

Another story of the kavir may also be related. A caravan was crossing this desert in winter; it came on to snow, they lost their way, and lay down till the weather should clear; and there they were all frozen to death."<sup>1</sup>

In the winter of 1880-81 General A. Gasteiger Khan travelled from Teheran to Bampur, Jalk, and Mashkid by command of the Shah, but his journey added nothing to our geographical knowledge. He confirms the notices of sand-dunes at Bampur, and asserts that the Bampur river contains the same volume of water all the year round. Seven miles (Austrian?) below the town "it completely disappears into the ground like a true steppe river." He calls Mashkid in Baluchistan a last outpost of life and civilization, "for here begins the most desolate sandy steppe, an eternal chaos without end, where every trail is lost and only the initiated can find their way by certain marks."<sup>2</sup>

During his journey in Eastern Persia in 1882 and 1883 Colonel C. E. Stewart crossed a part of the Lut, which lies to the north of my route between Naibend and Neh, and from his description we gather that this part of the desert is not to be trifled with. He recalls to mind that Sir Frederic Goldsmid's mission to Seistan passed through a part of the southern Lut less inhospitable than this tract, which was crossed by Khanikoff, as I have related above.

Stewart left Birjan on May 25, 1882, a season too far advanced for a desert journey. He speaks of the fearful heat and the desert wind, which was as hot as if it came from an overheated furnace. He betook himself through Khusf to Khur, which is the last inhabited place towards the desert, and says that he chose this starting-point because the desert here is narrower than along Khanikoff's line. The guides said that it was not necessary to take water, as Khanikoff had done, because water was to be found at two places during the first 80 miles. But his guide proved to be unacquainted with the desert roads, and in the end the caravan got into difficulties: "it was impossible to go on, and equally impossible to go back."

<sup>1</sup> Stack, *Six Months in Persia*, vol. ii. p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Von Teheran nach Beludschistan*, pp. 102 et seq.