

And meanwhile the rain pattered on the sand and was lost. In Turut the rain was local, and it rained, as could be seen, in half-a-dozen different places at once. But here it was general, and rained with equal intensity as far as the eye could reach, and continued without a moment's interval all day long. Strange country! A constantly overcast sky, abundant precipitation, not a glimpse of the sun—this is the last kind of weather I had expected in the eastern deserts of Haji Baba's land. Not a sign of the panorama of the hills that surround us near or far is to be detected. All view is hidden, and all kinds of work are harder. Photographing is not to be thought of; the map sheet becomes wet and pulpy; to read the compass and watch is more troublesome than usual, when I can scarcely take my hands out of my drenched pockets.

Many of the last Kevir creeks we have to cross run in farther than the others, and the last of all and the most easterly is the largest. In other respects also it is unlike its neighbours. It reminds me of a stunted *bayir*, skirted east and west by sand 65 feet high. Its bottom is hard and consists, at any rate on the surface, of hard compact sand. But the peculiarity of this creek is that it slopes towards the south, the direction to which its extremity points. I should not have noticed this circumstance, and never have thought of it, if it had not been that a stream quite a hundred yards broad and only half-an-inch deep on an average runs southwards. In places the stream is divided into arms by banks of mud some three-quarters of an inch high, but the current is so powerful that there is a tendency to the formation of small erosion edges. The ground falls then southwards, and it seems that the eastern basin of the great Kevir has a superficial drainage in this direction, though the phenomenon may of course be local and embrace a comparatively trifling area.

We crossed the creek and came to the eastern shore of sand, where our direction became due north, with large collections of rain-water on the left hand. We had, then, the suffocating north wind and pelting rain right in our faces, pattering on our clothes, and running in rivulets from them down the camels' flanks. I was so drenched that I had to