

are covered with a solid white saline incrustation. In winter it is entirely covered with water, and is very dangerous to cross, for the clay liquefies off the beaten track. "This salt swamp extends to a considerable distance northwards, but it is not a continuation of that in which the Zaindarúd terminates, though in the same valley."¹

The southern and south-eastern shores of Gav-khaneh have never, as far as I know, been visited by a European, and therefore we are in ignorance of the state of dune formation on this lake.

Immediately to the south-east of Shiraz, there is a lake which Abbott calls Darya-i-nemek, but St. John the Mahalu lake. According to the former, it is 6 farsakh long and 1 broad. It is very shallow, and its south-eastern third dries up in summer, so that a layer of salt as much as $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick is exposed. It can be crossed on foot. The salt is sold in Shiraz and the surrounding villages.² According to St. John, steep limestone cliffs stand close to the south-western shore, so that the configuration of the country renders the formation of sand-dunes impossible.

On his way from Seidabad to Niris Abbott passed the "Keffeh," which St. John afterwards crossed by the same road. Of the Niris lake he says that it is called the Deriah, or Sea of Neyriz, or Kheir, or Deriah-i-nemek, stretches from NW. to SE., and is quite dried up in summer, so that its bed can be crossed. The water is salt, clear, and frequented by numbers of flamingos.³ St. John says of the same lake that at the village of Khir it is a mile broad, and can be waded through in summer. The water is less salt than in the lake near Shiraz.

All the travellers who have visited the Niris lake speak of the beauty of the surrounding scenery. Captain H. L. Wells made an exact map of the lake in the year 1881. On the slopes of the southern shore hills he found whole woods of pistachios. He wished to take a bath, but, though he went out a quarter of a mile from the shore, the water did not come above his knee. All the water

¹ *Eastern Persia*, vol. i. p. 106.

² *Journal of the Roy. Geogr. Soc.* vol. xxvii. (1857), p. 151.

³ *Ibid.* vol. xxv. (1855), p. 71.