

may be supposed, the rivers are unimportant." The ancient description is scarcely longer, but conveys a wholly different impression: "Kirman . . . lies more to the north than Gedrosia. This is indicated by its fertility, for it not only produces everything, but the trees are of large size. . . . It is also watered by rivers. . . . It includes also a desert tract which is contiguous to Parthia." Even since the twelfth century there has been deterioration, for in numerous cases ancient Mohammedan towns have been abandoned, and cannot be restored because no sufficient supply of water can be procured.

A single quotation, one from among many that might be given, will illustrate another kind of evidence on which many writers have based the conclusion of a change of climate in Iran. In speaking of the mountains of Kharan in the centre of northern Baluchistan, Vredenburg says: —

"In all the valleys around Zara there are to be seen hundreds of stone walls, which are called 'gor-band,' or 'dams of the infidels.' Sometimes they stretch right across the flat, pebbly floors of the great valleys, which, for want of a better name, are termed 'rivers.' They also occur across the entrance to most of the tributary ravines and at various heights above the main valley. The country is quite uninhabitable for want of water, and yet there is no doubt about the nature of these walls, which are similar to works erected to the present day in many regions of Baluchistan and Persia, being, in fact, nothing but terraced fields. In many cases they still hold back the soil, formerly cultivated, which had been heaped up against them. . . . The absence of any canals, the great height to which the walls are found up