

of paper, and clapped it quickly on to an iron girdle laid over burning dung. The next sheet was laid on the former, and thus only the outer side of each sheet is baked. The worthy woman was baking for us, and at night we had two sacksful of bread.

The old man kept his valuables in a small room called the *sanduk-khaneh* or chest-house. A mud wall was the family's sheep-pen (*gusfend-khaneh*), and outside lay a store of steppe shrubs and tamarisk for fuel. Two wooden rollers, round which circular iron blades, sharp as knives, are fixed, revolve in a frame like a pair of millstones, and are used to tear straw to bits.

After I had been sitting two hours on a mealsack outside the old man's dwelling, drawing him, two other men and some women and girls came up. The latter were dressed in red light garments, with a kerchief on the head, and the feet bare or in skimpy wooden shoes. Two of them were quite handsome to my eyes, but perhaps that was because female faces are seldom seen in this land of veils. The hair is black, not curly but rather parted into locks and tresses, the eyes are dark brown, almost black, and the long lashes which veil them make them look still darker. White clean teeth peep out between rosy red lips, the hands are coarsened with hard work, and the feet are dreadfully dirty, as indeed are all their persons. Some, indeed, were shy, but their eyes flashed like fire, and though they restrained their merriment their glances were full of roguishness. They gradually collected in such numbers round my open-air perch that I could not finish the portraits before twilight put an end to my work. Greybeards and men stood around and must have made some very smart remarks to judge by the liveliness of the others. But it was delightful to observe these young, fresh, brown-skinned plants of the wilderness, which flourish in the niggard earth among tamarisk and camel grass. Their intellectual horizon is less extensive than the terrestrial, but they unconcernedly take things as they come. They regarded me with the greatest curiosity, and never took their eyes off my pencil as long as it was in motion. If some new victim, whom I chose from the