

dentally. All the others appear to have accepted the Alexandrine accounts as superseding those of Herodotus and Aristotle. As no one visited the northern coasts of the Caspian, there was no means of ascertaining the error. Nevertheless, the later geographers add materially to our knowledge of the shape and size of the sea. Pomponius Mela, A. D. 40, says that it has three main parts, the Caspian gulf to the north, the Hyrcanian to the south, and the Scythian to the east. Pliny, writing in A. D. 69, confirms this. A glance at the map accompanying this chapter shows that the Caspian and Hyrcanian gulfs are easily recognizable. In regard to the Scythian gulf, there is some question. The bay of Kara-Bugas is the only modern feature which could answer to it. It is possible that, although this bay is very small compared to the Caspian and Hyrcanian gulfs of Pomponius, it may nevertheless be his Scythian gulf. It should be noted, however, that the bay of Kara-Bugas does not now lie upon a trade route of any importance, and apparently never has done so. Therefore it is not probable that the Greeks and Romans knew much about it. If the Caspian stood a hundred or more feet higher than it now does, the size of Kara-Bugas would not be appreciably changed, since its shores are high. A new and larger gulf, however, would come into existence south of Krasnovodsk, as is shown by the shaded area on the map. The great trade route from the East to the West must have traversed this gulf if it existed, for it lies between the mouths of the Oxus and Cyrus rivers. The Greeks and Romans would surely have known of it. In view of the other evidence as to the former expansion of the sea, it seems probable that this is the true Scythian gulf.