

through this town, so also the caravans to and from Resht go through its gates. It is noticeable at once that we have come on to a great trade-route; here life and movement never cease all night long, and the road resounds with the ring of camel bells, as though the whole country were singing.

In two hours and three-quarters we are at Kevendeh and change horses, which in the same time draw us to Kishlak. It dawns on the morning of December 13. The third stage brings us to Yangi-imam, with its mosque-tomb under a pointed cupola. At the village of Kurdan we cross a ravine, and the station-house here bears the inscription *Kordanskaya Zastava*, and one has to pay a toll for the use of the newly made Russian road,—the Russians have already firmly established themselves in this part of Persia.

It grows lighter, the sun rises, the camel traffic ceases, for the animals must feed in the daytime, but instead the road is full of waggons and carters. Above and behind the dark outlying mountains of Elburz rise snowclad crests. Another change of horses at Hesarek and then the road, at Kerej, runs over the outermost slopes of Elburz. Here a steep arched bridge of brick crosses a river and Kelat, a picturesque village, stands in a cleft in the hills. We have low mountains on both sides, but Elburz disappears behind clouds heavy with snow. In Shahabad the horses are changed for the last time, and, long, straight and unending, the road stretches on towards a mountain projection situated beyond Teheran. The large city, the El Dorado of decay and decadence, appears in outline, the road turns by degrees into a street which runs through a new greyish quarter of mud houses, and through the Kazvin gate, adorned with plain tiles, we enter the town, and drive, tinkling, through the streets, where I quite unexpectedly meet my old friends of 1886 and 1890, Dr. Hybennet Khan and the postmaster Von Wedel, a retired general. The two gentlemen were coming to meet me, and we go together to Wedel's house, where I wish to undergo a necessary renovation before accepting Mr. and Mrs. Grant Duff's kind invitation to be their guest during my stay in Teheran.