

face north. But down here, on the steppe where we are travelling, the sun is burning, and the ground is heated; with the thermometer at 55.8° at one o'clock, it is quite a different climate from what it has been hitherto. And yet we are in the middle of January, the coldest time of the year! What will it be like in spring when we reach Tebbes and Seistan? Probably blazing and suffocatingly hot. All the way to India we go to meet the sun, to the south-east; the sun is now a grand mark to steer by, and every morning it will give us our course for the day's march. Every day is for us a step nearer spring, so much the longer that we are advancing south towards warmer regions. Now we could not wish for finer weather, and we are fortunate in escaping from the heavy fog of winter; but the time will come when we shall look back with regret to the cool snowdrifts in the fissures at Mulkabad. The past always seems in our memory brighter and better than the toil of the moment. Slowly, almost hesitatingly, the camels move along; they carry us gently but surely to our journey's end, and therefore we love them for their admirable patience. Even the monotonous clang of the bells is delightful, for it ticks off the seconds from the time that separates me from India.

At eleven o'clock we are in full summer, and long for the afternoon hours, with their freshness and their cooling breeze. Now I am perched up on the top of my tall, swaying bearer, and I have the sun right in my face, and feel as though I were sitting before a flaming fire. One of the men begins to sing a melancholy ditty—sing on, old fellow, perhaps it will shorten the way.

Sometimes a suspicion of driftsand is heaped up in the lee of the large shrubs, but otherwise there is no trace of sand desert, though all the conditions necessary for its formation are present. Fine yellow mud often lies at the bottom of erosion furrows, which after drying has fallen into concave flakes. It is such fine material which in course of time is carried by running water into the Kevir to fill it up and level its unequal depressions. The zone of the Kevir which runs close along the shore is of a yellow colour, and forms a kind of transitional stage from