

the sides. Here and there the brook is covered with ice, which is cut and splintered by the wheels, and retards our progress. We jolt, sway, and jingle upwards on our rough, tedious journey.

Then the valley expands, but the gradient is always steep towards the south; to the left we have the village Esheg-ellas, surrounded by tall haystacks. After a large valley junction our direction becomes easterly. The country is desolate and empty; here no travellers, carts, or caravans are seen. Shakir, my driver, remarks quite justly that there is no comparison between this road and that from Erzerum to Tarabuzun (Trebizond). But then the latter was laid by French engineers, while the road to Bayazid, like all Asiatic roads, is left carelessly to the wear and tear of the traffic, and no one troubles about its upkeep; repairs are neglected where damage is done, no stone embankments are constructed where there is danger of floods, and there are no bridges over the brooks.

Here and there shepherds watch their flocks on the hills scantily clothed with grass — we are in a part of Armenia inhabited by Kurds, who live chiefly by cattle-grazing. Taj-daghi raises its conical summit, regular as a volcano, quite close to the pass which separates the drainage basin of the Araxes from the eastern Euphrates. A solitary fox comes and looks out up above; he must know that troopers' rifles are not much to be dreaded, for he does not run away before the *on-bashi*, "commander of ten," or the leader of the escort, has sent three booming shots after him.

On the eastern side the road is better, and runs over soft hills of earth without detritus, and on the right, to the south, rises the snowclad crest of Mergemir-dagh. It begins to grow dusk, but Shakir says that our night-quarters are near, and this is confirmed by two disreputable Turkish soldiers who stand with arms grounded at the top of a knoll. They present arms as we drive past, and as soon as this imposing mark of honour is punctiliously paid, they take to their heels and rush down to the village to announce our coming; and when we drive in among the outermost cabins of Dayar, a crowd of men, women, and