

clay gives place to steppe of the usual kind. The afternoon is fine, and the rain-clouds fly in all directions from the sun like jackals.

Now the town of Neh is plainly seen in front of us, with its commanding fort. On the left lie green fields. We cross two irrigation canals, one of them with a stone slab for a bridge; skirt extensive tilled fields, which now occupy the ground on all sides; pass the first groups of houses in Neh, and come to rest as usual at the burial-ground near the best canal with drinking water (3924 feet). Not far off is a row of the characteristic windmills we first saw at Meigon.

We camped only just in time, for the tents were scarcely up before the third rain storm of the day came sweeping over the country, first a fresh wind with a velocity of 50 feet a second, and then half an hour of pouring rain, which drove the inquisitive onlookers to flight in a moment. The precipitation is said to be very variable in different years. This year there was abundant rain, scanty last year, while three years ago it had been so heavy that several houses in Neh had collapsed. Rain might be expected for a month and a half longer, but then would come burning summer without a drop. Snow had fallen twice this year. It lies at the most two days.

Neh has 400 houses, 30 shops in the bazaar, and 75 mills. Wheat, barley, melons, pomegranates, apples, pears, grapes, mulberries, figs and cotton are grown. The production of wheat is insufficient for the needs of the place, and must be supplemented by imports from Seistan, whither cotton is sent in return. Dates are imported from Deh-i-salm, an oasis two days' journey distant to the south-west. There, it seems, there are as many as 10,000 palms. For the rest Neh has 200 camels, used in caravans, a score of horses, a few cattle, and 2000 sheep. There are no jambas, or swift dromedaries. Nineteen villages are scattered over the country around, and several of them have gardens.

For the present Neh was practically cut off from Seistan and Khabis, for these places were ravaged by plague. Travellers coming from Seistan had to undergo five days'