

once on a time ran away or were entirely lost and forgotten, and, left to themselves, became so shy and wild that they avoided men and their resorts. Usually such stories are added to as the time becomes more remote. At the Rig-i-jin proper, or the sandy desert in the neighbourhood of Alem, we heard nothing of wild camels.

Near Sadfe was also an old town, called Shahr-i-surkh, where some singular spirits disported themselves. Many years ago a man had found a treasure of gold and silver coins in a garden there. But when he was urged to show where the treasure lay hidden, the town was suddenly surrounded by a score of gardens, and he could not tell in which of them he had seen the coins. Another man had also found a treasure in the old town, but after the discovery he became lame and dumb, so could not reveal the position of the place. A dervish could see the mysterious place when he was at a great distance from it, but not when he was near.

My body is still tired when Gulam Hussein wakes me next morning, but it is pleasant to be on the way, and it will be still pleasanter to know that the dreadful desert is behind us when we have crossed it a second time. But I must first draw a panorama of the whole district, and therefore I climb on to a commanding roof where I am escorted by fifty men and boys. As I do not wish to be buried under the ruins of the house I drive them away, keeping only two men well acquainted with the geography of the country. Meanwhile the camels are laden, and then off we go on the road to Turut.

In a couple of minutes we are out of the village, the main part of which we leave on the right; as also the neighbouring village of Mehdiabad, and to the east-south-east a small low hill, Kuh-i-kohuan, is seen on the edge of the desert. Our path crosses a succession of dry erosion furrows, one of them containing a kanat with a vertical well about 30 feet deep. Through all these furrows streams flow after heavy rain, washing down masses of detritus and the very finest silt to form the yellow clay of the Kevir. Here, as on the southern side of the desert depression, it is apparent that it is the peripheral drainage