

noise and the clink of draughtsmen has not yet ceased in the *kavekhaneh* of the hotel. The gendarme officer comes again to visit me; I suspect that he has passed the earlier part of the night in the café. Shukkur, my *sevari*, or trooper, complains that his horse is tired out, and I am obliged to inform him that it is the business of the authorities, not mine.

The night is calm and clear, the stars glitter like Ramazan torches, and the moon, like a gigantic lantern, shines down on Baiburt, and the weather is splendid for a drive over the Kop-dagh pass. But it is cool, nearly at freezing-point, and I draw a couple of felt rugs round me when I take my seat in the carriage and roll through the narrow dark streets and burial-grounds. As soon as we have left the last houses behind us we are out on the hilly untilled land, and pass long trains of ox-waggons effectively lighted by the moon, and equally picturesque when they are seen with the moon behind them, their outlines thrown in sharply-defined shadows across the road. Carts laden with corn rest on axles which revolve with the wheels, and grind and creak against their bearings. It is a horrible noise, a piercing squeak. The waggons move slowly along the road, the rattle can be heard from afar, becomes louder, and is quite deafening as the vehicles pass by us in the moonlight; the creaking has scarcely died away before more carts are heard approaching. Many are laden with firewood from some thicket, and are on the way to Baiburt.

After driving at some distance from the Chorok we come again to its bank, where a caravan of 121 camels, laden with grain, is on its way to Baiburt. The river looks quite imposing among the hills. At six o'clock the first glimmer of day appears, and the colour of the sky is discernible, but not that of the land. At the village Maden-khan, or khanlari as it is commonly called, the cocks are engaged in their morning concert; here a bridge crosses the Chorok, the left bank of which we now follow, ascending gently. Then the road runs up through a side valley, sometimes open and sometimes contracted, its dreariness broken only by thin shrubs or willows no