

deluged with rain. The road runs close beside the fortress wall, and in the old moat, so that the wheat-fields on the left lie some 6 feet above the level of the road. Palms are planted round the fields to retain by their shade the moisture from irrigation. A rain-pool was still left where the camels drank their fill.

As the camels proceed with their deliberate gait south-eastwards, and the palms of Muessinabad grow smaller behind us, we have again a feeling of steering out into a dreary sea, the even desolate plain, so silent, lifeless, and lonely. We are surprised to see some dark specks in front of us, which at length turn into two men, a woman, and a boy, who with camels set out yesterday from Pervadeh.

At a nameless hauz in a furrow, which debouches into the lake about half a mile away, we set up our tents.

During the last bit we had this lake fairly near to the right of the road, and that it was a lake and not, as is often the case, an illusion due to mirage was manifest from the dancing of the sun's rays upon it. To determine the course of the shore and take some photographs I went down to the bottom of the furrow, where some meagre plants found a hold. The furrow was dry, and opened into dark lumpy kevir, with salt patches here and there on its surface. It was dry and hard, but the ground beneath was soaked and soft. Next the shore, which runs out in small bays and creeks to the south and west-north-west, winds a belt of hard kevir mud impregnated with salt, and its surface had quite recently been under water, to judge by the fine ripple marks caused by waves. At the mouth of the furrow this belt has a breadth of 40 yards, but elsewhere it is several hundred yards broad, and away to the south and south-east several miles. The lake mirror seemed to be at most 6 miles broad to the south-west. The sheet of water lay spread over the desert as clean as a sheet of paper. At our shore the water was only an inch or two deep, but it became deeper out towards the central parts of the lake. The water is of course supersaturated with salt. The lake bottom bears well, and it is possible to walk a long distance on the crystallized salt,