

border of this desert is absolutely free from sandhills; so is the western one, except near Chah-Shur and the Kuh-Tulha, while on the west and south-western, and partly on the south border, are immense accumulations."<sup>1</sup>

He points out that the eastern sides of the sandhills are steep, the western slopes much gentler. "My opinion is, therefore, that these hills have been formed by the west and north-west, which are the prevailing winds, and that their shape has been modified by the sheets and streams of water which come down from the hills after heavy rain, and give them the appearance of sandbanks which have been thrown up by rivers that have long since disappeared. In windy weather one sees the top of the sandhills smoking, as it were, a dense cloud of sand being thrown off."

His theory of the influence of rain-water on the form of the dunes is, of course, erroneous. Of so much the more value is his statement that there are no accumulations of sand on the northern edge of the Kevir.

From Dasgirdun his road skirted the margin of the desert to Turut, to the west of the hill Kuh-Yak-ab, the eastern side of which Vaughan passed on his previous journey.

He also crossed the Kal-mura, and gives the following account of the mysterious lake into which the river is shown flowing on many maps.<sup>2</sup> Accompanied by Captain Burton, he climbed a mound, and both saw through a field-glass a large lake many square miles in area, "and could see the waves caused by wind." "Next morning there was not a vestige of it visible, and I can only suppose that it was a mirage." He instances other similar mistakes caused by mirage.

Vaughan found the Kal-mura full of water, and flowing rapidly into the salt desert. The river was crossed with some little difficulty. Beyond Turut, Husen-Nun was passed, and Paistun, that is, Husseinan and Peyestan.

Then follows a description of the Darya-i-nemek, "a solid sheet of rock-salt of varying, but in places doubtless immense, thickness. Its area we estimated at 440 square miles, and its elevation was 2700 feet, so that it is higher

<sup>1</sup> His views on the dune belt of the western border are not quite explicitly stated.

<sup>2</sup> As, for instance, in Stieler's *Hand-Atlas*, map 61.