

is Argov. The peak of Alagoz is like a light cloud, hard to distinguish from those that float below the azure of the sky; but the sun still illumines brightly its snowfields, while all the country round is sinking to sleep under the dark veil of evening.

It grows dark and fresh, and we are enveloped in impenetrable night before we pull up before the customs house of Argov, where the chief shows me the greatest hospitality, and begs me to come in and drink a cup of tea before I go farther, for there are still twelve miles to Igdir. Meanwhile he makes two horsemen of the frontier guard saddle their horses, and when we start again one of them rides ahead with a light, and the other behind the waggons to see that nothing falls off. Now we drive freely, for the road is good; the stars shine clearly, but the villages and farms are recognized in the darkness only by the packs of dogs which, barking furiously, dash after the vehicles.

At last we reach Igdir, and I put up in a tidy Russian *gastinnitsa*, visit the *uyesdni nachalnik* or district commander, an agreeable captain, and sup with him and his family.

On the morning of November 27 I bade farewell to Shakir, who had driven me so well all the way from Erzerum, and to the other two drivers. They had passports from Bayazid to allow them to cross the frontier; but they were dreadfully afraid of the Armenians on the Russian side. They received liberal presents, and their gratitude was unbounded when I succeeded in obtaining permission for the two Russian soldiers to conduct them to the frontier. Shakir believed that the rogue of a customs officer at Kura-bulak would not part with the pound and a half he had taken as security for their return, and I therefore wrote to the French vice-consul in Erzerum that in such case the customs official should be forced to do his duty.

Igdir has 6000 inhabitants and 800 houses, and did not tempt me to make a longer stay than necessary. I left the little town with three carriages and nine horses, and drove along the excellent highroad which runs all the way to the railway. The wayfarers and countrymen one