

dell. The rocks are grey sandstone, white fine-grained marble, and porous, loose, calcareous sinter. Over their edges trickles a small rivulet coming from Cheshme-i-torosho, a spring of salt-water, but not too bad for camels to drink of it. But it tasted lukewarm and flat, and in the bottom of small, muddy pools flourished a vegetation of slimy weeds. The dale gradually contracts, and at length becomes a hollow way with threatening rocky projections at the sides, and whole beds of reeds and rushes, tamarisks, saxaul, and other bushes. The path rises perceptibly, but is even and the dale is very winding. At one place there is a small expansion where the bottom is covered with sand and the path runs like an avenue between beds of close reeds and tamarisks. Here and there lies a skull or a horn of a wild sheep.

We would have encamped in the dale, but the air was so close and sultry and not renewed by the slightest draught, so I wished for more open ground, and we went on over a secondary saddle, separating our dale from its next neighbour on the west. With 70.5° in the afternoon the heat was intense, and the shadow of a small hilltop afforded a pleasant and refreshing coolness. The new dale was as narrow and crooked as the former, enclosed by hillocks of rolled stones, with a bottom encumbered by sharp-edged pebbles, shrubs, and rubbish. The camels breathed slowly and heavily on the trying ascent—they wanted to be rid of their warm winter coat.

At last we are up on the Torosho pass (3209 feet), a flat and insignificant saddle, from the top of which two similar low ridges can be discerned to the south. A flat depression lies between Torosho and the next ridge.

The road down from the pass south-westwards led through another corridor as narrow and winding as that on the north side. At a distance the Torosho hill looked quite insignificant and harmless, and we could not suspect that it contained such mazes, trenches, and pitfalls. But in fact it is flat, disintegrated and irregular, while the Naibend hill, which now comes again into view, makes a comparatively grand and imposing appearance.