

intricate lanes. A sheep is being slaughtered at an open place by a brook—Persia was once the victim in Turkman-chai, for it was here that the disastrous peace was concluded in 1828, when Feth Ali Shah lost two of his most valuable provinces. Turkman-chai is now the property of a gentleman with the title Munever-es-Saltaneh, contains 500 houses, and yields an annual income of 4000 tuman.

Haji-gias, again, the village where we pass the night, consists of 100 houses, owns a stock of 4000 sheep, and is subject to Muktadir-es-Saltaneh in Teheran, who derives from it a revenue of 2000 tuman a year. Wheat and corn are cultivated, vegetables and melons, and in the gardens ripen grapes, apples, pears, apricots, almonds, and walnuts. All the inhabitants of the village are of Turkish origin, and its "elder" has the title of *ak-sakal* or "white-beard." January, it seems, is usually severe, and not infrequently the snow lies three spans deep. After heavy summer rains the main river, which is here called Karangu-chai or Mianeh-chai, swells up so that it cannot be forded.

A decent old man took charge of me and led me to the *bala-khaneh* of the station-house, which had no windows, but three doors opening on to a balcony. He roasted a chicken over the fire, and brought me bread, sour milk, tea, and grapes. I had now no provisions of my own but sugar, and my table necessities consisted of a spoon, knife, and fork; I lived in much the same style as travelling Mohammedans, which is practical and instructive. In Persia the traveller's rank and dignity are measured by the number of his servants. The more numerous the rascallions and idlers that swarm in his wake, the greater the prestige and consideration he can lay claim to. As I had not a servant to be seen, but let the coachman or his boy carry my things up to the station-room, it was taken for granted that I was a most insignificant traveller who had not means to allow himself the smallest luxury. But when I was questioned I asserted that the drosky would have been too heavily laden if I had brought servants with me, and that my staff was waiting for me