

	Marches.
horse-beans, rice, cotton, henna, Palma Christi, and dates, and in part are of great fertility. . . . Rainy season from January to March, after which a luxuriant crop of grass." Across this plain (districts of Jiruft and Rudbar), the height of which above the sea, is something under 2000 feet . . . . .	6
4. 6½ hours, "nearly the whole way over a most difficult mountain-pass," called the Pass of Nevergun . . . . .	1
5. Two long marches over a plain, part of which is described as "continuous cultivation for some 16 miles," and the rest as a "most uninteresting plain" . . . . .	2
Total as before . . . . .	17

In the previous edition of this work I was inclined to identify Marco's route *absolutely* with this Itinerary. But a communication from Major St. John, who surveyed the section from Kermán towards Deh Bakri in 1872, shows that this first section does not answer well to the description. The road is not all plain, for it crosses a mountain pass, though not a formidable one. Neither is it through a thriving, populous tract, for, with the exception of two large villages, Major St. John found the whole road to Deh Bakri from Kermán as desert and dreary as any in Persia. On the other hand, the more direct route to the south, which is that always used except in seasons of extraordinary severity (such as that of Major Smith's journey, when this route was impassable from snow), answers better, as described to Major St. John by muleteers, to Polo's account. The first *six days* are occupied by a gentle ascent through the districts of Bardesir and Kairat-ul-Arab, which are the best-watered and most fertile uplands of Kermán. From the crest of the pass reached in those six marches (which is probably more than 10,000 feet above the sea, for it was closed by snow on 1st May, 1872), an easy descent of *two days* leads to the Garmsir. This is traversed in four days, and then a very difficult pass is crossed to reach the plains bordering on the sea. The cold of this route is much greater than that of the Deh Bakri route. Hence the correspondence with Polo's description, as far as the descent to the Garmsir, or Reobarles, seems decidedly better by this route. It is admitted to be quite possible that on reaching this plain the two routes coalesced. We shall assume this provisionally, till some traveller gives us a detailed account of the Bardesir route. Meantime all the remaining particulars answer well.

[General Houtum-Schindler (*l.c.* pp. 493-495), speaking of the Itinerary from Kermán to Hormúz and back, says: "Only two of the many routes between Kermán and Bender 'Abbás coincide more or less with Marco Polo's description. These two routes are the one over the Deh Bekrí Pass [see above, Colonel Smith], and the one *viâ* Sárdú. The latter is the one, I think, taken by Marco Polo. The more direct roads to the west are for the greater part through mountainous country, and have not twelve stages in plains which we find enumerated in Marco Polo's Itinerary. The road *viâ* Báft, Urzú, and the Zendán Pass, for instance, has only four stages in plains; the road, *viâ* Ráhbúr, Rúdbár and the Nevergún Pass only six; and the road *viâ* Sírján also only six."

	Marches.
The Sárdú route, which seems to me to be the one followed by Marco Polo, has five stages through fertile and populous plains to SarvÍzan . . . . .	5
One day's march ascends to the top of the SarvÍzan Pass . . . . .	1
Two days' descent to Ráhjird, a village close to the ruins of old Jíruft, now called Shehr-i-DaqÍánús . . . . .	2
Six days' march over the "vast plain" of Jírúft and Rúdbár to FarÍáb, joining the Deh Bekrí route at Kerímábád, one stage south of the Shehr-i-DaqÍánús . . . . .	6
One day's march through the Nevergún Pass to ShamÍl, descending . . . . .	1
Two days' march through the plain to Bender 'Abbás or Hormúz . . . . .	2
In all . . . . .	17