

and have the dead for our next-door neighbours. There are no caravanserais, but only the ruins of an old caravan shelter. The travelling dealers who visit the town with their camels encamp outside this rabbit-warren on the great market-place for caravans, where the townsmen, if they please, can get news of the outer world. There is also a smaller *meidan*, or market-place, in the midst of which the carcass of a camel lay steeped in a pool of yellowish-red stagnant water. Kuche-bagh is a garden by the canal, where a bed of water-weeds flourishes in the slow current.

To-day scarcely any people showed themselves abroad. As I stood by the old fort, there were only two persons in sight, but news of my promenade must have been spread about, for after I had been out drawing for two hours I was escorted by quite two hundred men and boys.

This fort is the only thing worth seeing in Jandak, though it is much ruined. It is in the form of a quadrangular wall, with corner towers and gateway, and presents a picturesque, genuine Mohammedan, Asiatic aspect. The foundation or the base of the wall is built of stone, but elsewhere sun-dried bricks are the building material used. If they are questioned as to its age, the wise men of the town answer that it was erected by the great and glorious Nushirvan, the king with the immortal soul, who ruled Persia with a powerful and just hand between the years 531 and 578. However that may be, the style of building and the condition of the fort show that it must be of very great age, and, no doubt, Jandak is at least as old as the fort. And even if it is not more than 200 years old, its walls are a striking proof that this spot was formerly of much greater importance than at present, and that the route running northwards through the Kevir needed strong protection and a point of support. And it proves also that the road between Jandak and Husseinan is an old route, and that the salt desert, where it crosses, has not changed its character for hundreds of years. It occurs to one that possibly a meridional swell in the ground lies across the Kevir, dividing the salt desert into two basins or depressions, and that it is precisely on this ridge that the roads