

Still farther appears a ridge called Kuh-i-kozar. On the left we pass a distinct path leading to Rishm, through Husseinan and Mahallaman; it points straight to the north, while our path trends somewhat to the east. In front to the left is now seen the margin of the detritus slope, reddish yellow in colour, and I seem to perceive that the ground rises in this direction, though extremely slowly. Undoubtedly, then, the peripheral parts of the Kevir are rather higher than the central. It is evident that the fine products of weathering washed down by water from the surrounding hills must be deposited round the edge. But when the mass which fills the huge depression is softened by precipitation in winter and summer, this deposit creeps or is thrust forwards to the deeper parts of the hollow, the central region. It moves like any other viscous substance; it advances like a moving bog or a lava stream. When the burning summer sun dries and hardens the upper layer, it stops like cooled lava. Probably this assumption is true only of the upper crust; beneath it the soaked masses are still so far in motion that, in obedience to the laws of gravity, they seek to arrange themselves horizontally. Possibly the strips, ridges, and concentric hollows we pass on both the southern and northern outskirts of the Kevir are nothing but creeping undulations caused by the thrusts which are necessarily produced by the constant pressure of alluvium washed down from the hills.

The wind from Khorasan, from the "Land of the Sun," is searchingly keen and cold as evening draws on. The camels stride on northwards at a round pace, covering mile after mile. I am glad when some one announces that the first of the 9 farsakh is past. I have travelled it on foot and found it easy, but the following are more troublesome, and another sleepless night is coming, which will be worse than the former, for after its hardships we are still heavy and stupid.

We cross two very shallow furrows from the north-west filled with water and covered with a film of slime; in these beds fresh water lies after rain. In the tract we are now traversing the Kevir is very different from the