

are torn mats of the simplest kind, and there is a circle of rags, cushions, and tatters, a nest of dirt and vermin. By the fire are a pair of tongs, a kalia, two pots for making tea, some dishes, bowls, and bags. Outside are two heaps of fuel, dry bushes and shrubs from the steppe. We buy a sheep and a good quantity of sour milk, which is kept in skin bags, and the transaction is watched by a crowd of barefooted women and ragged youngsters, buzzing like a swarm of bees around us. The young women, these daughters of the wilderness, who like the dry plants of the steppe extract nourishment from the niggard earth, are exceedingly picturesque for all their poverty, and displayed an unabashed boldness never observed among a settled population. They crowded round me, took hold of me, and pulled my clothes about, and were exceedingly interested in the cloth of my ulster and bashlik. They asked if I could give them some turquoises, begged for money, screamed and cackled together, rushed about like wild cats, and made such a noise that at last only flight saved us from this wasps' nest.

So on we went farther eastwards. A small ass caravan was being driven westwards by five men, wearing white turbans, often seen in the extreme east of Persia, and always in Baluchistan. From a new saddle we beheld a change of scene. Flat land sloped down before us and on the right were the same intricate groups of small hills and ridges, while to the north-east rose Kuh-i-Shah, now standing alone and loftier than any other in the country.

Rain commenced again immediately after noon, and was followed by a heavy pattering shower of hail, small white particles like granulated sugar, dancing and hopping over the ground, but quickly disappearing. The camels enjoyed their coolness, but the powder quickly melted on their forelocks. A little village of twelve iliat tents stood at the foot of a mound.

The detritus slope from Kuh-i-Shah falls wonderfully slowly due south, and is crossed only by very tiny furrows. Thin grass of a spring green colour has begun to sprout up here and there, lending the steppe a cheerful appearance. New juicy leaves shoot up from the dry stalks. The