

worth a kran to be quit of the man, so I threw him a coin and he trooped off.

We had heard that our travelling companions of the Yezd caravan had made a *détour* to avoid Turut and its importunate and troublesome inhabitants. We had also heard that a caravan of ten camels was to set out in a few days from Turut for Khur. Their owners had begged us to wait for the sake of company, thinking also, no doubt, that we should plough up a dry track through the desert for their animals. But their expectation was quite disappointed.

Meanwhile the löss terraces, cultivated fields, canal, and brooks are behind us, and when we cast a look back from the open ground at the singular village, we see its cubical mud houses with their round cupola roofs like clumps of mushrooms as yellowish grey and bare as the terrace out of which they rise, and which constitutes their building material. A little longer the yellow outlines of the village stand out sharply against the dull background of the detritus banks, and then are hidden by the hillocks, and there is only desert around us.

The path crosses a succession of yellow loam hills with pebbles heaped up in the furrows between them. The land is hollowed out by the erosion of water from the north-west, and we go up and down in it. Seams of gypsum protrude from the sides of the hillocks and glisten in the sun. Ali Murat has been this way many times, and we need no other guide. At Do-teppe, or the twin mounds, where the path goes through a passage between two small isolated hillocks, we have completed the first farsakh. At some distance to the east appears a bay of the salt desert, where several torrents open, so that the ground is treacherous and very dangerous for strayed camels. At its eastern side rises a small hill, and beyond it stretches a larger bay of the Kevir. Ali Murat believes that the shore of the salt desert runs on eastwards in curves in the same manner, bays and jutting promontories alternating.

Out in the nearest bay a score of small knolls stand up above the level surface of the Kevir like rocks along a coast. Before us to the south-west is seen the small hill Kuh-i-ser-i-Kevir, or the "hill at the beginning of the