

we approached his native village. He greeted them like a bird of passage as he went by, and parted from them without the least appearance of sadness. There is no room for tender feelings in the breast of a Persian camel-driver. He cannot love and yearn—it is all very restful and pleasant once in a way.

After a thorough rest our fat and hearty camels took to their loads again on the morning of February 17, and needed no help from hired camels. They would be able to endure without difficulty the ten days' stages which still separated us from Tebbes. As usual men and boys turned out to gaze, while the house-roofs were garnished with inquisitive women, all wrapped in their dirty white bath sheets of veils. I rejoiced to hear again the ring of my own camel bells and to sit steadily and comfortably on my tall bearer, as we trooped out of Khur, and its groups of mud cabins quickly vanished. Equally suddenly the palms came to an end immediately we had crossed a succession of furrows, hollows, ditches, and holes, all formed by rain-water and some of the latter still filled with it.

Mezre-i-neru is a small outlying village with its own grove of palm trees, and situated close to the edge of the white Kevir like a fishing station on a coast. To the north the hill Kuh-i-kuddelau rises out of this Kevir, which when we first saw it through the rain on the way to Abbasabad looked much larger than now. After a low ridge of low hillocks comes a level plain bestrewn with small pebbles, quite sterile, and falling slightly towards the north-east; here is a hauz for rain-water. South of our route appear new sections of the range Kuh-i-irech, their upper parts covered with snow. Half a mile to the north the boundary of the Kevir is very distinct and exceedingly sharply defined. Along it runs another route, which is said to be a shorter way to the day's camping-ground, but it cannot be trusted after the rain. Kuh-i-Halvan is faintly visible, but it can scarcely be distinguished from the clouds on the edge of the horizon.

At Rudkhaneh-i-ambar we have finished *ser-i-yek-farsakh*, or the first farsakh. To the right of the road where shrubs grow, a herd of camels is grazing and our stallions