

summit of some importance. Here, too, the road forks, and we are again in a dilemma; the left branch looks as if it were mostly frequented by herdsmen coming up to the well from the steppe with their herds, and therefore we resolve to try the right. But first we let the camels drink their fill of good sweet water, the stone trough is filled repeatedly and emptied again, all the men drink to their hearts' content, and then three sheepskins and all the jugs are filled—we cannot tell exactly how far it may be to the next water.

Our road winds for a while between hills and crosses flat offshoots from Kuh-i-busurgi, but soon we are out on the even detritus slope, which falls extremely slowly north-eastwards down to the level surface of the Kevir and towards the sand desert.

At ten o'clock it rained a little, and half an hour after there was a slight snowfall with a northerly wind. Marching south-east we went straight across two large drainage-channels running to the Kevir, and then passed several small flat tabular elevations of rolled pebbles, old relics of erosion a few yards high, rising here and there from the level plain. Between them lay hollows and flat trenches, and in two places small expanses of kevir of the usual appearance. South and south-east our way was barred by a considerable snow-clad range, still a good distance off, and Gulam Hussein, who is a native of Khur, suspected that we were on a road leading to Anarek. For my part I anticipated that we should be forced again by a southern extension of the Kevir to keep on this course until we could again turn north-eastwards to the wells on the way to Jandak.

But now, just in the nick of time, we see two dark specks to the south-east, which, with the help of the field-glasses, are proved to be a small caravan. The steppe stretches quite level up to the little group, and it is a good way thither—an hour's march according to my estimate if they stand still; but if they are going in the same direction as ourselves we shall not overtake them till evening. All our interest is fixed on these men, who can give us information we are greatly in need of; we there-