

from its sharp ridge. It looked as though the dune were smoking, and in the burning heat one could almost expect to see flames burst out. Another cyclone rushed right over us with such furious violence that the dromedaries began to run to get out of its embrace. I had to press my knees in tightly, not to be swept off the deck.

The desert stretches almost mournfully silent, light and hot in all directions round the little bungalow called Cha-sindan (3061 feet). Only milk can be obtained at the place, but its poverty is amply compensated for by its splendid water, the best we have had since the Hilmend. The well is quite 30 feet deep, and had a temperature of 73.6°. There are other wells around. We drink copiously and perspire profusely; we are in a Turkish bath all day long, the pores are always open and the water drops from them. The first bath on arrival is the most delightful hour of the day, and it is almost worth being tortured for hours to enjoy it the more. Afterwards I sit in the easy-chair and read, and at seven o'clock I go out to see the caravan start, accompanied by Riza.

I have made a Stanley hat of a Swedish newspaper, which is more useful than becoming. I folded up the whole sheet into a long strip which I then rolled round spirally, sewing it together ring upon ring into a beehive.

I could stay for hours watching the large beetles in the courtyard rolling to their warehouse marbles of dromedary dung, which these small, persevering labourers have scratched out of hard clay ground. They go backwards and roll the marbles with their hind legs. At small rises the balls roll back, but the insects begin again, and succeed in the long run. They teach us patience, and some time or other we shall certainly come out of the desert. There is a region in south-western Afghanistan called the Desert of Hell. The name would be equally appropriate for north Baluchistan.

East of Cha-sindan a large flood-bed runs down towards the Hamun-i-Mashkel. It comes from the hilly tract Melknaru, north of the road, and gives life to a little vegetation of tamarisks and steppe plants. To the east of it gravelly soil extends again, where we crossed a whole