

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE WEARISOME AND DESERT ROAD THAT HAS NOW TO BE TRAVELLED.

ON departing from the city of Kerman you find the road for seven days most wearisome ; and I will tell you how this is.¹ The first three days you meet with no water, or next to none. And what little you do meet with is bitter green stuff, so salt that no one can drink it ; and in fact if you drink a drop of it, it will set you purging ten times at least by the way. It is the same with the salt which is made from those streams ; no one dares to make use of it, because of the excessive purging which it occasions. Hence it is necessary to carry water for the people to last these three days ; as for the cattle, they must needs drink of the bad water I have mentioned, as there is no help for it, and their great thirst makes them do so. But it scours them to such a degree that sometimes they die of it. In all those three days you meet with no human habitation ; it is all desert, and the extremity of drought. Even of wild beasts there are none, for there is nothing for them to eat.²

After those three days of desert [you arrive at a stream of fresh water running underground, but along which there are holes broken in here and there, perhaps undermined by the stream, at which you can get sight of it. It has an abundant supply, and travellers, worn with the hardships of the desert, here rest and refresh themselves and their beasts.]³

You then enter another desert which extends for four days ; it is very much like the former except that you do see some wild asses. And at the termination of these four days of desert the kingdom of Kerman comes to an end, and you find another city which is called Cobinan.