

judge by the name. All the drainage from the north collects at the western foot of Kuh-i-murghab. From this hill there are two days' journey through perfect desert, the Lut, to the hill Kuh-i-bakhtab, and then a day's journey to Abdullahi, where salt water is to be found, and where the Baluchis used to rest when they made their attacks on Naibend. The first inhabited place is Deh-i-salm, a large village, with a hundred houses and palm-trees. Hence there are quite five days of desert to Neh. On the last stretch of road no elevation is seen to the south, but to the north there is Shah-kuh, visible from all parts of the country, and said to be three times as high as Kuh-i-Naibend, an estimate which is of course much exaggerated. But since it is asserted that Shah-kuh, or King's mountain, is covered with eternal snow, it must, however, be an imposing elevation. It is evidently the Kuh-i-Shah of English maps, with a height of 8292 feet.

I was much tempted to make an excursion still farther south into the Lut, but the season was too far advanced, the camels could not go more than two days without water in the now increasing heat, and therefore it would have been cruel to drive them out into the desert. Winter is considered to last only three months in Naibend, December, January, and February, but in the great Lut even the winter is mild, and now we were near the end of March. It is vexatious to feel oneself opposed to insurmountable obstacles, and such are the summer heat and drought in the Lut.

In the evening I lay pondering over new plans for travels in old Iran. I would, some time, visit the Bahabad desert and the land of wild asses, I would cross the Desht-i-Lut and the district round the Niris lake, and many other more slightly known tracts. And I thought of the long years which all this work would require, remembering that I was advancing in years, and that old age comes at last. Life is short and the earth so immensely large.

The wind blew hard from the south-west at eight o'clock, and then it rained slightly and intermittently from the dense clouds. The rain continued all night long, and our