

lay on the ground. Shakir says that I am lucky; usually it is almost impossible to drive here at this season, which is too late for wheeled vehicles and too early for sleighs. Later in the winter the snow often lies three feet deep on Tahir-dagh, and then sleighing is fine sport. During the thawing of the snow, or after heavy rain, the road is, it seems, detestable, for then the viscous sucking clay forms a mud-bath, in which the carriage wheels sink to the axle, while lumps of clay, heavy and tenacious, cling to the wheels.

From the saddle of the pass we descend into a hollow, and then go up again to another pass of about the same height. On its eastern side we meet a Persian caravan of 315 camels, which occupies a third of a mile of road with its many detachments. All the leaders are men of Azerbaijan, speaking the Tatar language, and identical in type and costume with the Tatars in Baku. In ornamental halters, and with large red tufts, the camels stalk solemnly and slowly on their way seawards to the sound of their bells. In their wake follow three arabas laden with millstones, and each cart is drawn by four buffaloes.

To the south-east Ala-dagh's snow-crowned heights rise in front of us when we move down the headlong, dangerous declivities that descend from the pass. Every moment we are in danger of slipping, and one of our riders goes on foot to be always at hand to preserve the balance. It takes us an hour and a half to get down to a tolerable road, where, however, the springs of the drosky are severely tried amidst the rubbish and blocks of stone. With hurried steps a hunter is making his way up the pass; he is out to hunt foxes with his two greyhounds, which he leads in a leash; they are called *tasi*, and easily overtake foxes.

At Kuraldi half-a-dozen willows delight the eye, an unusual sight on this barren plateau. Haystacks dominate everything, and are much higher than the houses and tesek cupolas. Canal water is conducted through wooden pipes to two mills. In this country no fezes are seen at all; instead, lambskin caps are worn, and grey felt caps as in Persia, or nothing but a bandage wound round