

bad, the irrigation water insufficient, the harvests uncertain, and the wolves invincible. There were now three hoary brutes which could not be got at; they carried off twenty or thirty sheep a year. The people cannot afford to keep dogs. If any one has a dog it must be fed on barley meal. The people themselves live on meal, sour milk, and butter. They cannot afford to slaughter sheep. They eat also wild herbs and wander about in summer, living in tents, but in winter they stay in the village Kelat-i-Hassan. Their appearance shows that they are poor and badly nourished, the children are thin and puny, and the country seems to suffer from famine. My informant had travelled to Khabis in six days, and said that when travellers come into the salt desert they must march on day and night, just as in the Kevir, partly that the camels may not have to go too long without water, partly to escape rain and slippery ground. In the interior of the desert there is a belt of salt deposits which in certain strips rises in cross ridges, no doubt in consequence of some lateral pressure in the soft clay. He had never seen any salt lakes, and even the great Nemek-sar contained a thin sheet of water only during the rainy season.

March 28. Beggars spring up like toad-stools from the wilderness, a swarm encircles us in the morning, and we cannot understand where they come from. We believe them when they speak of their extreme poverty and their constant hunger, and we are sorry we cannot help them all. On the day's march also small parties of ragged, dirty beggars turned up on several occasions, begging for help with heartrending voices.

The country is level and open, beside us we have solitary hills and ridges of porphyrite, and all these small elevations scattered about like islands have their individual names. The monotony of the country is oppressive. The only relief to the eye is to observe the development of the steppe vegetation, and it is pleasant to see the ground becoming greener every day. At the hill Kuh-i-rume there was a slight distraction. A camel stallion came up bubbling and gurgling, with all his nose white with foam and the froth dropping from his fleshy, writhing lips. He