

ground is wet and spongy from this heavy rain; but a cold moist Khorasan wind does all it can to remove the moisture.

The country is gently undulating, and near the camp lies a sandy belt with numerous saxaul bushes. The Teshtab furrow can be distinguished by dark conspicuous banks winding at least half a mile down to the Kevir, which becomes darker with the distance. The salt desert nearest to us is greyish yellow, which passes into a dark reddish brown and nearly to black in the distance, indicating an increase of moisture towards the lower parts of the depression. The white strips of saline efflorescence seen yesterday have now disappeared, but no doubt only to show up again as soon as the upper layer of the desert dries.

The path runs over fine pebbles and sand resting on a substratum of yellow clay. On the left lies a belt of saxaul, and on the right grow low steppe shrubs. The comparatively high hill ridge to the south is lightly covered with snow, and round its summit heavy threatening clouds are again piled up. But the weather clears again, and the sun comes out. Then the water is heard trickling, bubbling, and purling on the ground, which is as sodden as a swamp. The small isolated hills and crests come into sight again, and those that rise to the north-west are tinged with pale shades of blue and pink, which seem to hover like light veils above the dark surface of the Kevir.

At Rudkhaneh-i-lundeher we have marched 2 farsakh, and already the puddles on the ground become fewer, soon to vanish altogether. The leader believes that this is because it has rained less eastwards, but I suspect that the evaporation taking place during the day is responsible for it. The furrow mentioned, which we follow upwards towards the south-east, is eroded between red hillocks, and when we again come into open country we ride through belts of fine saxaul. The rock is red sandstone.

We approach again the shore of the Kevir, which is now barely a farsakh off. To the north, north-east, and east-north-east, the horizon of the desert is absolutely flat, and more than ever the desert conveys the impression of an immense lake, and the more so that in this direction there