

change every thread, even to my stockings. There was silence in the caravan, only the bells ringing as usual. Those who went on foot leaned forwards as they walked, and those riding sat on their camels facing the tail, so that the rain should fall on their backs; while I sat forwards for the sake of the mapping, and the rain pelted on the sheet. I became quite frozen and numbed in the hands, but I faced the trouble resolutely.

The germsir, the warm country, where even in winter a warm sun in a bright blue sky and wide views over distant hills in the light rosy hues of the desert might have been expected! Instead, the sky is leaden grey and the rain so troublesome that I must snatch at opportunities of photographing and drawing. Ever since we have come in contact with the Kevir the weather has been such as to persuade us that the great salt desert has the effect of forming and condensing clouds.

I was, therefore, anything but disgusted when Gulam Hussein asked if it would not be well to encamp. We might have gone farther, for we were already like drowned cats, but we could see nothing of the country, so I ordered a halt. Height 2687 feet.

We pitched our tents in beating rain, and every load was, so Meshedi Abbas declared, 10 batman heavier. It was not easy to make a fire; there was plenty of firewood, but it was so wet that we only succeeded after half an hour's perseverance with the help of paper and grass. And then a blazing fire crackled and hissed in the rain. My first care was to change my clothes and hang up my dripping garments with safety-pins on the inside of the tent canvas. The camels were sent off to graze on the saxaul. Fortunately they had still their thick winter coats, though they were soaked with water. The fowls were benumbed and half dead with the cold and wind, but they were given shelter in my tent where they sat meditating round the brazier, and were regaled with bread and water. I was soon myself again, and could use my hands for making notes and sketches. We had seen no robbers up till now, nor even any suspicious signs, but the Cossacks had their rifles and revolvers ready and when I awoke once in the preceding