

September and October, and from November to March, four or five days seldom passing without precipitation. Mekran has rain in early spring, and in the latter half of summer; this refers only to the highlands. According to Strabo Alexander chose summer purposely because he knew that the south-west monsoon then brings rain with it, which, indeed, falls on the mountains, but fills the rivers and wells down to the coast. And as regards precipitation, there is no real difference between the four travellers we are comparing. Goldsmid had light or heavy rain four times, on January 11th, 13th, 17th, and 24th. Miles does not actually mention rain, but he often speaks of sweet rain-water pools. And he speaks of a caravan of 400 camels which came to Punjgoor from Kandahar at the end of September, and which therefore travelled in exactly the same season as Alexander.

Smith had good showers several times in those parts of his journey which fell within the highland region. It is also evident that Alexander had rain, for he speaks of the natives as dependent on rain-water, and also of a deluge, which fell indeed among the hills, but swept away a large part of the camp, women, and children, baggage, all the king's private field equipment, and all the remaining baggage animals.

There is no doubt that southern Baluchistan is not suited for the march of an army, and with the weapons of the present day still less than in ancient times. Alexander commenced his march with a heavy baggage train, but it was lost on the way. Both Strabo and Arrian inform us that Cyrus, son of Cambyses (559-529 B.C.) made the same attempt and lost all his army except seven men. Yet this great King of Persia, according to Justi, subjugated Seistan and Gedrosia.<sup>1</sup> If the reports of his campaign are to be relied on, he encountered still more formidable obstacles, though his enterprise took place at least 200 years before Alexander.

Most remarkable, however, is it that Euan Smith seriously warns his government against the Persians, and maintains that a large Persian army could make its way

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte des alten Persiens*, p. 28.