

considered the best, the Aruzun-Turut somewhat worse, but the Aruzun-Halvan the worst of all, for *nemek bala amed* ("the salt comes up"). In many places, it should be explained, the slabs of salt, owing to thrusts and lateral pressure, have been thrown right up so as to form complete fences of salt slabs up to 3 feet in height. Yet with good and lightly burdened camels the journey to Halvan can be accomplished in two days, water being taken from the last well. The bed we crossed in the Kevir on the last day, called Shur-ab, continues eastwards and crosses the Halvan route also. In winter it is filled with water to the depth of 3 feet, through which camels cannot wade, for the bottom consists of soft mud into which they sink. In the summer and autumn the Shur-ab bed is dry. We find, then, that this bed, whether formed by flowing salt water or by other forces, has a considerable extension eastwards. On the other hand, there is no salt lake on the Halvan route, and it is doubtful how far the maps are correct which show such a lake in the eastern depression of the desert.

We resolved to stay for a day in Aruzun if the weather remained fine, so that I could draw, but to move on if it were gloomy. And gloomy it was, worse than ever, on the morning of February 13. So we packed up our belongings and left the neat little village, so jealously hidden in its dell that strangers not acquainted with the neighbourhood would never find it, were it not for the cairns and way-marks erected on the ridges and summits around it. Aruzun, like the other places we had recently come across, resembles a coast town which is in communication with the outer world through the caravan traffic across the desert. Most of the caravans come in spring and summer, for in winter they avoid this journey through the Kevir. Here also the tradition is current that the salt desert was formerly a large lake into which a large river through the bed at Aruzun emptied its water. Ruins of houses are found in many parts of the adjacent hills. It was also said that forty years ago wild camels occurred in the sandy deserts at the edge of the Kevir, but that nothing had been heard of them in recent times. The natives are