

The spring where we camp this evening is named Cheshme-i-sehesid (4370 feet), and near it stands the hill of the same name. All the running water in this district is destined for a small isolated basin called Nemek-sar-i-chashur, or the "salt-well's salt reservoir," which is bounded on the south by a low ridge. A path leads thither, which is used by small salt caravans, for, it seems, table salt is deposited in the depression. Farther to the south rises a solitary rocky hill, Kuh-i-ombar, and from its southern foot it is said to be quite 4 farsakh to the wide kevir desert.

The country continues to be as monotonous as ever, and we look in vain for an oasis, a caravan, or anything to vary this wearisome desolation. Narrow and insignificant, often smoothed out by storms and rain-water, the path meanders east-south-eastward over grey pebbly slopes scored by furrows and dipping gently to the south, where stand a number of small, barren, weathered ridges parallel to one another and the track. They are dull and dirty in colour, while the hills to the north are decked in brighter hues, red, brown, purple, with a background of blue and white, the sky and the desert. When the clouds become lighter for a time the sunshine plays freely on these bare ridges.

Dizzy and stupid after the long march of yesterday, and the forced labour and the eternal jangle of the bells, I sit dreaming and jolting on my grand camel and examine the dreary country step by step, which is always changing in our immediate vicinity, but remains the same hour after hour in the distance. To-day the temperature has never risen above 52.3° , and a cloak over the shoulders and a bashlik on the head are comfortable. I feel always a great attraction to the unknown parts of the Lut desert, and if this cool weather continues we can make an excursion southwards without danger.

A sign of life at last! Wandering nomads have set up their seven tents by the road. We halt and take a look into two tents. The black tent cloth is thrown over poles arranged in a conical form, and just at the apex an opening is left to allow the smoke to escape. Around the hearth