

stumble and fall as on ice, while if the rain is steady and of long continuance the briny soil of the Kevir is soaked to a depth of 2 or 3 feet; the camels sink helplessly in the mud, and a caravan which happens to be in the midst of the desert under such circumstances may encounter the greatest difficulties. The camels understand the situation, and put forth all their strength, but they get tired, sink in, and are lost. Weather such as we had now made it imperative to wait, and therefore we consoled ourselves for the late appearance of the new camels. But at last a message came that the little caravan would be ready in the camp early next morning.

Here also it was affirmed that the south-east wind was wont to bring precipitation with it at this time of year, while the west wind made a clear sky. An exception to the rule occurred, however, at nine o'clock at night, when a strong south-east wind swept away the clouds and raised the temperature several degrees. At one o'clock it was 50.2° , and at nine o'clock 52.7° ; as a rule it is twelve to fourteen degrees colder at night.

The caravan was ordered to stay three days at Jandak and then march in five days to Khur, there to await us. Abbas Kuli Bek was responsible for the cash, and was to make all payments, which were to be entered and accounted for by Mirza. This system was dearer, for the Persians must always have their rations. Our small equipment was arranged; the provisions consisted of six fowls, two score of eggs, pomegranates, butter, tea, and *penir*, a kind of cheese, and fresh-baked bread. We took straw and cottonseed for the camels. We had a sack of sweet water and two sacks of fuel and charcoal. The instruments and notebooks I wanted were put in a soft bag. Instead of a tent I took the large camera stand, which, covered with a Caucasian *burkha*, would be sufficient to give me some shelter from the rain.

The success of the enterprise seemed still very uncertain. The temperature fell in the night to 38.3° , and in the morning I was awakened by the rain pelting against my tent. The prospect was hopeless. The hills to the east and west disappeared in the mist, and in the north, where