

out of doors had had a cool night, but still they were brisk and merry in the morning. One would think that their life with the camels must be hard and toilsome, especially considering the trifling pay they ask; but they are contented, make their way through all kinds of weather, wrap themselves in their thick, sack-like cloaks, and sleep through cold and snow. Immediately they wake, before the day breaks, they hasten to light a fire, and restore their circulation in ten minutes.

To the north something dark hovers above the ground, but we cannot make out whether it is cloud or an indistinct hill. The crest of Elburz, however, is sharp and clear, and the cone of Demavend, somewhat dimmer than before, owing to the greater distance, seems to be freshly sprinkled, and to present a more connected sheet of white than usual. But at half-past nine the summit disappears behind the mist, which again collects in the north.

By the time we set out the day has become blazing hot, and as we travel straight towards the sun I feel as though I were sitting in some kind of insolation bath. I sit longing for the slightest breeze cooled by passing over snow, and raise my cap to cool my forehead. According to a Persian saying, Iran has seven climates; but this peculiarity may be ascribed to the desert in the words, *biaban heft klim dared*; for during the days we have passed on its outskirts we have had the warmth of spring, calm and bare ground, winter cold, a dust-storm, and a fall of snow, one after the other. And now the weather changes again in five minutes; the mist draws together and comes sweeping over the desert. Siah-kuh, lately showing so finely, disappears, together with all the other isolated hills; the heat of the sun abates, and this it is, indeed, which has drawn up the light clouds of vapour from the surface of the ground. They grow thicker, and the *ketkhoda*, who with his camels forms the vanguard, quite disappears in the fog, and we can only follow his track in the snow. The glittering play of light on the snow-facets has ceased, and the blue of heaven has changed to a greyish hue. The snow which still lay in the morning on the camels and their loads has gone up in steam, and lies only in the