

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### PERSIAN DEPRESSIONS

THE foregoing dissertation has no claim to be considered exhaustive, but it is sufficient to give a notion of the form of desert called kevir, and of the distribution of kevir deserts in Eastern Persia. Innumerable smaller isolated kevir expanses are also found in the kinds of deserts which are known under the names of Lut and Desht. They are of all sizes, and are often only a few scores of yards in diameter. In distribution and extent they diminish from north to south and from east to west. The largest belong to the north-eastern and eastern parts of the Persian tableland. And the same seems to be true of the sandy deserts. They diminish from north to south and from east to west. We have only to compare the immense deserts of Kizil-kum and Kara-kum with the comparatively small desert areas in Iran.

Equally subject to natural laws and dependent on climatic factors, above all precipitation and winds, are the lakes of Persia, their distribution and peculiarities. Only in Western Persia are permanent lakes to be found, for instance the Urmia, Van, and Gokcha, of which the last two, however, lie beyond the political boundary. The lakes of Central Persia, as Gav-khaneh, Niris, and Mahalu, still struggle against annihilation with some little success. In Eastern Persia the temporary lakes are only filled with water for two months. That such must be the case is not strange. During the dry season all the rivers and lakes, lying in a layer as thin as paper on the salt incrustation of the depressions, evaporate very rapidly, giving place to