

he has crossed, the scene of his slow suffering progress in the burning sun and drought.

We had two months of desert behind us when we camped under the palms of Tebbes,—how gladly I would have stayed as long in the shade of the oasis! Emad-ul-Mulk tried to persuade me to do so with genuine Persian kindness. The whole oasis was mine, all his subjects were my servants. But I had no time to spare now, and between the palms floated a vision of the snow-capped mountains which awaited me far in the east, and among which, during the following years, I was to remember, on many a cold night, my sojourn in the beautiful Persian oasis.

I looked with a certain amount of respect southwards over the dreary country, where our bells would ring again during the succeeding days, and where the temperature would rise degree after degree, until at last it passed into suffocating heat on the frontier of India. Yonder the sun's rays already quivered over the sand pebbles and kevir as over a furnace which is just being heated up. On the large English map I had received in Teheran from Colonel Douglas the word "unexplored" lay to the south-west of Tebbes, just as over certain regions on the latest map of Tibet. But here, in Persia, the attractive word covers only a small patch, the part of the country which I call the Bahabad desert for want of a better name, because the road to Bahabad passes through it.

Whichever way I chose, we must in any case hire six camels, and on March 6 appeared a man who declared himself ready to put his best camels at our disposal. He undertook to lead us in ten days to Bahabad, and his animals could carry all the supply of straw and cottonseed we required. He asked 8 kran a day for each camel, and the price was to be the same if we altered our course on the way.

"Have you your camels here in Tebbes?" I asked.

"No, Sa'ab, they are grazing 3 farsakh off, but they will be here in the morning at sunrise."

"Your price is much too high. To pay 8 kran a day for a camel which is worth 50 tuman is absurd."