

photographic camera in the shadow of the tower, and with the splendid view over the desert around, I was about to draw a boy, when his father elbowed his way through the crowd of onlookers and began a long sermon to all who would listen to him. He considered it highly dangerous for a heathen to draw orthodox Shiites, and he predicted that every one who was drawn would sooner or later become blind. And it did not improve matters, he said, that I asked their names and ages. The boy jumped up and hid himself, while I tried to pacify the father. The portrait should remain in my own possession, and I could very well dispense with the name. The discussion ended satisfactorily, the boy came back, and at last the anxious father allowed me to take his portrait. Another prophet of evil wondered if I were some sort of secret agent of the Shah, and if all those I drew would be forced to join the colours. He opined that in that case they would never see the palms of Naibend again.

Here, as elsewhere, I obtained information regarding all the villages, springs, wells, hills, and caravan roads in the district, and, as in Tebbes, I was somewhat uncertain as to the way I ought to choose. We had to decide on the usual road to Neh, which skirts the northern edge of the Lut, or on a little-known, and now seldom used, way right through the desert. As we chose the former, I will only very cursorily describe the chief points of the latter, as they were communicated to us by the new hunter and guide, Abbas, whom we met with on the way to Naibend.

There are, first, 2 farsakh to Dik-i-Rustem, where there is only a hut and a palm; 2 more farsakh to Araghi, where there are water and palms, but no building to rest in; then 5 farsakh to Puse-i-kal-orkosh at the foot of the hill which constitutes Kuh-i-Naibend's southern prolongation; on this stretch there is true kevir on the left hand, that is, on the east. Then is to be noticed Kuh-i-murghab or the "hill of the birds' water," to which it is reckoned three days' journey. Kuh-i-murghab should be passed on the left; while on the right, that is, to the west, lies Teghmeidan, a level tract of desert with saxaul bushes, to