

To the right of our route stands a group of hills called Lar, and the valley which descends from it and is intersected by our road bears the same name. It contains a rivulet of salt water. A hill farther on on the same side is called Kuh-i-piran.

It is three o'clock when we are told that we are half-way. We cannot then reach the station before it is quite dark, and we long for the dusk to relieve us from the heat of the sun. The sun is dangerous in this country, and one may have a sunstroke before one is aware. The Englishmen advised me to be exceedingly careful, and I now began by winding a white pagree round my soft felt hat.

At some distance to the south there is said to be a spring, Leshker-i-ab, with sweet water, and one of our men rides to it to fill the indiarubber bag. Rud-i-piran emerges from the hill by a valley to the south. It is now dry, but its arms can be seen spreading out in a delta over the flat detritus fan. The land in front of us, therefore, rises, and the south-eastern horizon has come quite near. A succession of similar small, trumpet-shaped valleys pass into flat detritus fans, where the dry steppe shrubs grow more freely than elsewhere. At half-past four o'clock it is pleasant, the sun being hidden by clouds. Vast and boundless Afghanistan extends north-eastwards, and the ground falls towards its plains, which like a yellow, indistinct mist lose themselves on the northern horizon. It is an illusion that the ground seems to rise in this direction.

A white-clad man on a light-coloured dromedary appears out of the desert. He quickly draws near, his jambas flying over the gravel with a gliding gait. Ah, it is the man who went to fetch water from Leshker-i-ab. When he comes to the road we halt half a minute to refresh ourselves with cool water. And then we jog on again.

A particularly large erosion furrow, quite 100 yards broad and 13 feet deep, bears the same name as this blessed spring. At half-past five we pass close to the foot of the hill beyond Kanduk. The sun sinks into clouds, but through a rift it still throws its shining arches far across to the east, where they strike the ground at the shores of God-i-Zirre, white with salt. In consequence of a slight