

visible like a pole for a long distance over the flat country. On all sides, except where the lake is, sterile, greyish yellow plains extend, flat as a pancake. Sometimes flat islets of mud just emerge from the water, and in two places we pass lagoons which are bounded towards the lake by small strips of clay. To the east the Hamun seems boundless, no shore being visible. Sometimes we move away from the lake, again returning to its irregular coast-line.

In the afternoon clouds spread over the sky from the south, taking away the direct rays of the sun, and we have no cause to complain of the heat. A little later dense clouds float all round, it rains on Kuh-i-Khoja, and the wind blows freshly from the east. The clouds become denser and closer, changing from grey to dark purple, and show tinges of yellow and red, and we suspect that a storm is on its way. We have water to the right as well, and we are evidently on a peninsula and are to begin our navigation from its extremity. Camps and tents are seen in several places, and sometimes the shore is dotted black by cattle—the cows seem to be all black in this country, with white spots on the head and their tail tufts white. Some of them are lying in the water, so that little more than their heads are visible, thus protecting themselves from gadflies and other bloodthirsty insects. But what do they live on, for the ground is quite bare and grey, and no verdure is in sight? Perhaps they eat the root-stalks left after last year's growth of reeds. In a creek a whole herd is grazing, where, doubtless, the spring shoots are budding forth. A village of twenty-two tents and huts is on the left. When the wind falls occasionally we are pestered with flies, gnats, and midges.

Another village of twenty tents was passed, constructed of straw matting, and we encamped just beyond, on the shore. The weather was such that I could not draw or photograph; but, accompanied by Abbas Kuli Bek, I made a round through this simple gipsy encampment to gain at least a superficial notion of it.

The tents are not of cloth but of matting made of reeds which is laid over and tied fast to a frame of small poles. They are therefore made in quite a different style from the