

to Kerman, surrounded by extensive plantations (date palms) and fields.' Makdisi adds: 'Near this village there are ruined buildings as far as the eye can reach, in which no one now lives, because the springs and cisterns are dried up; the inhabited village belongs to Kerman.'"

Tomaschek also speaks of a road from Sanig (southern Nasretabad) to Deh-i-salm, which follows the eastern foot of the hills of the basin, and he says that no European has travelled along these two roads, and that only the Arabian authors, Edrisi and Makdisi, throw a light over this *terra incognita* of Carmania.

The road from Bam (Narmashir) to Deh-i-salm is of particular interest. It is not indicated on the latest map of Persia. It is 155 miles long, and only on the first two days' journey can water be obtained. After that it is perfect lut desert all the way. But the most interesting feature of this road is that it runs right between the two salt swamps, which are named on our maps Nemek-sar and Shur-gez, and of which the former collects the drainage from the north and west, and the other from the south. We shall return to this subject later.

The fifth road is the southernmost, and it was well known to the Arabs, who describe it as starting from the town Narmashir for Faraj, the first place on the margin of the great desert, to which it is a short day's journey. Thence to Sanig or Nasretabad it is reckoned four days' journey or 31 farsakh. Edrisi gives the names of the stages. Sanig was a military colony badly supplied with water, and on all sides surrounded by dreary deserts; all the heights and furrows are disintegrated by weathering and dried up, and not a sign of life is to be seen.<sup>1</sup>

This road was followed in the same direction by Sir Frederic Goldsmid's mission in January 1872, and has been described by Major Euan Smith.<sup>2</sup> The caravan for the desert was equipped in Bam. It consisted of 73 men, 138 animals, and 16 tents. The last halting-place before one comes out into the desert, is Tum-i-rig or the "sand-hills," where good water is found. Six inches down in

<sup>1</sup> Tomaschek, vol. ii. p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Eastern Persia, an Account of the Journeys of the Persian Boundary Commission, 1870-71-72*, vol. i. p. 245 *et seq.*