

driftsand been heaped up in almost as large quantities as in Central Asia in the valley we have just left, while only some insignificant dunes have been able to establish themselves at one spot in the valley where we are now? All the conditions for the formation of large dunes seem to exist here as well as there. No, perhaps not! For the former valley opens out westwards and passes into the Kevir, and possibly the surface of the Kevir, which at certain seasons lies dry, provides no small quantity of driftsand, and yields it to the west wind on its journey over the sand-dune area.

A black dog, thin and miserable, has of its own accord attached itself to our train; he has run away from the Seruman hut, where there was nothing to be obtained but water. He sneaks, ghostlike, beside me as I walk in front of the caravan, throwing a shadow before him which is not nearly so black as himself. When I ride he keeps beside the camel. The men take a dislike to him and pelt him with stones, but he always comes back again. He makes light of Nevengk's inhospitable reception, and seems to be fulfilling some mysterious mission in following us at any cost. He is an unavoidable omen, a *kismet* (fate), or Ahriman, the principle of evil, in a canine body. At night he lies outside my tent, and then follows the caravan through the desert, but he never becomes really tame. He runs along philosophically, engaged with his own thoughts, and does not trouble himself about us. He receives food gratis, and keeps a good watch, but remains a stranger to every one. He receives the name of Siah-sek or "black dog"; and, coal-black as he is, even to the point of his tail, he is conspicuous against the yellow ground as he rushes about, before and behind and alongside the caravan, as though he were restlessly looking for a lost trail.

It is four o'clock, and still our bells ring at the foot of the "hill of the thousand valleys," which now really deserves its name, for an endless succession of narrow, short, but rather broad valleys issue from between the forks of its spurs. The crest of the chain stands out dark beneath the evening sun. We march still north-westwards, and