

through Hauz-i-verbend, Ab-i-germ, Mehrejun, Hauz-i-mirza, Cha-meji, Dari, Jaffaru, Khormau, and Shur-ab.

A certain interest, however, is aroused in the village when a caravan on its long wanderings halts before its gate, and especially if it is the party of a travelling European. It always brings with it a whiff of the outer world far beyond the range of the desert, and makes a little change in the monotonous life.

The environs of Chupunun are not entirely devoid of picturesque and charming colouring. To the desert and its neighbouring lands an almost Biblical solemnity seems to be attached, and here more than elsewhere one feels that the same purple gleams now spread over hills and plains as in the misty times of legend and story when Median merchants crossed Iran with their caravans. Particularly striking are the red hillocks to the north and north-east, and when the sun sets they glow with such an exceedingly intense colour that they remind me of red-hot iron. Like an endless riband the road to Tebbes winds eastwards over ground dried up and burnt by the sun, and it would have been an advantage and a saving of time to follow it, but we had determined to visit Jandak first. To the south is displayed a world of hills, of which those to the south-east make a respectable show with their snowfields, and form a huge undulation in this part of the country. In the same direction stretches of sandy desert alternate with steppe, and immediately to the south of the village a long and singular sand-dune with a steep fall on either side starts off east-south-east from a mound. It is evidently growing no more, but has reached its maximum dimensions; that is to say, every gust of wind carries to it as much driftsand as it sweeps away. The mound, which consists of red limestone, forms a curve convex to the south, and within the concavity lies a small mud-flat, so smooth that it shines like ice in the sun. Where the limestone on the ridge of the mound lies exposed to wind and weather, it has been eaten out in designs which resemble in their smallest details the ripples which the wind produces on water or sand, or the marks left by waves on the bottom of a lake. The hardness of the