

considerably widened, and then the depression was filled still more. In 1885, then, the lake Hauz-i-sultan was complete, and travellers had to take a road to the east round the lake. In the end of April 1886, I travelled along this road and wrote as follows: "Below Hauz-i-sultan lies a large lake of the same name, the environs of which are little known to Europeans; it is, however, probable that the lake has been formed by the rivers Kara-su (= Kara-chai) and Rudkhaneh-shur, which run up from the mountain ranges in south-western Irak-ajmi and flow eastwards. . . . Just below the caravanserai of Pul-i-dellâk flows the large and broad river Kara-su, that is, 'black water.' A bridge, mostly in ruins, crosses it. One half of the bridge is left, but the other has fallen in, so that the river must be crossed by riding through a ford; it is rapid, deep, and turbid."¹

Eighty years before Morier wrote of the offshoot of the Kevir lying between Teheran and Kum: "At the distance of 6 miles from *Pool Dallauk*, we entered the swamp of *Kaveer*, which (to its termination at the *caravanserai* called *Haooz Sultan*) we crossed in three hours, a length of 10 miles. It is part of the great desert which reaches into *Khorassan*, the soil of which is composed of a mixture (at least equal) of salt and earth. Though the road, therefore, over which we travelled is as good as those in any other direction across the swamp, it is frequently after rains impassable: as the horses, which in our passage were up to the fetlock, are up to their bellies in less favourable weather."²

According to C. E. Biddulph, the lake Hauz-i-sultan is formed by the Kara-chai and the Kum river, which is identical with the above-named Rudkhaneh-shur. Two northern rivers, flowing south-east, are lost in the Darya-i-nemek.³ Of the depression, on the north-eastern edge of which Siah-kuh stands, Biddulph says that it is divided into two parts, Darya-i-nemek and the new lake, Hauz-i-sultan, which is much smaller, and is separated from the Hauz-i-sultan by many miles of dry land. He believes

¹ *Genom Persien*, etc., pp. 126, 127.

² *A Journey through Persia*, etc. 1808 and 1809, p. 182.

³ *Proceedings of the Roy. Geogr. Soc.* vol. xiii. (1891), p. 645.