

so large a party as mine; and as it was stopped altogether by the damp soil getting frozen overnight, men had in the evening to be detailed gradually to collect spare water in two of my iron tanks where it could be stored as ice for use on the next day.

The winter of the desert had now set in with full vigour. In daytime while on the march there was little to complain of; for though the temperature in the shade never rose above freezing point, yet there was no wind, and I could enjoy without discomfort the delightfully pure air of the desert and its repose which nothing living disturbs. But at night, when the thermometer would go down to minimum temperatures from 0° to 10° Fahr. below zero, my little Kabul tent, notwithstanding its extra serge lining, was a terribly cold abode. The "Stormont-Murphy Arctic Stove" which was fed with small compressed fuel cakes (from London!) steeped in paraffin proved very useful; yet its warmth was not sufficient to permit my discarding the heavy winter garb, including fur-lined overcoat and boots, which protected me in the open. The costume I wore would, together with the beard I was obliged to allow to grow, have made me unrecognisable even to my best friends in Europe. When the temperature had gone down in the tent to about 6 degrees Fahr. below freezing-point, reading or writing became impossible, and I had to retire among the heavy blankets and rugs of my bed. There 'Yolchi Beg' had usually long before sought a refuge, though he too was in possession of a comfortable fur coat of Kashmirian make, from which he scarcely ever emerged between December and March.

To protect one's head at night from the intense cold while retaining free respiration, was one of the small domestic problems which had to be faced from the start of this winter campaign in the desert. To the knitted Shetland cap which covered the head but left the face bare, I had soon to add the fur-lined cap of Balaclava shape made in Kashmir, which with its flaps and peak pulled down gave additional protection for everything except nose and cheeks. Still it was uncomfortable to wake up with one's moustache hard frozen with the respiration that had