

passed over it. Ultimately I had to adopt the device of pulling the end of my fur-coat over my head and breathing through its sleeve! Also in another way these first campings in the wintry desert brought some trying experiences. The tooth I had vainly endeavoured to get rid of at Tawakkel continued to cause trouble, and the neuralgic pains it gave me were never more exquisite than at night. The only remedy I had within reach to secure some rest was chlorodyne, and to take its drops I had need of water. But for this it was first necessary to melt the solid lump of ice contained in my aluminium tumbler, and the minutes which passed until I had secured over my candle the little quantity of liquid, were enough to benumb hands and fingers.

On the evening of the fourth day after entering the desert, as we were pitching camp amidst desolate sand dunes covering dead tamarisk scrub, two of the men sent ahead returned to report that Kasim's party had failed to trace the ruined site we were in search of. It was now the turn of old Turdi, my "treasure-seeking" guide and factotum, to prove his knowledge of this dreary region. He had only once in his life approached Dandan-Uiliq from this side, and had apparently, from a feeling of professional etiquette or pride, refrained from pressing his advice against the guidance of the two Tawakkel hunters. But he had more than once on the march told me that he thought our route was leading too far north, and now, on the plain avowal of their inability to discover our goal, I could see a gleam of satisfaction pass over his wrinkled face. A short conversation with the returned men sufficed for him to locate the point which Kasim's party had reached, and early next morning they were sent ahead again with full instructions that were to guide Kasim back into the right direction. We ourselves set out later, now under the guidance of old Turdi, who, with an instinct bred by the roamings of some thirty years and perhaps also inherited—his father had followed the fortunes of a treasure-seeker's life before him—found his bearings even where the dead uniformity of the sand dunes seemed to offer no possible landmark.

Skirting the foot of several higher ridges of sand or 'Dawans'