

in the sand. On this signal, the travellers also lie down, close nose and mouth, and remain in this position until the hurricane abates. Unless these precautions are taken, men and beasts inevitably perish." (*Palladius, l.c. p. 4.*)

A friend writes to me that he thinks that the accounts of strange noises in the desert would find a remarkable corroboration in the narratives of travellers through the central desert of Australia. They conjecture that they are caused by the sudden falling of cliffs of sand as the temperature changes at night time.—H. C.]

Hsuen Tsang, in his passage of the Desert, both outward and homeward, speaks of visual illusions; such as visions of troops marching and halting with gleaming arms and waving banners, constantly shifting, vanishing, and reappearing, "imagery created by demons." A voice behind him calls, "Fear not! fear not!" Troubled by these fantasies on one occasion, he prays to Kwan-yin (a Buddhist divinity); still he could not entirely get rid of them; but as soon as he had pronounced a few words from the *Prajna* (a holy book), they vanished in the twinkling of an eye.

These Goblins are not peculiar to the Gobi, though that appears to be their most favoured haunt. The awe of the vast and solitary Desert raises them in all similar localities. Pliny speaks of the phantoms that appear and vanish in the deserts of Africa; Aethicus, the early Christian cosmographer, speaks, though incredulous, of the stories that were told of the voices of singers and revellers in the desert; Mas'udi tells of the *Ghúls*, which in the deserts appear to travellers by night and in lonely hours; the traveller, taking them for comrades, follows and is led astray. But the wise revile them and the Ghúls vanish. Thus also Apollonius of Tyana and his companions, in a desert near the Indus by moonlight, see an *Empusa* or Ghúl taking many forms. They revile it, and it goes off uttering shrill cries. Mas'udi also speaks of the mysterious voices heard by lone wayfarers in the Desert, and he gives a rational explanation of them. Ibn Batuta relates a like legend of the Western Sahara: "If the messenger be solitary, the demons sport with him and fascinate him, so that he strays from his course and perishes." The Afghan and Persian wildernesses also have their *Ghúl-i-Bedban* or Goblin of the Waste, a gigantic and fearful spectre which devours travellers; and even the Gael of the West Highlands have the *Direach Ghlinn Eitidh*, the Desert Creature of Glen Eiti, which, one-handed, one-eyed, one-legged, seems exactly to answer to the Arabian *Nesnás* or *Empusa*. Nicolò Conti in the Chaldaean desert is aroused at midnight by a great noise, and sees a vast multitude pass by. The merchants tell him that these are demons who are in the habit of traversing the deserts. (*Schmidt's San. Setzen, p. 352; V. et V. de H. T. 23, 28, 289; Pliny, VII. 2; Philostratus, Bk. II. ch. iv.; Prairies d'Or, III. 315, 324; Beale's Fahian; Campbell's Popular Tales of the W. Highlands, IV. 326; I. B. IV. 382; Elphinstone, I. 291; Chodzko's Pop. Poetry of Persia, p. 48; Conti, p. 4; Forsyth, J. R. G. S. XLVII. 1877, p. 4.*)

The sound of musical instruments, chiefly of drums, is a phenomenon of another class, and is really produced in certain situations among sandhills when the sand is disturbed. [See *supra*.] A very striking account of a phenomenon of this kind regarded as supernatural is given by Friar Odoric, whose experience I fancy I have traced to the *Reg Ruwán* or "Flowing Sand" north of Kabul. Besides this celebrated example, which has been described also by the Emperor Baber, I have noted that equally well-known one of the *Jibal Nakús*, or "Hill of the Bell," in the Sinai Desert; Wadi Hamade, in the vicinity of the same Desert; the *Jibal-ul-Thabíl*, or "Hill of the Drums," between Medina and Mecca; one on the Island of Eigg, in the Hebrides, discovered by Hugh Miller; one among the Medanos or Sandhills of Arequipa, described to me by Mr. C. Markham; the Bramador or rumbling mountain of Tarapaca; one in hills between the Ulba and the Irtish, in the vicinity of the Altai, called the Almanac Hills, because the sounds are supposed to prognosticate weather-changes; and a remarkable example near Kolberg on the shore of Pomerania. A Chinese narrative of the 10th century mentions the phenomenon as known near Kwachau, on the eastern border of the Lop Desert, under the name of the "Singing Sands"; and Sir F. Goldsmid has recently made us acquainted with a second *Reg Ruwán*, on a hill near the Perso-Afghan frontier,