

snap. Now I have only two Turkish troopers as escort, and they are to turn back at the frontier. They are of no use, know nothing of the road, and cannot tell the names of the villages.

Here and there the road is covered with fragments of tuff, and after we have passed an intervening projection Ararat stands out grandly to the right of our course, now nearer than ever. A little to the east of the road lies a marsh overgrown with yellow reeds, and Gyll-Tepe, or "hill of flowers," is a village at the foot of a small elevation. Asses and their foals are grazing on the dreary steppe about it, and here and there ridges of volcanic blocks lie in our way. We pass the village Ahmed Agha, near which is a black tent like those of the Tanguts on the Koko-nor, and at Kara-bulak we reach the Turkish customs station, where a peremptory gentleman takes on himself airs and says he must search all my baggage. He calms down, however, after looking at my papers, and contents himself with taking a pound and a half in pledge from the drivers, to make sure that they do not migrate to the Russian side. One of the waggon drivers, an Armenian, has to stay behind at Kara-bulak, for Armenians are not allowed over the frontier in any direction.

The greyish-blue smoke cloud from the chimneys of Bayazid still hovers over the little town, which is visible far to the south, while the country to the east, towards the Persian frontier, seems quite flat and open. Now commences the rise to the frontier pass, and Kurdish shepherds and their sheep are seen on both sides of the road. The hills are already bestrewn with fragments of tuff, but the higher we ascend the worse they become, and at length large volcanic blocks lie so close together that it is no longer possible to steer our way between them. To drive over stone blocks on level ground is difficult enough, but uphill it is maddening. To me it is a perfect puzzle how the carriages withstand the trial that awaits them here. The horses strain and struggle with all their power, and before we have gone far one of the traces of an outside horse breaks, and while it is being repaired I follow the baggage waggons on foot. One of them is almost over as it goes