

black lava in the flood-plains north of Imamla, I was told that they were the brains and skulls of the infidels who were destroyed in the great hurricane which arose after Nuktereshid-Chuktereshid killed the four Imams. I eventually found their origin in some lava flows of the glacial period interstratified with piedmont gravel.

While we were at Imamla, the men again offered sacrifices. Five or six pilgrims were there at the time; and a thousand are said to come in the course of favorable years, in spite of the remote location. One was a highly intelligent, well-dressed man, originally a merchant of Yarkand. In his youth he went to Mecca, where he settled for twenty years: now he was on a money-making tour of the shrines of Central Asia. His sanctity as a resident of Mecca, and as a visitor at many shrines, entitled him not only to the richest entertainment, but to lavish gifts. He attached himself to me for a day, and that night I heard a village headman give orders for a gift of supplies of all sorts to be made ready for his journey.