

Ladak and Tibet, where monasteries and forts are usually constructed on commanding points and small mountain pinnacles. And in former times Naibend had every reason to be on its guard. Only thirty years ago the Baluchi robbers were wont to make raids on the village. They came in bands of two hundred, and rode swift-footed jambas, which reached their goal in a day and a half from Abdullahi. They raced like the wind over the Lut by untrodden paths, and came down like a storm on the unsuspecting village. Winter and night were the chief conditions for the success of such a raid, and it is scarcely credible that the little fort on the rock could offer any formidable resistance to the bold and warlike Baluchis.

A winding path leads up the slopes. Here and there a branch runs off to an open donkey-stall only defectively covered with dry palm leaves, or to small flat shelves which serve as roofs to the houses below, and where the absence of a parapet makes walks at night dangerous to arms and legs. In all directions the most picturesque scenes are displayed. At one side, for example, are the perpendicular walls of two houses, on the other, an abyss with palms at the bottom, and far away to the south-east the endless Lut desert. On the west stands the magnificent Kuh-i-Naibend, which we have seen from all directions. On the south its crest is free from snow, and it is only on the shaded slopes that snowfields are still able to defy the increasing heat. To the north, the direction from which we have come, there is that confusion of small horrible hills and ridges, very intricate when one is among them, but in bird's-eye view blending into crests and ramifications.

The rock is equally steep on all sides, and from the east also, where a long grey dale begins, one can climb up to the village itself, a maze of narrow winding lanes and stony paths between square houses and walled-in courts, where asses bray—there are no camels or horses in Naibend. Some paths run close along the edge of precipices. The ground is very uneven, certain parts rising above others, but in the middle of the village there is a fairly level square with a small basin, and there is another at the northern foot of the rock pleasantly surrounded by