

more farsakh to a place where we know water is to be found. We march east-north-east; and behind a small hill in this direction there is a *sengab* or stone basin, and yet it proved afterwards that behind this very hill we had to do without water this evening. The shrubs in belts and strips become thinner, and some parts are quite barren. The ground is uncomfortably loose, and therefore our progress is slow and laborious. Rain furrows are very scarce, the rain seems to go right down into the ground, and as it seeps in it carries the finest particles with it. What remains behind is therefore loose and porous.

Farther on, it appears that the three ranges are in *échelon*, and are parallel (NW.-SE.), one following another, but each lying a little south of the next in front of it. A peculiar change takes place in the ground. The plain we have followed hitherto ends in a distinct edge of points and projections with a kevir flat stretching along the foot of it, but the path leaves it on the left hand and enters a belt of extraordinarily close-growing tamarisks in fresh green spring foliage, where the camels become refractory and hard to steer. Here two springs come forth, forming bright, clear brooks, which make the camels increase their pace. It is impossible to hold them back, and they must have their way and convince themselves that this water, so fair in appearance, is bitter and salt. We follow the stream for a time to avoid the close vegetation, and march through an alley between heath and brushwood. There is an odour of fresh spring foliage, but the mosquitoes buzzing in our ears are irritating. It is surprising to find water and verdure in this desiccated land, but our delight is not great, for there is no oasis, only an illusion beguiling and mocking our thirsty party. Out yonder is kevir, which far in the north is bounded by a low ridge faintly visible through the haze. The vegetation soon thins out, and after a belt of shrubs we are out on the salt desert, white as the whitest snow, with which the camels contrast strongly. Here we have come down to 3035 feet.

After the belt of desert we mount slowly among low ragged hills, and after three hours of good marching are told that the *sengab* of our evening camp is not far beyond