

At night the temperature sank only to 34.7° . My men had expected a visit from the herdsmen who were tending camels in the neighbourhood, but they heard nothing of them. They go only every third evening to the spring, and remain two nights on the steppe without water. A strong wind blew during the night, and as it came from the south-east it quite covered the sky with clouds as usual. The morning also was cool and dull, but fortunately the air was clear; perhaps there must be a heavy fall of snow before thick fog is formed. Three of the large camels carried water sacks, all of them now watertight but one, which leaked the whole way, and had shrunk very considerably when we came to the next camp. We marched slowly down a furrow, where the rivulet from the spring soon dried up. As it became too stony and winding we left it, mounting up its right side, where light green disintegrated mounds alternated with shallow trenches. In itself the light rock is quite hard, but in such a climate as this no material can withstand the forces of denudation. These mounds, which are often worn steep at the base, are conspicuous by their fresh bright colour; their position is the same as those we have seen before.

All the offshoots and ramifications of Kuh-i-nakshir are here parallel to our route; but they form no continuous ridges, being often broken by low saddles and breaches. The higher parts, the nucleus of the small group, consist of a reddish-brown porphyritic rock, but the farther we recede from Kuh-i-nakshir the rarer is the reddish-brown colour, while light green limestones and clay-slates become predominant. We are forced by the configuration of the land towards the south-east, though I would rather march eastwards to see if there be not a possibility of venturing into the Kevir from this direction. But we must, as far as possible, follow the dales, lest we should land in such a labyrinth as that I had made a close acquaintance with yesterday. Certainly the ground slopes east-south-east, and we are obliged to cross some of the dells, but they become shallower the farther we go. Small ridges and backs still lie between them, pointing like fingers down to the desert.