

A few extremely interesting paintings were recovered from Sīstān, which are now set up in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum in New Delhi, but their condition is so bad that successful reproduction was not possible. Stein recalls that according to Zoroastrian belief it is from the lake in Sīstān that the victorious saviour is to arise to vanquish Ahriman, the spirit of evil, and to set the world free.

The many other journeys of exploration and research made by Sir Aurel Stein, in addition to the three into Central Asia, are not referred to in the above brief review as they have no direct bearing upon the subject of the present work. There were many shorter tours, each with a definite object, such as that into Swāt with Sir Bindon Blood's Expeditionary Force in 1898.<sup>1</sup> Explorations in 1911-12 on the North-west Frontier and in 1925 when he followed the tracks of Alexander the Great to Aornos.<sup>2</sup> In the years 1927-36 he travelled in Wazīristān, Balūchistān, Makran, and Īrān,<sup>3</sup> tracing the evidence of prehistoric and later civilization in those lands. In 1938-9 he explored in 'Iraq and traced the old Roman *limes* in Trans-Jordan. In 1940-1 the dried-up course of the 'lost river' Sarasvati was surveyed.<sup>4</sup>

The immense quantity of archaeological material excavated by him from the enshrouding soil and debris of ages has helped to enrich the ethnographic and artistic departments of many museums in India, Persia, the continent of Europe, England, and America, and has provided material for study for students engaged in many branches of research. If are added to all this his extensive surveys and accurate mapping of great tracts of territory formally either imperfectly or entirely unsurveyed, his hydrographic, linguistic, and anthropological observations systematically carried on and recorded throughout his journeys, his great output of published records, and his continuous and voluminous correspondence, we have a sum of labours accomplished which for versatility, scholarly recording, and actual quantity seems incredible as the life's work of one man.

The scheme for this work was, as I have intimated, formulated long ago, and although submitted to the High Commissioner for India in 1930, it was after ten years of consideration that sanction for its publication was given. During the interval between 1930 and 1940 inevitable changes occurred in the personnel of the offices and departments before which the matter was periodically brought under

<sup>1</sup> Stein: *Detailed Report of an Archaeological Tour with the Buner Field Force*. Lahore, 1898.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, *On Alexander's Track to the Indus*. Macmillan, 1929.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, *An Archaeological Tour in the Ancient Persis. Iraq*, vol. III, no. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, *Geographical Journal*, vol. XCIX, no. 4, April, 1942.