

a little too fast in this vile ground ; the wheels on the near side are suddenly lifted up by a bump, and the vehicle would capsize after remaining suspended a moment on the off-wheels, were it not that at this moment the front wheel comes in contact with a block and the carriage is brought back to an even keel. My valuable instruments hang between heaven and earth, and it is wonderful that nothing is broken or cracked during such a drive. Up and down, over stones and boulders, over firm rocks and down into treacherous pits, the vehicles groan and screech and rattle, rolling like ships in a high sea.

The gradient becomes less steep, but the ground is just as much encumbered with boulders ; the last bit, quite close to the pass, is a little better, and at length we are up at the stone pyramid which marks the frontier between Russia and Turkey. Behind us and below us to the south are seen plains with marshes, and blue reed-grown lakes on a yellow foundation.

Chingil is the name of the Russian frontier post, where eighteen Cossacks and two customs officials keep guard. Here also there is a small reedy pool, and Jilli is a Kurdish village in the neighbourhood. The first stretch of road beyond is stony and level, but at the fifth verst post it goes down headlong, and one is amazed at the extraordinary steepness, and astonished that it is possible to drive down such hills. The view over the valley of the Aras or Araxes is remarkably extensive, and to the north Alagoz raises its bell-shaped cone 13,465 feet high, an extinct volcano with a crater full of sulphur and a sharply marked snow-line.

It grows dusk ; shadows on our mountain pass over the hills, and slowly ascend the southern flank of Alagoz. Fields and strips of various colours, now belts of vegetation, now screes of detritus and ridges, extend down to the bottom of the deep valley. The drosky rolls gently and easily down the zigzags, Shakir keeps the horses in hand and sits as upon thorns, and the horses make short thrusts with their forelegs to keep back the carriage. A votive pile of stones and rags, a *mazar*, is erected beside the road. Down below is seen a village of white houses ; it