

desert." We shall round its eastern point, which looks out towards the Kevir, and it will be our last landmark when we go out into the desert sea again. The yellow hillocks soon become flatter and then cease altogether, and then follows hard ground with small pebbles gently sloping to the east-south-east and crossed by a number of dry channels among meagre shrubs.

The desert sea, with its shades of brownish grey, now stretches before us farther than we can see. Due south is Kuh-i-Khur, the end of our journey, faint and dull in outline like a light blue streak a little above the horizon, and to the west of it is seen the continuation of the low hills which lie on the south side of the salt desert. At Hauz-i-ser-i-Kevir, or the "reservoir at the beginning of the salt desert," we have covered 3 farsakh. The cistern does not now contain a drop of water. The pebbles, now still finer and fewer, consist of porphyry, quartzite, gypsum, flint, coarse-grained basalt, sandstone with veins of quartz and calcite, and white, fine-grained limestone. The ground becomes flatter as it falls slowly to the margin of the desert, the pebbles come to an end, and here and there we pass small flats of salt clay of the same kind as in the Kevir.

The last belt of firm strand is very narrow, and then we are out on the Kevir, here porous, rough, and dry, and all the alarming reports we have heard prove to be baseless. Only in the shallow furrows, where the last tentacles of the rivulets pass out into the desert, is the clay wet and slippery. The boundary between the firm ground and the Kevir is so sharp that its position can be determined to a yard. Down here we have certainly the feeling of standing on the shore of a sea or a large lake. East and west the small hills projecting like capes and points grow fainter, and behind us are seen the reddish uplands above Turut. We have descended 358 feet from the village, and are now at a height of only 2313 feet.

Now our route runs south-south-eastwards, and we march over nasty, wet, and slippery ground, where the camels trip and make their riders nervous. They get on very well, however, for the path is holey and the holes