

the Arabian geographers of the 10th and 11th centuries, Istakri, Makdisi, Yakut, and others, who have left accounts of itineraries through Eastern Persia, his authority has more weight than any other, and we may confidently accept his view that the word kevir is derived from the Persian *gaver* or *gav*, which signifies depression or hollow. It therefore also becomes evident that the name Gav-khaneh for the Sende-rud's lake terminus does not mean a place of cows as Vaughan assumes, but a depression or kevir hollow in which the river is lost.

Desht-i-lut signifies, according to Curzon, the great sandy desert, and this author rightly rejects the fanciful explanation that the Lut has some connection with the Lot of the Bible and his wife who was turned into a pillar of salt.<sup>1</sup> Bunge says that the word betokens bare, and Schindler agrees with him, and also Tomaschek, who translates Desht-i-Lut by "bare surface." Schindler alludes to the Persian *luti* signifying tramp or ragamuffin, which is also mentioned by Sykes. St. John translates lut by "waterless." To my question how the word was used the Persians answered that a lut is where there is no water and vegetation. The word has, then, a wider connotation than kevir.

Sykes makes the following distinction between the two terms: "And firstly, I would urge that geographers have, without sufficient grounds, divided the great desert of Persia into two regions, that to the north being termed the Dasht-i-kavir, and that farther south the Dasht-i-lut." He more correctly holds that the name Lut applies to the whole desert, and that every salt swamp is called a kevir.<sup>2</sup> This is only partly correct, for kevir is the only correct name for the great salt desert in the north, and every other desert depression of the same type is a kevir. Lut, on the other hand, is the south Persian desert, and the term is not met with till we come to the south of Tebbes. A lut may contain many kevir, though they are usually called nemek-sar or salt reservoir. Desht-i-lut is translated by Sykes "bare desert."

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Arabic name Bahr Lut for the Dead Sea, and also Bint Sheik Lut, or Sheik Lot's Daughter, for a rocky point on the eastern shore.

<sup>2</sup> *Ten Thousand Miles in Persia*, p. 31.