

comfortable resting-place. A garden beside an old columbarium was so enclosed in lumber and walls that it was impossible to take the camels in, and instead we tried to make a convenient camping-ground in an airy garden which could boast of only a dozen meagre poplars.

Here our tents were pitched after the other men had arrived, and here we were to remain for two days to complete our equipment and let the camels eat their fill and get up their strength for the journey through the desert. I had, then, plenty of time to look about me. Around us rose ruins of a past age when Veramin, like Rhages long ago, was a town of great importance, as may be judged from the dimensions and construction of certain of the remains. The place then deserved the name of Shahr-i-Veramin or Veramin Town, whereas now we find only a small scattered village. At a distance one seems to be approaching a place of some importance, but on a nearer acquaintance one discovers that the existing dwellings are few and poor in comparison with the remains of those which have for centuries lain in decay.

Beside our garden, close to the market-place, stands a very elegant columbarium, called simply *minar*, or the tower. In cross section it is round and fluted, and so is of the same form as the tower in Rhagae, but it has a curious roof, on which a pair of storks have built their nest; possibly a similar roof once existed also on the tower of Rhagae. The walled-up gate faces a small by-street enclosed between two mud walls. A man who has lived forty years in Veramin affirms that this tower has been a *serdab*, "cold water," that is a water reservoir or a shelter built over a well. Meshid-i-Juma is a large, fine mosque partly in ruins; its *pishtak*, or front portal, has been decorated by beautiful blue tiles, of which only half remain. At another spot, near at hand, a quadrangular mosque court has had four portals, and under its well-preserved cupola, on the west side, is a *shabestun* or temple hall, which has been tastefully ornamented with arabesques in relief, of which numerous fragments still remain. In Emrabad, the "abode of life," a village quite near to the north-west, there are remains, and in Kohne-gel, a village