

and at length halt at a place where several large "leads" are witnesses of the visit of the salt caravan. The incrustation is here $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, pure white above, and becoming more and more dirty below, all resting on sodden yellow plastic clay. In the leads the water stands nearly 2 inches deep. At half-past ten o'clock the air temperature has risen to 80.8° ; at the depth of two inches the thermometer marks 77° in the salt and 77.5° in the clay. A thermometer laid in the sun on the salt crust rises to 84.2° , but laid on a dark cloth to 102.6° . The water in the leads is heated up to 86.9° .

East and south it extends like an ice-covered sea with an absolutely level horizon.

In winter this salt crust is said to be not infrequently covered with a lake 3 feet deep, which gradually dries up in summer. In summer and autumn the salt is quite dry as I found it. This depression is of exactly the same kind as that crossed by Vaughan and Biddulph, the Darya-inemek, a temporary and vanishing lake, which is filled in the rainy season by a very shallow layer of water, and is equally rapidly emptied by evaporation. Thereupon the salt is left behind, and increases in thickness year by year.

Brownish-yellow streaks are seen on the salt crust, which are found to be driftsand brought hither by the wind. In Gushe also the Persians declared that evil spirits haunt the interior of the Kevir.

Farther east on the road to Meshed, between the stages Mian-desht and Abbasabad, is seen to the east-south-east a strip of kevir fairly close at hand, and if one ascends to the roof of the *chaparkhaneh* of Abbasabad the white salt expanse seems still nearer. From this place I made a very short excursion south-south-east on October 5. In the distance the bluish hills were visible which bound the basin on the south-east. It took only an hour over steppe and yellow clay to reach the first salt, which here is like a slight crust of hoar-frost. One or two steppe plants grew on cones 3 feet high. Then we came to a river bed with a quagmire, where there was beautifully crystallised salt and half an inch of water. From this point I rode back north-eastwards to Sadrabad, leaving Pul-i-abrishum, or "silk