

have undergone a series of changes intimately associated with the human history of the region. These changes seem to be explicable only on the theory that the climate of Eastern Persia has been growing gradually drier during historical times."

We readily agree with Huntington when he says that the latest geological history of Persia begins with a dry climate at the end of the Tertiary age; then commences a fluvial period consisting of a number of subdivisions with extended rivers and expanded lakes, separated by interfluvial epochs with short rivers and contracted lakes. Everything speaks of a more abundant precipitation in former times than now. Even historical data, legends, and traditions agree in this. The last period of abundant drainage seems to have included the times of Alexander, 300 B.C., and of Istakri, A.D. 900. The change from the abundant water-supply during ancient times to the desiccation of the present evidently involves a change from the last fluvial period to the present interfluvial. To the question whether there is any separate and independent evidence that the climate has altered in historic times, Huntington replies in the affirmative, for Alexander and Istakri show that the climate is now drier. He refers to the reports of Bellew and members of the Goldsmid expedition about years of scarcity and of several successive years without rain. "In view of the periodic return of such famines, it does not seem probable that Persia is capable of supporting permanently a population greatly in excess of that of to-day."

Thus far Huntington. Before we compare his results with other parts of Persia, it may be well to say a few words on Blanford's and Richthofen's views. In the category of Quaternary and recent formations, Blanford includes all superficial accumulations of gravel, sand, and clay on the Persian plains and valleys, and on the slopes of mounds and hills. They cover an enormous area of the country; perhaps more than half is covered with recent deposits. In this respect Persia resembles large parts of Central Asia; Turkestan, Afghanistan, and Tibet suffer from the same drought, insignificant rainfall and the