

entirely filled up by the compact train of camels. A group of inquisitive onlookers follow in our wake, talking about the unusual spectacle ; but the huts become fewer, the ruins are behind us, one loiterer after another troops off, and the desert land lies before us.

At the last canal outside Veramin the first camel in the second detachment is made to lie down so that I can mount on to his back, where there is a hollow formed between the humps and the two sides of his load, so that I sit comfortably and freely, as in an easy-chair, with my legs hanging on either side of the front hump. With compass and watch at hand, and a clean sheet of paper spread out on a piece of cardboard in front of me, I now begin a map of the route which is to be extended to Nushki, and when finished will occupy 234 sheets. Distances are calculated from the camel's stride, which I measure daily along a line 200 metres in length.

Far in the west stand the two small isolated elevations we have seen before, and to the east appears the outermost small offshoot from the foothills of Elburz, with a more marked summit. Siah-kuh, or Black Mountain, our next goal, stands out as a faint and isolated outline to the south-south-east ; but though we direct our course towards it all day long and cover $12\frac{3}{4}$ miles, it does not seem perceptibly nearer—the small elevation is still just as faint and looks like a light blue cloud on the earth's surface. We have a conception of great distances. First on one side and then on the other begins the desert,—how immensely far it is to Tebbes, which is only a stage on our way to India!

The day was fine and warm, there was no wind, the whole sky was overcast, but it neither rained nor snowed ; the peak of Demavend was hidden in clouds, but there was a clear view all round to the horizon, and I sat up in my swinging observatory and made my notes. It was a long time since I had ridden a camel, and certainly at first one becomes a little stiff in the back ; but by degrees one becomes supple again and hardly notices the swaying movement. Before me a huge bell swings its ceaseless ding-dong at every step of its bearer, and behind rings