

caused a lowering of the temperature.\* It went on snowing all night, and in the morning we and our effects were literally buried under it.

On the 4th January it still continued to snow, and even when the sky cleared above-head, it still went on snowing; for the greater part of the day however it was cloudy, and the temperature did not rise above  $-13^{\circ}$  C. The wind blew from the south. Before the day came to an end, the arrangement of the sand once more changed, and the main features of the relief that had previously prevailed once more became evident. Accordingly four bajirs made their appearance, and though they were very narrow, with kamisch on the east side and low, hard, level sand on the west, they nevertheless afforded us some assistance. These bajirs were formed with perfect regularity, and were fenced on the east by the usual

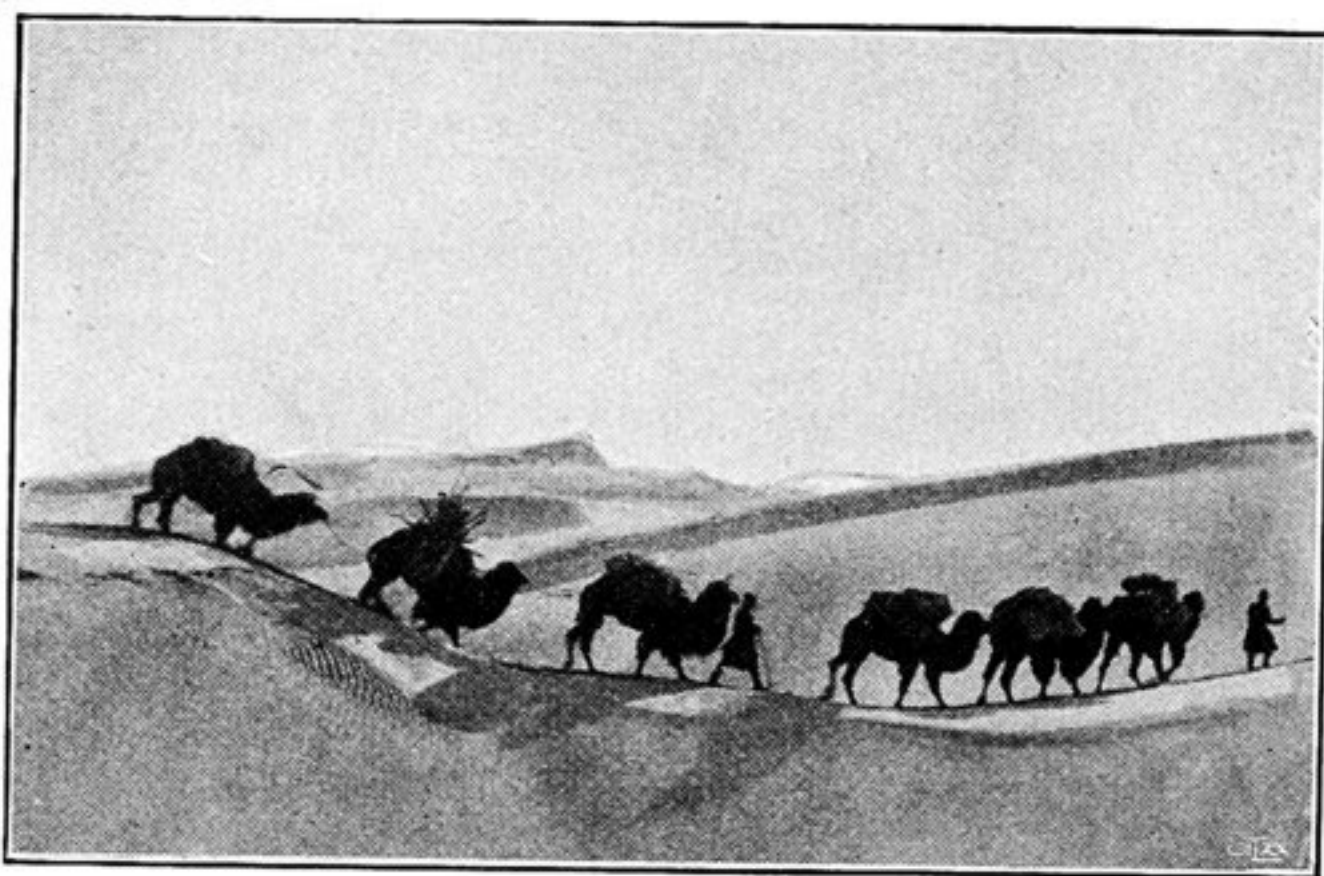


Fig. 281. A PART OF THE DESERT WHERE THERE ARE NO BAJIRS.

lofty, sharply outlined wall of sand, pointing to the recurrence of the immense accumulations, running north and south, with which we have grown so familiar, and they were parted from one another by perfectly barren thresholds. It was however interesting to note, that these bajirs, in which the level clay was nowhere exposed, but which were in the stage of sanding up, extended towards the south-south-east, not towards the south-south-west as in the northern half of the desert; and this new direction was in far better agreement with the prevailing wind. Except in bajir No. 42, we did not observe any tamarisks. During the day the snow evaporated rapidly, and in the afternoon it lay one to two cm. deep in convex places, but about 1 dm. in the hollows; on the slopes facing south it had disappeared entirely.

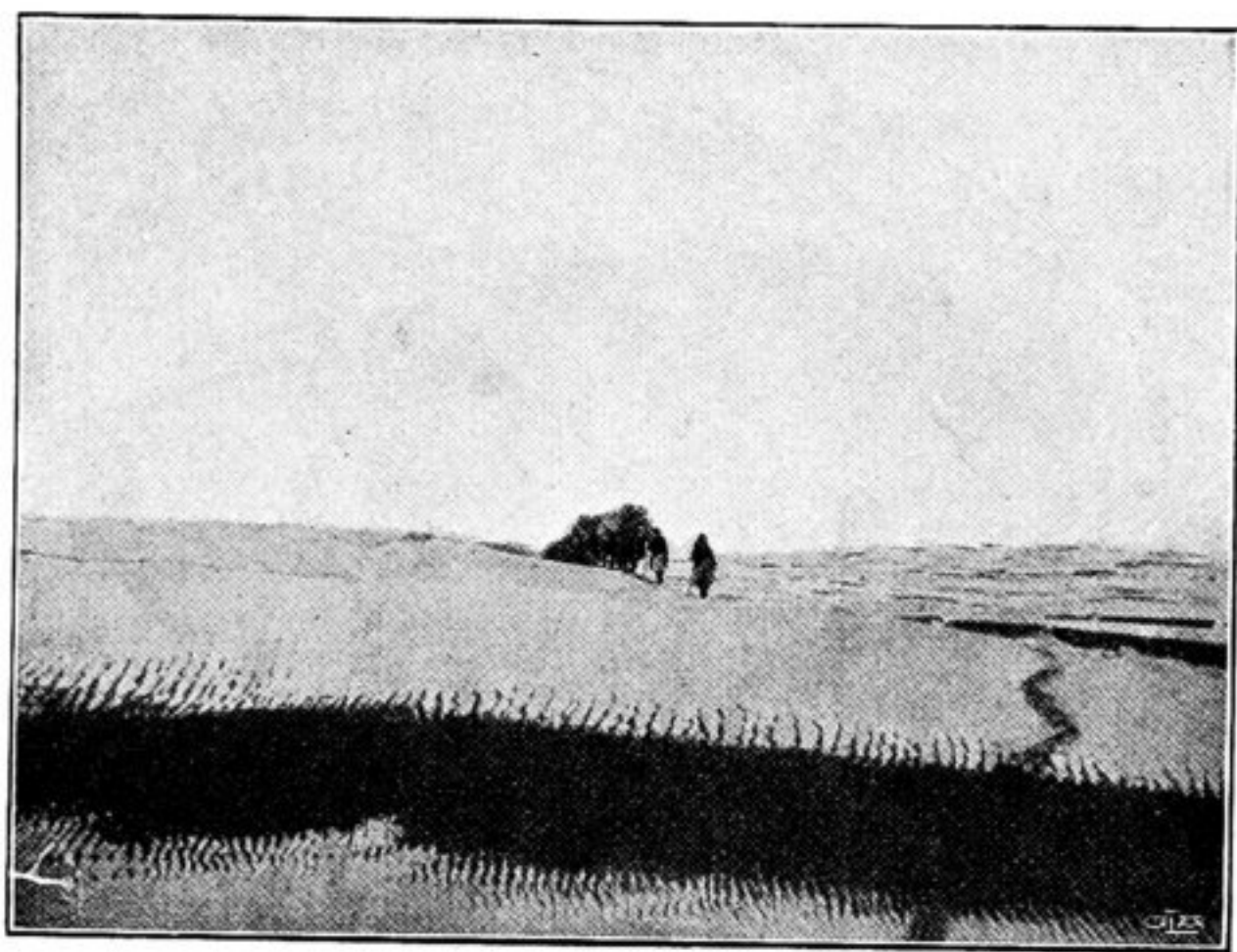


Fig. 282. STEEP LEESIDE FALLING TO THE SOUTH. EFFECT OF THE RIPPLE-MARKS UPON THE MELTING OF THE SNOW.

Again it snowed all night, but cleared up at 9 a. m. on the morning of the 5th January. The temperature did not drop below  $-16^{\circ}$  C. Such wide ranges of temperature are however unusual in the desert in winter. Although apparently the sky was perfectly blue and serene, the fine ice-needles nevertheless still continued to fall, and their facets reflected the sun all day. The snowy mantle was 3 cm. deep, and the glitter from it, when the

\* Walther says with regard to this point: »Wenn man weiter erwägt, dass ein Gemisch von Schnee und Salz eine beträchtliche Temperaturerniedrigung herbeiführen kann, so wird bei leichterm Schneefall, wie er in der Wüste gelegentlich beobachtet wird, eine energische Abkühlung von Salzseebecken eintreten.« — *Das Gesetz der Wüstenbildung*, p. 148.