

quite right in saying that the Kevir is a climatic boundary ; the country to the north is considered *serhed* or cold country, but on the southern side of the Kevir the land is included in the *germsir* or warm land. Date palms, which grow in the *germsir*, are very rare to the north of the Kevir.

The small village soon disappears, and we make a *détour* to avoid the Panther hill, which leaves room only for a *gudar-i-piaderah*, or ravine path available for foot-passengers. We keep to the main valley, which rises up to the pass *Gudar-i-penu*, and I note down a collection of names of valleys, passes, and summits. A tamarisk-like bush grows here in great luxuriance, sometimes assuming the dimensions of a tree, which is called *badum-i-talkh* (bitter almond), or *badum-i-kuhi* (mountain almond), and which we have heard of before. Its fruits are bitter, but they are dried, ground up, and eaten mixed with sugar. The wood is burnt into charcoal and sold. At *Cha-kotel-i-madki* or "well at the pass of the kilns," we found several of these charcoal kilns, which are excavated in the ground and walled round, and look like ordinary wells. At the neighbouring *Hebne-kotel-i-madki* a temporary waterfall had deposited lime in the form of a bowl or basin, which was now full of clear, sweet water. Such natural cisterns are called *seng-ab*, or "stone-water." The rock is limestone.

A little higher up we pass the point where a road branches off to *Khur-i-gez*. Through this place runs a more level but longer road to *Aruzun*. And then we mount slowly up to the pass *Gudar-i-penu* (4032 feet), where the landscape changes in a moment ; all the intricate dales and crests we have crossed disappear, and the country slopes down southwards, more even and slowly, to pass into an immense arena skirted on all sides by peaks, irregular and ragged hills. *Kuh-i-shur-ab-sar* in particular, the nearest to the right and a continuation of the ridge we have passed over, has the appearance of a row of ruined towers. About the pass a large flock of sheep is grazing, and it is astonishing that the animals can grow so fat and sleek on the scanty nourishment they find on this apparently bare slope.