

change its position with regard to the caravan. Is the camel standing still? No, for I am swinging and the bells are sounding as usual. I wonder whether I am wrong in the head, shut my eyes and move about as though to shake off a defect in my eyesight and sense of direction. Ah! it is only Nevengk keeping pace with my camel.

The caravan is still the central point in the dark desert, and nothing shows that we are near the edge of the Kevir. The leaders climb up again on their camels and fall asleep. I can hear their slow regular breathing. It is strange that the animals do not grow weary and stiff and sink down on their trembling knees, refusing to go farther. They follow one another patiently. Sometimes a leading-rope breaks, but they still go on. Near the muzzle an iron chain is fastened, and the rope is tied with a piece of string to its last link. If the tension becomes too tight it does not hurt the camel, for the string breaks and the chain hangs down from the muzzle without hindering the march of the camel.

Now all the openings in the clouds have vanished, and there is not a ray of moonlight. It begins to rain, at first slightly and then more heavily. The pace is quickened. Agha Muhamed, who leads the whole train, is still awake. I have my fur at hand at night, and now pull it over me. The raindrops patter on the skin turned outwards, and an unpleasant smell of dampness is exhaled from the caravan. It is well that we have only a few farsakh more. We are now out of danger, however hard it may rain. At Rudkhaneh-i-kal, a trench 6 yards broad, running east-south-east, we have 5 farsakh left. Two more furrows are crossed, unmistakable signs that we are approaching the margin of the Kevir. At nine o'clock the temperature is  $49.1^{\circ}$ , but it blows very freshly from the north. The rain is thick and continuous. We are expecting every moment that the ground will be wet enough to make the camels slip. The height is 2356 feet.

At a quarter to ten the nature of the ground changes. We cross two more furrows, Kale-i-guch, the largest, pointing south-eastwards, in which direction the Kevir