

front to the desert, has quite disappeared, and its distant outline, scarcely perceptible against the sky, has merged into the horizon. At sunset, when the temperature falls quickly, one seems to hear a slight ringing or rustling sound from the dunes, possibly the combined tone produced when myriads of grains of sand cool and scrape over one another. It is the evensong of the desert, the curfew bell of the new night rung by these dunes now reposing after their restless wanderings through innumerable centuries. The ruddy firelight flickers over the surroundings, while the shadows of the tents, camels, and bushes radiate out into the murkiness of night, which envelops us on all sides. It is quite calm and silent; the sky shows not a wisp of cloud, and the stars twinkle cold and bright. Between us and them is the space of the universe, and around us slumbers the desert—an unsolved mystery.