

thing was grey and gloomy. Here, on the other hand, the spectator was on an elevated spot with the immense depression below him, and here the sky was pure and blue, and the ground was of light, delicate, rosy tints. The whole length of Kuh-i-shuturi or "Camel Hill" beyond Tebbes shone with a faint purple shade at sunset, and even the snowfield on its crest was pink and formed a fine light outline against the blue sky behind. But the sun sank, the shadows from the western heights passed quickly over the desert and crept up the precipices of the Camel Hill, the purple hues grew dull and changed into a neutral grey, the outline of the range became indistinct, and the details of its relief, even before scarcely perceptible, vanished altogether, and rosy shades hovered on a thin veil of clouds high above the snow—a reflexion of the red light of evening.

The hurrying shades of night have stretched their dark curtain over the earth. Then is heard a wonderfully bewitching music from the inner court of the caravanserai, also surrounded by recesses with pointed arches. Two caravans are making ready for the night's march. The camels are brought forward in long rows to receive their loads. All the bells ring and their beats meet together in a single sonorous peal, strengthened by the echo from the solid stone walls and vaulted roofs, and the whole serai seems to be converted into sounding bronze and a vibrating resonator. How charming is the scene, how soothing and lulling the music, accompanied by the shouts of the men to the camels, and their talk as they hoist the loads on to the bearers! There is something grand and imposing in caravan life in Persia, the long wanderings through desert tracts, the longed-for rest at rabats. At Rabat-gur we felt that we were at a great focus of caravan life. Twenty years ago I had witnessed many such scenes on the royal road from Teheran through Ispahan and Shiraz to Bushir, and on the road through Khorasan, and I had even been a member of a large Arabian caravan from Bagdad, poor as a student and without a servant; now I travelled as a gentleman, had my own caravan, and could go whither I chose.