

then, whilst a people of Arab descent ruled in Sind, there existed through Makran one of the great highways of the world, a link between West and East such as has never existed elsewhere on the Indian border, save, perhaps, through the valley of the Kabul river and its affluents. Along this highway flowed the greater part of the mighty trade of India."

Holdich speaks of the former wealth of Seistan, and justly adds: "Sistan was the granary of Asia once; it might be so again, were the magnificent irrigation schemes of the past revived." It is, then, not owing to a change of climate that Seistan is so desolate, but because its natural resources are not turned to account as in the past.

In another article, "The Greek Retreat from India,"¹ Holdich follows the march of Alexander along the coast, and insists that Craterus, with the heavy baggage and elephants, was restricted to certain well-known roads where it was easier to travel. But we must remember that Craterus also had certain strategical and political tasks to fulfil. Holdich says that Alexander, up to the Hingol river, "almost step by step followed out the subsequent line of the Indo-Persian telegraph, and at the Hingol he was not very far south of it." After that there was only one possible route. "Nothing here has altered since his days." Farther on we read: "Other writers than Arrian have told the story of Alexander's retreat and of the disasters that attended it, and have inferred, if not actually stated their conviction, that where so great a general as Alexander failed it would be hopeless for others to attempt to succeed. . . . After Alexander's time many centuries elapsed before we get another clear historic view into Makran, and then what do we find? A country of great and flourishing cities, of high roads connecting them with well-known and well-marked stages; armies passing and re-passing, and a trade which represented to those that held it the dominant commercial power in the world, flowing steadily, century after century, through that country which was fatal to Alexander." Holdich says a word in favour of the view that the country in the time of the

¹ *Journal of the Society of Arts*, vol. xlix. (1900-1), p. 417.