

children has turned out to gaze at us. Along intricate lanes we drive between scattered homesteads to the village inn, where a fire is hastily lighted in the grate of the wretched apartment. The fuel consists of dung compressed into cakes and piled up in beehive-shaped heaps outside every cabin. To light this fuel a handful of dry steppe plants is laid underneath and kindled.

The hundred low, grey, and wretched cabins of Dayar are built of stone and sun-dried mud, and are surmounted by flat roofs. The inhabitants are exclusively Kurds, and when they are asked what country this is, they answer Kurdistan; but they understand Turkish. The *kaimakam* of the place resides in the fortress, Toprak-kale or Alashgerd, at some distance to the north-east. Barley is grown around the village, which also possesses about 4000 sheep, besides cattle, buffaloes, and horses. It is reckoned to be three hours' journey to the Russian frontier. Bears, wolves, foxes, and lynxes occur in the surrounding mountains.

The escort and drivers put up in a stable at the other end of the village, but Shakir, who also does my cooking, stayed at the inn. He and the innkeeper, Suleiman, kept me company in the evening, and the latter related adventures he and his friends had experienced with robbers and footpads of Kurdish race. A couple of years previously Suleiman's brother had been attacked and slain between Dayar and Toprak-kale by a band of thirty robbers. According to custom, Suleiman took his brother's wife, and now had a little son by her.

Here the *on-bashi* and two troopers turned back, and were replaced by Kurdish riders of the Hamidieh militia, veritable bandits, in motley dress, and with untidy bandages round the head. When we drove off at half-past six o'clock the temperature was unexpectedly high, quite 39°, but the sky was overcast, and new-fallen snow lay on the mountains. Honest Suleiman, who is also the *mudir* of the village, received two bright medjidiehs for his services, and then off we went on a well-made road over gentle slopes. In numerous bends the road runs up to the little flat pass, Tahir-dagh, where only two thin patches of snow