

two outside pishtaks. The cupolas are flat, and one of them in particular exhibits very bold vaulting. The other has stair-like terraces below. Through the principal entrance, a long court is reached with fallen pishtaks, niches in the walls and a few palms, their bright green harmonizing well with the greyish yellow of the ruined walls. From this a long passage leads to a vaulted crypt, where some priests slumber in their graves amidst the gloom. Into the holiest of holies, where the saint's grave lies in complete tranquillity, a stranger cannot enter. Here the doors are locked.

I cannot resist pausing a while in the shade of the tall tamarisk, to listen to the mid-day breeze rustling through its crown of needles and enjoy the view of the singular desert town and the pink and snow-clad background of the Camel Hill. A similar tree stands near two small *gumbez* or towers. Tebbes was not the first place where we had seen one or two large old tamarisks standing peacefully outside, the outposts and heralds of the adjacent community.

Singularly enough, the temperature in the night had fallen to a minimum of  $27^{\circ}$ , and even at one o'clock it was only  $46.8^{\circ}$ , but as the air was calm it felt warm, and in the sun outside almost broiling hot. To me it was a surprise to find it so cool at the beginning of March in this part of Persia, the promised land of palms. I had expected subtropical heat at this time of year.

We returned to Tebbes through the western gate of the town, and rode up through the bazaar and the lanes leading to the tekkieh, for to-day also the play was performed as usual, and we stayed there a while. It was another chapter in the sad story, another step towards the catastrophe at Kerbela. A procession of men passed round the arena bearing a number of flags wrapped round their poles and enfolded in cloths, and then followed a group of about thirty men with their heads and the upper part of their bodies bare. They accentuated every step, and every time called out in a deep, almost frenzied voice, "Ya Hussein, ya Hussein," many of the spectators joining in. Together with the