

from it, I cannot refrain from riding thither, for it involves only an insignificant *détour*, and after a night in the open air we shall regain the high road near the bungalow of Kirtaka. Several Europeans have already visited this singular depression.

Our men turn up later, and my belongings are arranged in the room of the station-house, and Riza gets supper ready. The twelve dromedaries I have hired cost only 20 rupees a head all the way to Nushki. The Indian Government pays 16 for its transport. A good dromedary costs 100 rupees, or only 85 if the bargain is struck between Baluchis. My large Turkman camels were then, at least, twice as dear, but they were better and stronger animals.

With two mounted men and two *bellads* or guides, I ride on April 25 north-eastwards down to the plain country round the depression of the Shela and the God-i-Zirre. The bed of the Maki-cha can be followed for a good distance, and here cool shade can be obtained under its erosion terrace 23 feet high. But presently it becomes lower, and we come out on to a gravelly slope, and are on Afghan territory, as my guide informs me. Behind us the hills present themselves more and more clearly, while before us the plain country seems more at our own level. Yellow streaks indicate belts of sand.

When we come to the edge of the detritus fan at eleven o'clock, the landscape totally changes its aspect. We have come to a much lower level, the grey detritus slope is seen foreshortened as far as the foot of the hills, and we are down on the plain where the Maki-cha river deposits its silt. At the station-house we were at a height of 3524 feet, and now the aneroids mark barely half, or 1722 feet. The detritus fan slopes very evenly and slowly towards this depression.

After four hours of rapid march we came to quite a jungle of saxaul, and here my men asked for a rest. While the dromedaries went to graze, my coat was spread out on the sand in the shadow of a close saxaul, and I lay down to take my notes, while the flies buzzed, and there was a mild breeze through the foliage as on a bank in the country on a day in midsummer. The bushes rustled and whistled