

journey from Kharan in Baluchistan to Jalk on the Persian frontier, passing east, south-east, and south of the large salt depression, and the lake Hamun-i-mashkil. Sir Thomas Holdich cites in his last book one or two of Pottinger's experiences in this very tract.¹ It seems that the first part of the journey was not so dangerous, and that the difficulties commenced farther towards the south-west, in the sandy desert. Pottinger describes it as a sea of red sand rising in dunes to a height of 10 to 20 feet. Their steep lee sides sloped to the south-east, showing that northerly winds predominated. This wind prevails from June to September, and is called the *bad-i-simun* or pestilential wind, and kills men and scorches up the vegetation. In April he found the Mashkil river dry. Of this Holdich says that it falls extremely slowly to the Mashkil swamp.

This excerpt suffices to prove that the law referred to holds good, and that a sandy belt extends to the leeward or the south-east side of the lake basin.

On later maps of Persia we find in the south-easternmost part, Mekran, a long depression, drawn out from WNW. to ESE., and therefore parallel to the strike of the hill ranges. On the maps it is represented as containing a lake or swamp, called Jas-morian, but I have never succeeded in finding any detailed description of it.

E. A. Floyer travelled in the year 1876 to the east and west of this great depression, but could not decipher its character. A lake was not visible from his route, and there is no indication of it on his map, published in 1882. He even assumes that the rivers Halir and Bampur, which enter the depression from the west and east respectively, unite, and as the river Sadich flow into the Gulf of Oman. But of the road between Maskhutan and Bampur, that is to say, the country immediately south-east of the lake, he says that it is "open country, all sandhills. Crossed some large ones called the Allūd Rig." Of the tract close to Bampur on the south-west he says that he trudged "over the high heavy sandhills." At Geshkoh he found pools of rain-water in the sand, and then had to travel two miles more through deep sand. On the map also is

¹ *The Gates of India*, pp. 339 et seq.