

One is almost inclined to believe that he has confused the Lop desert with the great Persian desert.

About the way through the Kevir, which we intended to take, and which was now every minute becoming more soaked, our guide, Ali Murat, gave the following report. From the neighbouring shore we had 4 farsakh before us of kevir and then 2 farsakh of *nemek*, or hard salt deposits; then again 12 farsakh of kevir and 1 farsakh of *nemek*, and lastly 9 farsakh of kevir to Husseinan. From the camp where we now were it was reckoned in all 30 farsakh to this town in the north. Between Turut and Khur there are first 4 farsakh to the margin of the salt desert, then 6 farsakh of kevir, 1 farsakh of hard salt, 12 farsakh of kevir, and again 1 farsakh of salt and 4 farsakh of kevir, and then 2 farsakh to Khur-i-gez, 1 to Aruzun, and 8 to Khur; here 26 farsakh are counted as lying in bad desert. It might be taken for granted that, as three caravans were now waiting at Jandak, so some parties must be staying at Husseinan waiting for good weather. If any caravan comes from the desert and reports that it is passable, the waiting trains set out at once, if they have not already preferred to turn back.

Thus we talked while the rain pelted outside. At ten o'clock the rain gave place to snow, and the splashing and swishing were no longer heard, and it seemed delusively quiet, while the precipitation was as heavy as before, and the snow melted as soon as it touched the ground. The only consolation we had was that the smoky den was dry inside, and after Gulam Hussein had scraped away the rubbish in a corner where many caravan men had rested, we set our simple camp in order and crept into bed.

When I awoke at seven o'clock my two companions were crouching over the fire, keeping quiet in order not to disturb me. They were warming their hands over the fire, and no wonder, for a westerly wind blew hard, the minimum temperature had been 28.9° , and there was still frost. The sky was thickly covered with clouds, and the weather looked anything but inviting. The west wind, which is here called *bad-i-shahriyar*, or city wind, because it comes from the direction of Teheran, is at this season very cold and raw,