

showed a slight tendency to dune formation, but was now wet after the rain. The height was 2497 feet.

We slept on February 12 till seven o'clock, when the temperature was 45.3° , and then we marched on between terraces breaking off suddenly towards the Kevir, and their fronts often deeply strewn with driftsand. On the left stood the little hill Kureges (Khur-i-gez), and on this side of it the small sand-belt Rig-i-kademu. The country was fairly diversified; fine tall saxaul grew more closely, alternating with steppe shrubs, where a lizard and two small birds contributed to convince us that we had really left the desert sea behind us. A withered palm leaf lay in a cleft, so we were approaching the home of the date palm, the warm land of the south, the beautiful land of oases, so different from the inhospitable wastes whence we had come. We crossed a path from Jandak and Cha-no, and the whole road wound among dunes and clumps of saxaul, where camels find pasturage.

Beyond the deep, slightly briny well Cha-penu our path runs up a distinct erosion furrow between banks of clay 20 feet high, its bed still full of wet mud after the rain of yesterday, which evidently produced a considerable stream down to the Kevir. We mount up towards the foot of the hill, and cross a succession of troublesome gullies. Again the boundless level Kevir comes into sight to the north. A white belt, but just discernible, is the large salt expanse we crossed. East-north-east, on the shore, rises a small isolated hill with a steely-grey cone very conspicuous against the dark surface of the Kevir.

The road we follow, the road to Aruzun and Khur, here consists of a score of parallel paths worn down deeply into the hard ground. They all finally run together into the single track we followed through the desert which, though passing over loose material, is yet in general but little sunk in, and if it is in certain parts a foot deep, that is only in relation to its own flanking banks. This circumstance also proves that the surface of the Kevir is not constant and immovable, but that a path which may become fairly deeply trodden down during the dry season may be wiped out when the Kevir has been soaked by the winter rain. The