

And again I was told of the dreaded spider with hairy body and legs. The good men of Ser-i-cha maintained that the bite he gives to wreak his revenge is exceedingly dangerous. If he bites and gets away, and manages to reach a pool of water or a canal, that is, if the spider drinks after the bite, the injured man dies. But if the man catches the spider and kills it the poison loses its deadly effect. Of course this story is only a creation of the popular imagination, and there is no truth in it. I heard it not only here but also in many other places in Eastern Persia and Baluchistan.

We stayed a day in Ser-i-cha, and I had again an opportunity of enriching my portrait gallery with various specimens. Most were young women, and many of them were quite good-looking without being actually handsome. On the whole, the women became less bashful the farther we advanced eastwards, but they could not be induced to remove anything but the veil. The head bandage they would never take off, and therefore it was quite impossible to see a pair of ears. Notions of modesty are different among different people. They showed their bare feet unbidden, even up to the knee, but the ears—never!