusque and unceremonious, their bodies are lithe, active, and wiry, and in stature they tend to be above the average. Their clothing is strange in the extreme. On the head, a tall brown conical cap, around which is wound a black or red turban; the body is swathed in a long flowing shirt of white, cut square at the neck; a short cloak of brown leather, and pointed curled-over shoes complete the costume. When I saw these curious figures around me, it seemed as if four thousand years had slipped back, and I was sitting among some forgotten primeval people, such as those who carved their barbarous monuments upon the rocks at Ivriz.

"There is an air of mystery about the Yezidis, which may well account for all the monstrous tales that are told of them. As I sat in the tent, a man in black robes entered and sat down opposite. Great reverence was paid to him, many of the men kissing the hem of his garment. What or who he was, I could not learn. Presently I left the Agha's tent and went to my own, where I found a crowd of silent men slowly and deliberately examining all my furniture, while the soldiers and muleteers sat shivering with terror at a distance. All the evening crowds of people came trooping down from the mountain to stare at my camp and swell the ill-omened crowd gathered round it. At last, with a troop of some sixty at his heels, came Shaykh Hamo, the religious chief of that region. He was of more cheerful aspect than the others, and helped to dispel the feeling of depression and helplessness that had gradually crept

over one in the course of the day. He came into my tent, and I entertained him to the best of my ability. He said that if war broke out between Persia and Turkey, the men of Sinjar would kill every Moslem within reach, a sentiment loudly applauded by the rest; indeed, the solitary yapping cry by which they marked their approbation of their pastor's speech

YEZIDI OF SINJAR.

was the first sign of animation I noticed among them all that day. Shaykh Hamo then took his leave, and after his departure a good many of the others stole away towards the hills. After sunset, my host, Khalil Agha, sent down six men to look after my camp, and their repeated and earnest inquiries as to what time I usually went to sleep did nothing towards restoring my confidence. However, beyond a few stray shots fired at a distance, nothing of import occurred during the night, and the next morning we set off for the town of Sinjar.

"When the Turkish flag, which flies from the top of the hill on which the town is situated, came in sight, my muleteers began to sing for the first time since the preceding day."

quite tame. If a man desires any particular wish, he is counselled to pray in the little mosque at 'Ain el Arus, give a present to Shaykh Saleh, who has charge of the shrine, and feed the fish in the pool. The fish are so tame, and have acquired so much confidence from this practice of pilgrims, that they will actually accept grain from the hand of a stranger. Between 'Ain el Arus and Rakka, the Belikh receives the waters of two tributaries: the Karasuk on the right bank a little below Tel el Hamam, and the Sulayuk on the left a little further north. At Tel el Hamam I discovered the ruins of a castle and a gigantic cistern; these remains, I think, may be said with some certainty to be those of Kelat Mashamah, mentioned by Mr. Guy L'Estrange in his 'Lands of the Eastern Kaliphate;' that author places it on his map (compiled from the *written* works of the Oriental geographers) not above a mile from the place where I found the ruins.

Mr. L'Estrange also marks the town of Bajerwan on the left bank of the Belikh, between Hamam and Ragga, in precisely the same spot on which I found the ruins of an extensive city. The banks of the Belikh are extremely fertile, and barley, maize, dara, rice, hemp, and opium can be cultivated on them with great success. I am unable to supply such detailed information concerning the Khabur as the Belikh, as I have never ridden down it, but have only crossed it at Ras el Ain and Shedadeh. At Ras el Ain it is a fair river about 40 feet wide and 3 feet deep; at Shedadeh, however, it had grown far greater, being unfordable, and, I should say, almost of the same proportions as the Thames at Maidenhead. Between Ras el Ain and Shedadeh the Khabur receives the waters of the Jag-Jag and the Girgan rivers, both strong perennial streams along which cultivation is possible, and, from the numerous ruins which stud their banks, I should imagine would prove profitable.

We must now consider the large areas of plain which lie betwixt these mountains and rivers. I will take them from west to east. The first section is that which lies between the Euphrates and the Belikh; this is a stony region of bare and forbidding hills, arid, repulsive, and uninteresting. There is one brief season when it is attractive, and that is in early spring; the following extract from my diary, written in the month of March, may give an imperfect impression:—

"The next morning we set out into the desert, or rather prairie, for that cannot be called a desert which the slightest scratch is sufficient to cultivate, and where the pasture is green for two months in the year. The lands of the Jazirah, indeed, differ from any other rolling stretches of country I have ever seen, and bear not the faintest resemblance to either the Texan or Mexican plains, nor the South African veldt. The atmosphere, which is at once clear and hazy, produces a very curious illusion—a stone 800 yards away appears to be close at hand, while a mountain on the horizon which is not more than 6 miles away appears

to be treble the distance; the two effects combined give an impression of a vastness and space that it is difficult to describe in words. The sky, which in spring is often cloudy and overcast, throws strange streaky shadows over the landscape, and a dull indefinite line of grey on the horizon will change suddenly to a clear bright ridge of yellow hills, which is equally quickly transmuted to a dark, forbidding range of purple mountains; the wadies form trailing serpents of olive-green and brilliant flowers; the rolling steppes run in lines of grey and green, thus marking the good grazing-land from the stony tracts. On the sky-line herds of camels move almost imperceptibly to and fro cropping the grass, while on the hillsides dappled flocks of sheep speckle the country with

MOSQUE AT 'AIN EL ARUS.

splashes of black and brown and yellow. The larks, while in the air, sing cheerily. Now and again a rare thunderstorm comes rushing across the land—a dark curtain of black, from which the huge falling drops smite the dusty ground, the hills and distant plains vanish, the horizon closes in, the ground turns yellow and red, the yellow lightning sends an unearthly sheen upon the grass, and for ten minutes we are in a strange unknown world of rushing waters, roaring wind, and rolling thunder. The storm passes over, the camels and sheep begin to move again, the larks are once more in voice, and, save for a little brightness in the sky, the desert is as it was before."

Once the line of the Belikh is reached, the scenery undergoes a

complete change; at all seasons the grass is green in its vicinity, and swamps and bogs are common. Between the Belikh and the Khabur we have another vast steppe of rolling hills, which, as one proceeds eastward, becomes more veldt-like and stony; the curious little conical hills, pimples as it were on the face of Nature, grow more frequent, and from convenient landmarks change into aggravating and perplexing distractions.

After crossing the Khabur we enter another and totally different description of the low country. From a land of low grassy wolds, where the view is always curtailed by a horizon of rolling undulations, we pass into a country where the visible distances are immense, and the natural features distinct and pronounced. Where we formerly looked eagerly for the sign of some slight hill or landmark, we stare blankly at the castle of Mardin, some 50 miles away, or at the snowy peaks of the Karaja Dagh, which hang, as it were, suspended in the air at nearly double that distance. Or if we turn south, the forbidding bulk of the Sinjar stands before us. Nor is it a flat and empty plain which is enclosed by these far-off barriers. Instead of empty wadis, we cross deep but narrow perennial streams, which thread their way through deep valleys, or alongside unending ranges of dark hills; while in place of the green grass we have grown so accustomed to, we ride over masses of flowers which dazzle the eye with their brilliancy and variegated colour, and whose honey scent is at times almost oppressive. I am sadly ignorant in botany, or I should attempt to give some account of them. As it is, I can only say that the hillsides are splashed with yellow, blue, and purple, while on the river-sides our horses could hardly force their way through the snowy banks of daisies and cowslips. And yet this well-watered country, whose fertility bursts out in this torrent of blossom, is almost uninhabited. As we proceed further east the magnificent and mysterious mountains of Kurdistan become visible, and the traveller finds himself in the centre of a vast horizon, of which this panorama gives some slight impression. The plain to the south of the Sinjar is another and wonderful change. Here we find an appalling flatness stretching mile upon mile, seemingly never destined to end.

Now, the question which naturally presents itself to one's mind is, What was the past of this strange and silent region? This is not the South African veldt with its miserable emptiness, or the Sahara with its dismal solitude; this land was once teeming with life and wealth, business and war. If we peer back into the darkest antiquity, we find a land densely peopled by a highly cultured race; mighty mounds still mark with permanence their fleeting sojourn, huge canals and dykes, some containing water even now, remain to show us where man once was. What was the precise nature of their civilization it would be almost impossible to say now; in a few years we may expect that archæological research will probably yield much minute but little general information

PIT AT TELL EL HANAN (KALAT MASLANAM).

WALLS OF HAKKA.

I might add that one small view I had of the action of a marauding party convinced me that it was a sport which, for excitement, pure undiluted fun, suspense, and delight, left fox-hunting as far behind as fox-hunting might be said to outdistance lawn tennis; and for this reason, I think, although Bedawin of the Jazirah care little for the chase and are rather poor horsemen, they may be said to be the finest sportsmen in the world. I have yet to hear a Bedawi speak ill of his enemy, even though he may have had the worst of it himself; indeed, as far as I could see, there was as little personal animus between hereditary foes as exists between two elevens of our cricketers. Of course at times regrettable things are done, but the occasions are very rare indeed; the only really discreditable aspect of the intertribal warfare is the ruthless way in which the Bedawin of the shepherd tribes plunder the poor agriculture dependents of their antagonists, who, having neither arms nor horses, are incapable of defence and afforded little by their patrons.

It is now my duty to draw your attention to the condition of the agricultural Arab tribes, the Weldi, the Baggara, the Aghedaat, the Jibbur, and the Afadileh. These people, who dwell in tents similar to the Bedawin, are branded with the ignoble name of fellahin, which signifies that they have sunk so low as to work with their hands. Indeed, they do it very badly, but still the contamination of manual labour places them on a lower plane in the eyes of the desert Arab. In character, save that they are more hospitable and civil to strangers, they are the exact counterpart of their brethren the shepherds, many of them are of equally noble blood, and alliance with their women is not deemed dishonourable by the noblest. Their wealth or poverty depends partly on the crops of maize and dourra and barley which they cultivate on the river-banks, and partly on their herds of buffaloes, which, as the latter cannot leave the banks of the rivers, are fairly safe from raids. Except the Jibbur, these agricultural tribes live in subjection to their neighbours of the desert, to whom they used to pay a tribute, which all agree was far more severe than the tax the Government now levies. However, although the Government extends a certain amount of protection to them, and often recovers looted stock, it cannot as yet guarantee them immunity from continual annoyance and discomfort, and of late many of the Baggara have abandoned cultivation on the banks of the Khabur and have taken to regular herdsmanship. It must also be noted that these agricultural tribes have, in common with many of the Arabs of Syria, the habit of leaving a great portion of the work to the women, and it is no uncommon thing to see a woman with a child on her back either ploughing or digging a canal while her husband dozes in the tent and the boys tend the herds of buffaloes. Notwithstanding their idleness, these Arabs are by no means intellectually stupid; all are imbued with the idea that the advent of the railway will mean great wealth and happiness for them, but have, since the rumours of the Euphrates valley

line first reached their ears in the fifties, grown rather sceptical. It is also my private opinion that the love of money, which is so strong in them, will prompt them to do harder work than they now will undertake. My reason is, that at present the only recompense for labour is personal comfort, for which the Jazirah Arabs have no apparent desire; indeed, their natural frugality is extraordinary. A little boiled rice or wheat, the roughest bread, some dates dipped in butter, or the flesh of a sick sheep or goat that has had to be killed, are their only foods, and this in spite of the fact that greater luxuries are well within their reach.

Having now described the Arabs, I will turn to the Kurds; but before going further, I must say that the Kurds are a very little

ARAB OF SOUTHERN SHAMMAR.

understood people, whose history has yet to be written, and even whose distribution is at present but little known. As regards their general distribution over the Ottoman Empire, and their divisions and racial differences, I must refer such as are interested in the matter to the memorandum I have appended to this paper.* Let it suffice to say that the opinions I express now only refer to those Kurds who inhabit the regions at present under discussion, and do not include the Kurds of Anatolia, the Pagans and Shias of the Dersim, the Zazas north of Diabekir, the Zilan Kurds north of Lake Van, the Kizilbash between Erzerum and Erzinjian, the Baba Kurds of the South Persian border, the Kochkiri branch, and various isolated settlements which

* This will be issued separately as an Extra Publication.

so joins the forest which goes in a belt right round the mountain. I can only corroborate, as far as we were able to see, exactly what Major Powell-Cotton has told us in regard to the natives and pygmies in the forest; and some of the things he told me when we were at Beni I was able to identify in the forest. I can only thank him for the very delightful and realistic account of the Congo forest which he has given us to-night.

Mr. Wollaston: It is very hard to make comments on Major Powell Cotton's most interesting paper, and I am not really entitled to do so, because I did not go through his country. He went down into the Ituri, and I went in a different direction. Mr. Carruthers and I went down by Lake Albert Edward to Lake Kero, then to Tanganyika, and on across to Kasongo, on the upper waters of the Congo. I was interested to hear Mr. Freshfield say that coming on to Lake Albert Edward was like the first view of Lake Garda, because my first view of Lake Tanganyika reminded me of Lake Maggiore. It has very much the same appearance, the same colour, and the same shape. About these okapi and the other things, I am not competent to speak. There was one thing that struck me in Major Powell-Cotton's lecture. A great many of his photographs are of Congo State posts and soldiers and officials. I know that Major Powell-Cotton visited many of the posts, and was hospitably received by them. Mr. Carruthers and I were also very hospitably received on many occasions when going down through the Congo.

Major Powell-Cotton: I do not think there have been any points raised in the very interesting discussion we have heard which require any words from me. I have collected a good deal of information about the habits of the okapi, and at some future time I may perhaps put it in a form which you can read, if you care to. I thank you very much for the very kind way in which you have listened to my brief account of my travels.

The President: I think it is unnecessary for me to tell Major Powell-Cotton that he has given us great pleasure to-night. It is always easy to detect when a lecture is interesting to an audience, and we now thank him most heartily.

JOURNEYS IN NORTH MESOPOTAMIA.*

By MARK SYKES.

Having glanced at the general characteristics, we may now proceed to examine the Kurds in detail. All along the northern slopes of the Karaja Dagh we have a collection of tribal and non-tribal Kurds of the lowest type and description, nomads and semi-nomads. They are all despicably cowardly, dirty, cruel, and apparently idle, and I am afraid that many travellers, generalizing from these particularly odious people, condemn the whole race, when, as a matter of fact, like the Kurds north of Lake Van, they are an exception to the rule.

Between Urfa and Birijik we find a wonderfully different people in

* Read at the Royal Geographical Society, March 11, 1907. Continued from p. 258.

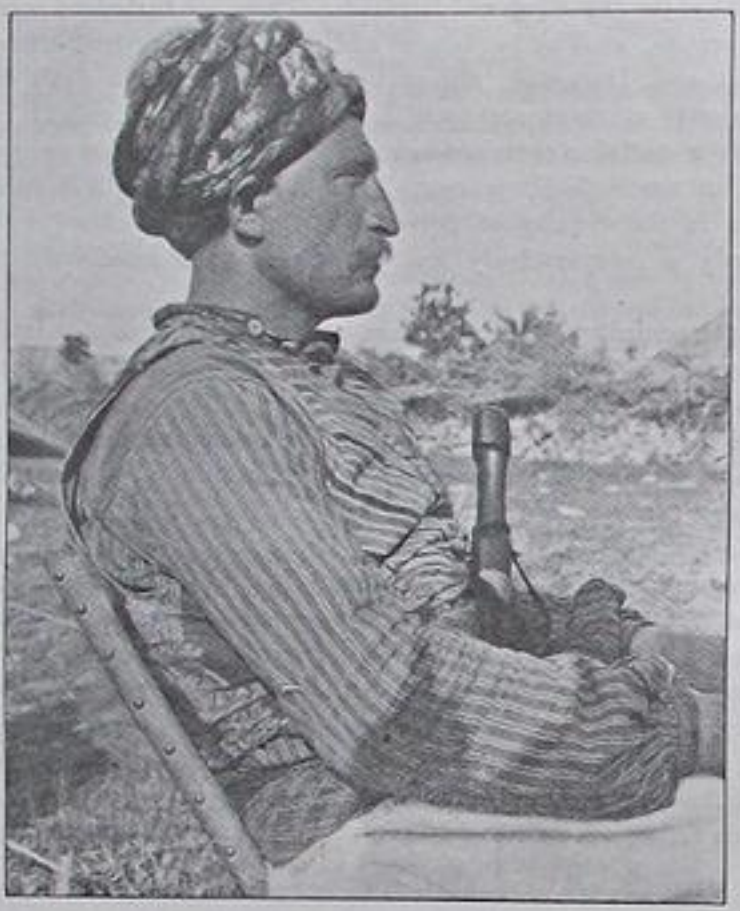
the tribes of the Dinardieh and Bernzieh. These are turbulent politicians, bold warriors, wealthy herdsmen, and industrious agriculturists. The Bernzieh and Dinardieh, although they have adopted Arab dress in the majority of cases, are pure Kurds, and are an excellent example of what a useful economic asset the Kurd is when his energies are turned in the right direction. There are now some 360 prosperous villages in the vicinity of Seruj, and these are inhabited by people who only a comparatively few years ago were mostly dwellers in tents.

In the vicinity of Harran, there are many villages of mixed Arabs and Kurds; however, as they have practically no tribal organization and no leaders, their lot is unfortunate, but, although non-fighters like the Fellahin Arabs, they are far more industrious and persevering.

We now come to the southern slopes of the Karaja Dagh. This section of the country is entirely in the hands of Ibrahim Pasha, the great Hamidieh noble and chieftain.

Ibrahim Pasha is, without a doubt, the most interesting person in the Jazirah. When he started life ten years of age, his father was a prisoner in Diabekir, and he himself a penniless refugee in Egypt. He now stands out a brigadier-general in the Turkish army, the master of fourteen thousand lancers and horsemen, the leader of twenty-two distinct tribes, and chief of the Milli Kurds. His photograph will give you some idea of the man. Ibrahim Pasha's mother was an Arab of the noblest race, his father a Kurdish chieftain of renown. In Ibrahim we find the

IBRAHIM PASHA.



JACOBITE OF TUR ABDIN.

racial characteristics of both his parents—the constructive and practical powers of the Kurd combined with the mental faculties and humanity of the Arab. Ibrahim is a man with many enemies, his position requires him to be at constant war with his neighbours, the Arab and Kurdish tribes without his confederation long to see him killed, but I have never heard any one accuse him of a disgraceful or dishonourable act. Indeed, although he has personally no bias in favour of the Armenians, he did not hesitate to threaten to destroy Suverek if they were massacred there, and so saved hundreds of lives; and when matters were at their worst at Diabekir and Urfa, he actually succoured some thousands at his head-quarters at Veranshehr. For two months he fed these people for nothing, and when the troubles subsided, he gave such as chose to remain lands on which to live and work in peace. I am sure no one can grudge him the wealth which his action has brought him, and his statement that the terms he imposes on settlers in his country are not unreasonable is proved by the fact that Armenian immigrants are increasing at Veranshehr every year.

At Tel Afar we find an interesting survival in the small Turkish settlement which still remains there. These Turks, who must have settled at Tel Afar early in the twelfth century, apparently lost all connection with the other invaders, and seem to have remained independent until the days of the reforms of Sultan Mahmud. At that time they were a thriving predatory independent community. According to themselves, their history is as follows: They are escaped slaves and runagates who settled in the ruins of the ancient city of Tel Afar. They formerly lived independently in a kind of commune, and, under an elected leader, held their own against the Shammar, even when the latter levied toll on Mosul. The great strength of the men of Tel Afar lay in the large and solidly built castle, the ruins of which now cover the hill overlooking the town. However, in the days of Reshid Pasha the Turks refused to admit the rights of the Constantinople Government, which reappeared, for the first time since the days of Heraklius, in these parts early in the thirties of the nineteenth century; consequently, the independent *réyiate* was brought to an end and the castle laid in ruins by a military expedition.

I have, I think, now given you a rough idea of the present appearance and condition of the Northern Jazirah, for once Tel Afar is left behind we enter into the sphere of influence of Irak, which is as different a country to the Jazirah as is Castille to Normandy. Had I been reading this paper ten years ago I should have terminated here, but I feel that a question has now arisen which cannot be passed by, and that is the Bagdad railway. I will not enter into the political aspects of the case, but will try and give my unbiased opinion as to the prospects of the German venture should it once set foot in the Jazirah. In the first place, I will take in detail the difficulties with which it is expected to have to contend.

Firstly, the constant tribal warfare. Now, I have endeavoured to show how trifling an obstacle this is. At present the tribal warfare goes on because there is nothing to stop it, but, nevertheless, caravans pass to and fro from Aleppo to Mosul without being inconvenienced by it as long as they have a single soldier with them—a posse of ten soldiers can easily turn back the most ferocious war-party—and the aghnam, or sheep-tax, is collected from warlike tribes without any great difficulty; consequently we need not expect that a railway would be much inconvenienced by it. Organized opposition is impossible; the difficulties which a man like Ibrahim Pasha experiences, even with Government assistance, in keeping his tribes loyal to himself are sufficient to show how fruitless it would be for any other tribe to endeavour to prevent the railway being built.*

Secondly, the difficulty of developing a land without a sufficient

* Ibrahim himself and nearly all his allies are eager for the railway to be built. The only inhabitants of the Jazirah whoare against the scheme are the Shammar of the south.

population. Here indeed is an objection which would seem more formidable; however, I am convinced it is not so terrible as might at first be supposed. I have described to you how rapidly villages have grown in the district of Seruj; I will draw your attention to an even more striking case. Any one riding over the road between Aleppo and Meskene some ten years ago would have found what was tantamount to a desert—a few ruins, some scattered encampments, and half a dozen villages would have been all that would have met his eye. Now this year I passed over that tract in March and again in October. In March I never left cultivated land until I was within three hours'

BEGAD SINJAR.

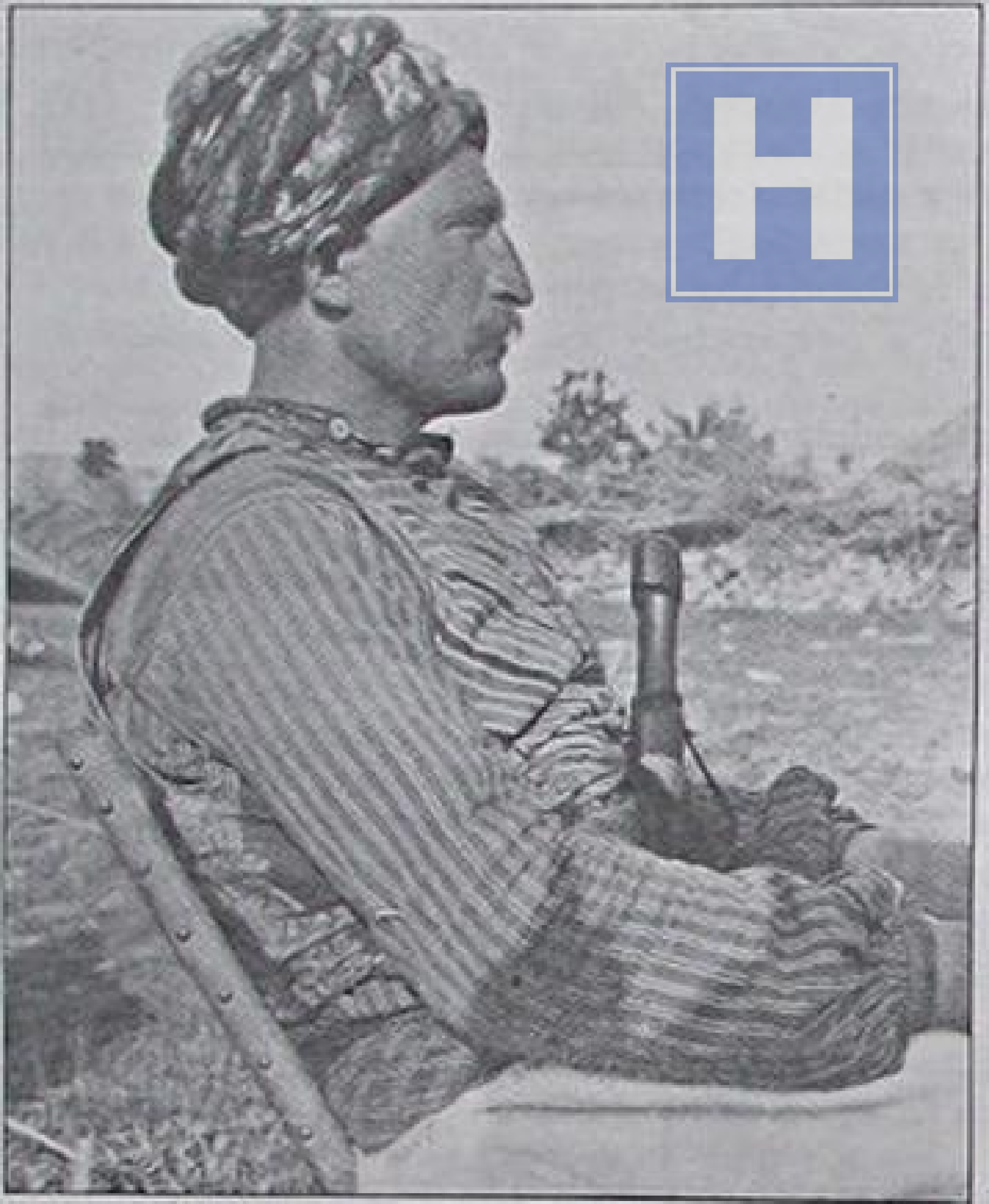
ride of the Euphrates; in October I found that distance had decreased by a third; now that tract of country has been settled and cultivated by the poorer nomads who formerly lived there, by Kurds of the Berazieh and Dinardieh who had been crowded out of the Seruj district, and by Arabs from the coast and Turks from the mountains of the Taurus. The Arabs, Kurds, and Turks were rapidly amalgamating into one race of which Arabic was the language. The problem of settlement of the desert between Aleppo and the Euphrates had been solved by natural forces; the increasing size and prosperity of Aleppo had made it necessary for the Government to bring the Bedawin under control. The moment they were checked, the poorer nomads began to cultivate, and

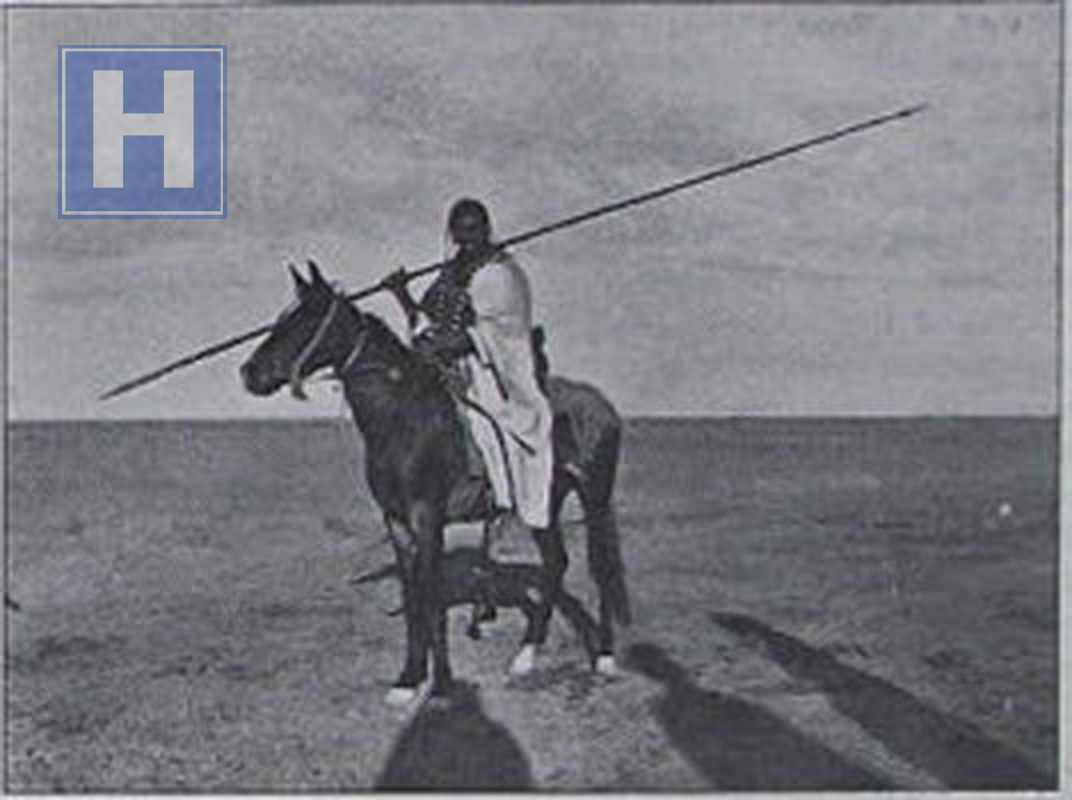
were immediately joined by the floating populations of Kurds and Turks. A moderate infusion of the two latter stocks in the population works wonders on the Arabs, who lose their dirty, penurious, and feckless habits, while the Kurds and Turks, by intermarriage with Arabs, grow more civilised and intelligent. Now, in the Jazirah we have already the nucleus of an agricultural population along the banks of the Belikh and Khabur in the tribes of fellahin Arabs; once they are secure from raids and have a market for their produce, they will begin to work in earnest, and they will instantly be assisted by the Kurdish immigrants who are at present earning but a very precarious existence as agriculturists among the mountains north of Urfa. We have also to count upon reinforcements from Deir Zor. Fifteen years ago Deir Zor was a small transit town, probably little more than a village; it has now, roughly, 25,000 inhabitants, mostly Kurds: of these, at least 6000 would be available for agricultural purposes. Another point I should like to make is that there are about 14,000 of the Milli and Kikieh Kurds on the slopes of the Karaja Dagh, who have every intention of settling along the banks of the Jag Jag and upper reaches of the Khabur whenever the railway comes. On this point I had the following statement from the chief Agha of the Kikieh Kurds—he was at the time encamped on the banks of the Jag Jag: "Formerly we Kikieh lived here in villages in winter and tents in summer, but the Shammar destroyed our crops and drove us up to the Karaja Dagh, where we live in houses in winter. However, we come here to pasture our flocks in spring, and also to show we have a right over the land. When the railway comes we shall be very rich. I shall bring all my people down here; the Government will be forced to protect them; and we may build, perhaps, five hundred villages." And this is only one tribe among many. In the Sinjar we have a district already well cultivated, and inhabited by about 30,000 industrious people, most of whom are completely sedentary. We may also count on many of the native labourers who come to build the railway settling along it.

I think these few points tend to show that once there is rapid and commodious transit, the questions of labour and security will not present such difficulties as people might suppose. Against this, however, we must remember that the idea of European colonization is hardly one that can be entertained. On several occasions large colonies of Circassians have been introduced by the Government, and although they were good farmers, and could hold their own with ease against the Arabs, they always succumbed to the climate; in fact, the Jazirah is not a country for white men to work in. The climate in summer is terribly trying, and the autumnal Malarial fevers are extremely dangerous. Europeans, even when not leading a sedentary life, get run down and slack, and if a man is to be a pioneer agriculturalist, he cannot afford to be either.

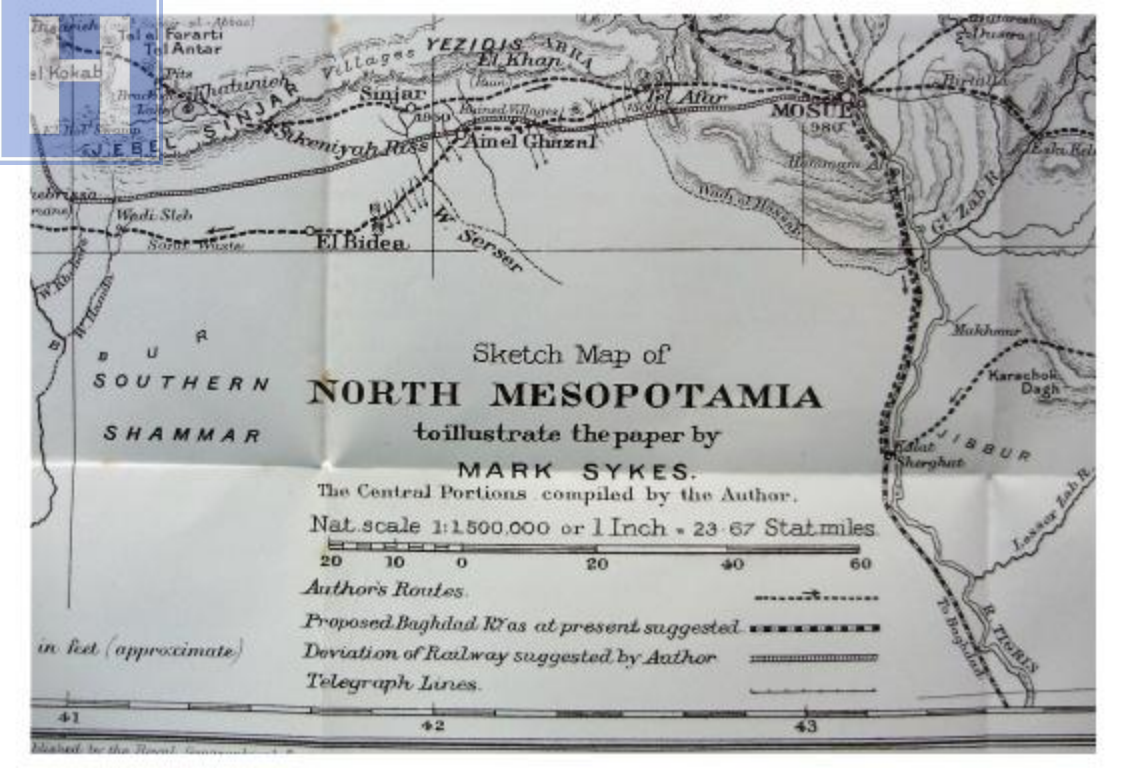
Before closing this paper, there is one more thing to which I should like to draw attention, and that is the proposed trace of the railway. I am inclined to suggest that, after reaching Ras-el-ain, the line should then follow the Khabur on the left bank as far south as Shedadeh, and then skirt the foot of the Sinjar hills as far as Tell Afar, and afterwards resume the old proposed trace along the Tigris. My reasons for making this suggestion are as follows: (1) Once the Khabur is reached, the actual expenses of laying the line would be but slight, the physical obstacles being trifling—how slight, indeed, may be judged from the fact that in the days of the early khalifs there was a canal connecting the Wadi Serser with the Khabur, running from Tel Kokab to the southern slopes of the Sinjar; (2) that it would develop the interior waters of the Jazirah first. That the settlement of the banks of Khabur and Jaggag rivers should come first is, I submit, of primal importance. Agriculture between Baghdad and Mosul, although not very flourishing, is well under way; between Nisibin and Mosul the land is to a certain extent populated. Now, should the railway take the northern side of the Sinjar, all tendencies will be to migrate and settle northward and eastward; a branch line from Mardin to Deir would probably be under discussion for many years before it was accomplished, and during all that time the magnificent lands on the banks of the Khabur, Belikh, and Jag Jag would be lying idle. If, on the other hand, the trace I have suggested be followed, the whole trend of agricultural immigration and settlement would be diverted to its proper central channels and led away from the stony ridges of the Mardin hills, whither it has been driven by Arab incursion. Thus, if the central line is followed, we may expect with confidence to see a chain of villages and fields some 100 miles in length, where at present there are not above twenty permanent dwellings; Deir Zor would still remain a central depôt for grain as far south as Ana, and it would be connected with Shedadeh by plenty of cheap wheeled traffic.

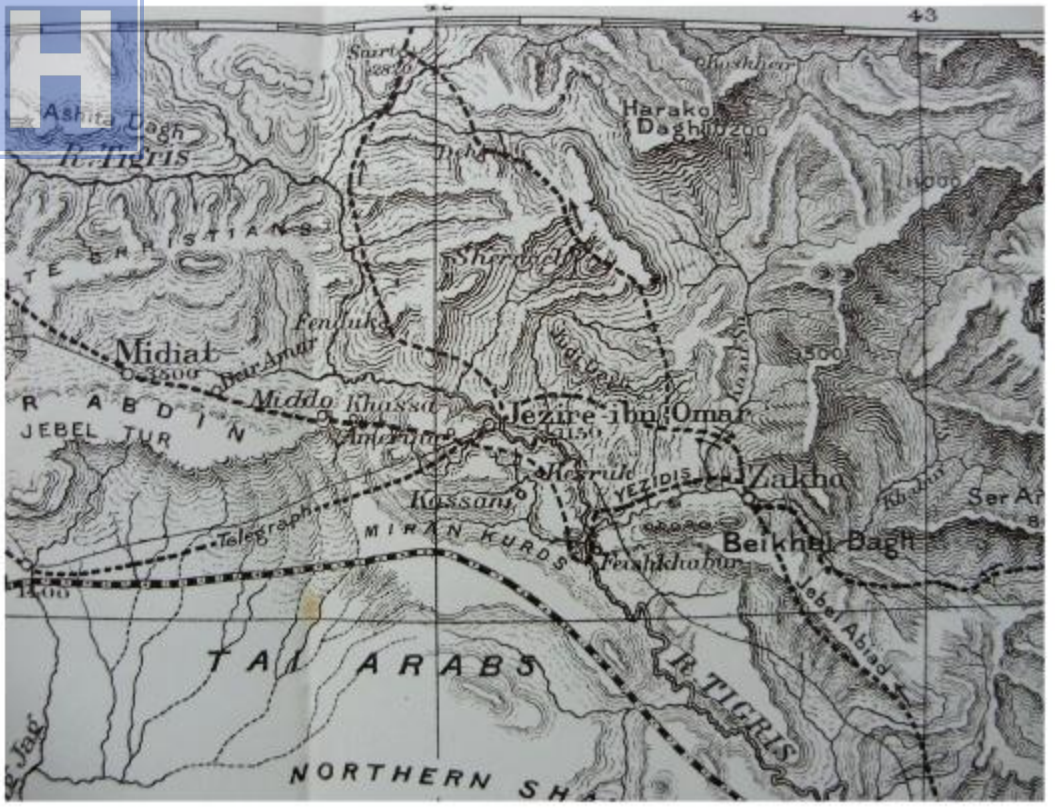
As regards the repopulation of the tract between Ras-el-ain and Shedadeh, this would not prove so difficult as many people imagine. In the last three years 56 new villages have sprung up between Mahdum and Jubb es Sufa near Aleppo; these villages have been sufficient to set the area in which they have been built under general cultivation. Taking that district as a basis of calculation, I find that about 312 villages would have to be established along the central rivers between Shedadeh and Ras-el-Ain, a number which, according to all local authorities such as shaykhs, zaptiehs, mollahs, and so forth, could be easily provided twice over by the Baggara, Weldi, Agbedaat, Kiki, and Dinar Kurds, and Arabs, without counting the influx of people from Aleppo, Mardin, and Mosul. Once a small settled population had been established in security along the central rivers, no one acquainted with the country would doubt as to its rapid increase.

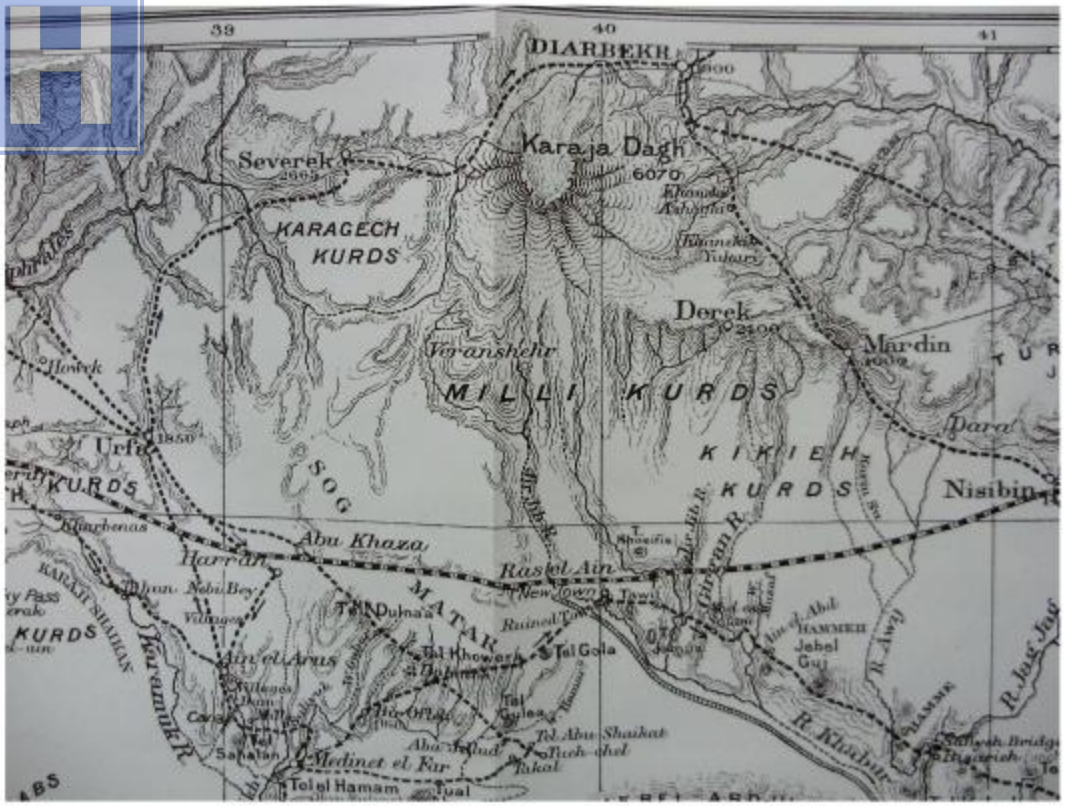


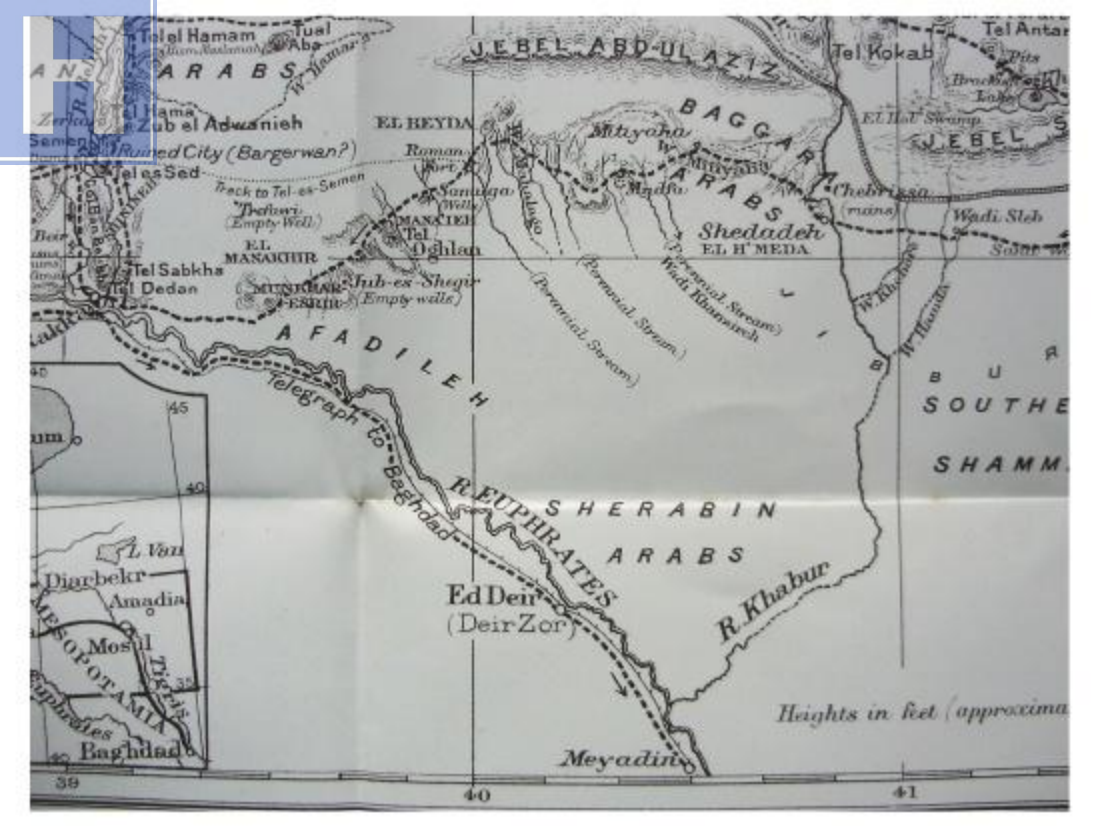


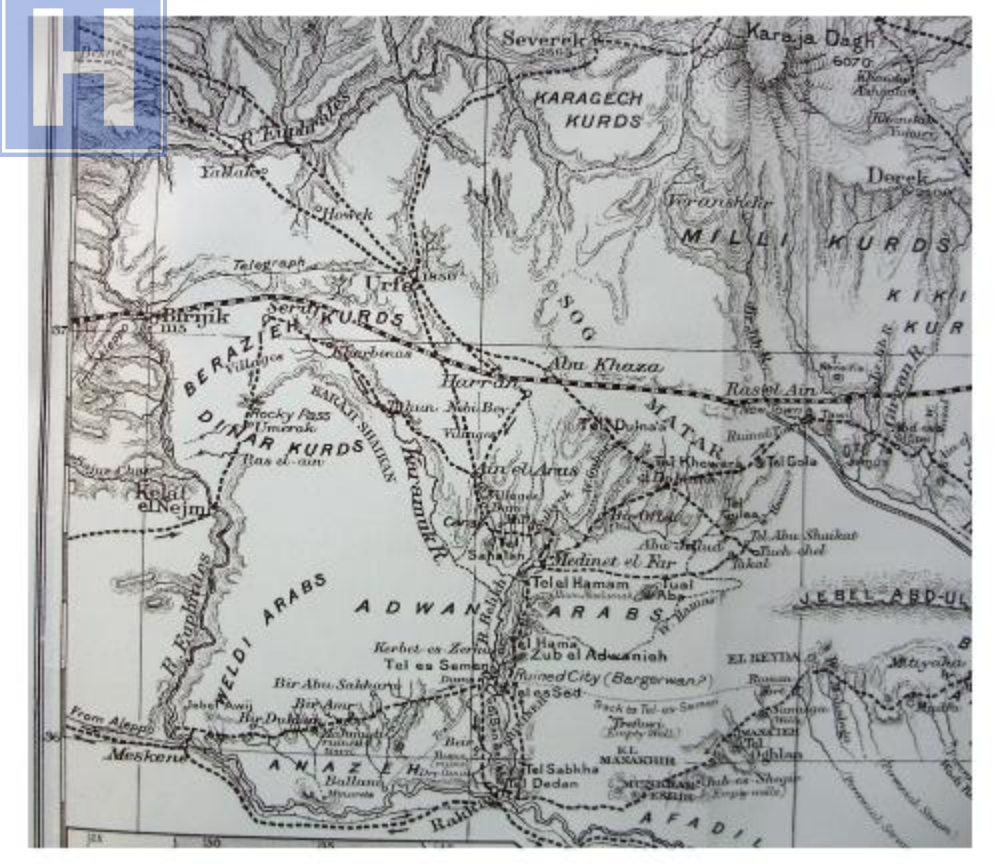

Sketch Map of
NORTH MESOPOTAMIA
to illustrate the paper by
MARK SYKES
Author's Routes
Proposed Baghdad Rly. at present projected
Portion of Railway explored by Author
Telegraph Lines
TAI AHADS
SOUTHERN SHAMMAR
SOUTHERN SHAMMAR
ADWAN ARABS
ROWALLA ARABS
SHAMMAR ARABS
MILLI KURDS
SINJAR KURDS
HAMAWAND KURDS
PEACE AND
ASSYRIA
Erbil
Mosul
Nineveh
Khabur R.
Tigris R.
Euphrates R.
Jebel Sinjar
Jebel Abdul Aziz
Jebel Tarbis
Jebel Hamrin
Jebel Makhul
Jebel Kara Chok
Jebel Bishri
Jebel Abiad
Jebel Sindjar
Jebel Tenf
Jebel Kara Chok
Jebel Bishri
Jebel Abiad
Jebel Sindjar
Jebel Tenf


Tel el Farafir
Tel Antar
el Kokab
Villages
YEZIDIS
ABRA
El Khan
Khatuniah
SINJAR
Sinjar
Tel Afar
MOSUL
JEBEL SINJAR
Sikeniyah Russ
Ainel Ghazal
Wadi Sleb
El Bidea
W. Serser
Wadi el Hesah
Gt. Zab R.
Makhmur
Karachok Dagh
SOUTHERN SHAMMAR
Sketch Map of
NORTH MESOPOTAMIA
to illustrate the paper by
MARK SYKES.
The Central Portions compiled by the Author.
Nat. scale 1:1,500,000 or 1 Inch = 23·67 Stat. miles
20 10 0 20 40 60
Author's Routes.
Proposed Baghdad R'y as at present suggested.
Deviation of Railway suggested by Author
Telegraph Lines.
in feet (approximate)
Kalat Sherghat
JIBUR
Lesser Zab R.
R. TIGRIS
To Baghdad
41
42
43

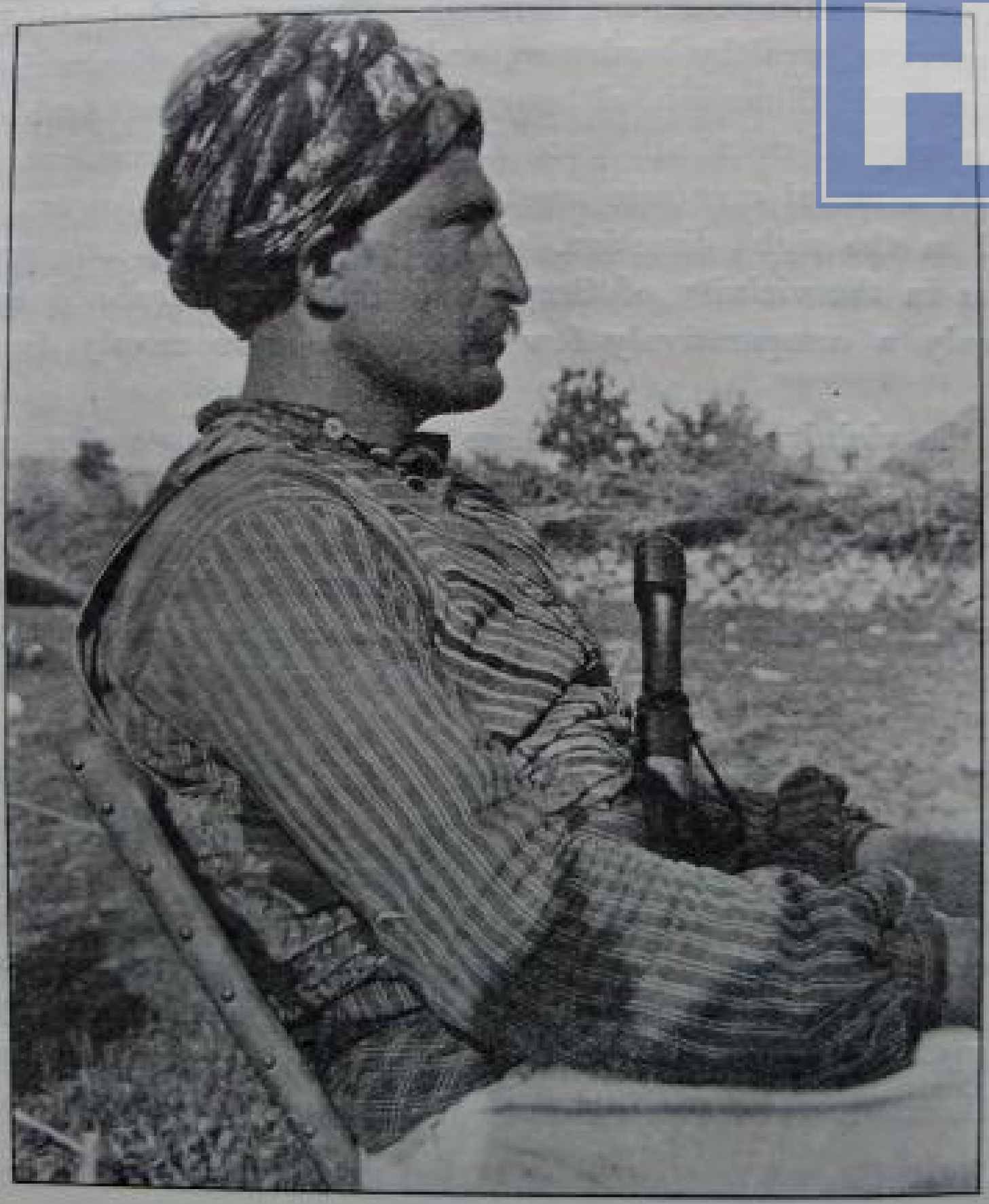

43
Saint
Ashita Dagh
R. Tigris
Harako Dagh
Shurvel Ov
Midiat
Deir Amar
Fenduk
Middo Khassa
Jezire ibn Omar
R A B D I N
JEBEL TUR
Kassam
Telegraph
MIRAN KURDS
YEZIDIS
Zakho
Beikhel Dagh
Jebel Abiad
TA ARABS
R. TIGRIS
NORTHERN


39
40
41
DIARBEKR
Severek
Karaja Dagh
6070
KARAGECH
KURDS
Derek
2100
Mardin
Veranshehr
MILLI KURDS
Urfa
1850
KURDS
SOG
KIKIEH
KURDS
Nisibin
Abu Khaza
Harran
Ras el Ain
MATARA
Tel Duhna
Tel Khowera
Tel Gola
Ain el Arus
Tel Ghalib
Tel Sahalan
Medinet el Fir
Tel el Hamam
Tel Abu Shaikat
Tel Akal
R. Khabur
R. Jaghjagh
Jebel Gul
HAMMEH
Harranik R.


Tel el Hamam
Tual Aba
ARABS
W. Hamara
JEBEL ABD-UL AZIZ
Tel Kokab
Tel Antar
Pits
Brackish Lake
El Hal Swamp
JEBEL
Zub el Adwanieh
EL HEYDA
Ruined City (Bargerwan?)
Tel es Sed
Track to Tel-es-Semen
Tel Sabkha
Tel Dedan
MANAKHIR
EL MANAKHIR
Tel Dghlan
Sub-es-Shegir
(Empty wells)
Mityaha
Madra
BAGGARA ARABS
Shedadeh
EL H' MEDA
Chebrissa
(ruins)
Wadi Sleh
(Perennial Stream)
Wadi Khanuseh
W. Khabur
W. Hamida
AFADILEH
Telegraph to Beghdad
R. EUPHRATES
SHERABIN ARABS
Ed Dein
(Deir Zor)
R. Khabur
SOUTHE
SHAMM
Van
Diarbekr
Amadia
Mosul
Tigris
MESOPOTAMIA
Euphrates
Baghdad
Meyadin
Heights in feet (approxima
39
40
41
45
40
35


Severek
Karaja Dagh
6070
KARAGECH KURDS
R. Euphrates
Yalmalee
Horrek
Derek
Transkelei
MILLI KURDS
Telegraph
Urfa
1850
Birejik
Serudj
KURDS
BERAZIEH
Khurberas
Abu Khaza
Harran
Rasel Ain
MATARIEH
DINAR KURDS
Mocky Pass
Umerak
Ras el-ain
Khan Nahr Bey
Tel Dulma
Tel Khewara
Tel Gola
Ain el Arus
Kalat el Nejm
Tel Sahalan
Medinet el Far
Tel el Hamam
Tuel Abu
Tel Abu Shaukat
Tuleil Shel Tokal
JEBEL ABD-UL
WELDI ARABS
ADWAN ARABS
R. Euphrates
Kerbet es Zerrak
Tel Hama
Tel es Samen
Zub el Adwanieh
Ruined City (Bargerwan?)
el es Sed
EL BEYDA
Bir Abu Sakhara
Bir Amr
Bir Dukhan
From Aleppo
Meskene
ANAZEH
Tel Sabkha
Tel Dedan
EL MAXAKHIR
Tel Dighlan
AFADIL
Rakkah

BELAD SINJAR.



JACOBITE OF TUR ABDIN.