

At Hauz-i-Ali-Shah we took a good hour's rest, during which I photographed the caravan from all angles and positions, and also took a cinematograph film. The men took the opportunity of eating a third breakfast, and their appetite was wonderful. Hauz-i-Ali-Shah is a walled, covered-in cistern, and was full of good rain-water. Water was poured from a skin into a trench, where the camels drank. As a rule it is not thought proper to give the sweet water to camels, which can very well hold out till they come to the next well, but for once we broke the rule.

As we were setting out a party of travelling peasants and tramps came up from Seistan with bundles and children on asses. Two of their old women came hobbling slowly along in their wake. They had been twelve days on the way from Seistan, and the crossing of the Hamun lake had caused them no trouble. They were very cautious not to say a word about the unfortunate circumstances in Seistan at the present time which caused them and many others to move into the interior of Persia.

At mid-day there was a peculiar change in the weather. Straight in front of us, in the south-east, the whole horizon became yellow, just as in the Lop desert when a *sarik-buran* or yellow storm is coming on. A huge, yellow cloud, sometimes high, sometimes low and interrupted, came rolling towards us, preceded by comparative calm. After a quarter of an hour we were enveloped in it and the hills beside us disappeared. It blew freshly but not hard, and the whole sky became at the same time overcast. In a short time the squall had passed over the desert, leaving only scattered sand-eddies careering over the ground, like the stragglers of an army on the march. An hour later the same phenomenon was repeated, but this time with greater force and denser clouds of sand, which buried all the country in impenetrable gloom. The sky above Shahkuh looked dark and threatening, and dark-blue and steely-blue streaks hung down from the clouds, indicating heavy local rain. It was cold in the fresh wind and all cloaks were put on. Thunder growled in the distant hills. What a different climate from that in Naibend, where sometimes we were almost melted by the heat!