

cruel to force them through a germsir and through swarms of gadflies.

After long bargaining, we agreed on a price of 500 tuman, and the Kafle-bashi offered to pay 400 in silver, and to give me for the remainder a horse which was worth 100 tuman. But I have always been afraid of horse-dealers and I said that I had no use for the animal. He yielded, and agreed to give me the whole sum in silver, and thus the wretched business was concluded, but I had a lump in my throat all evening.

Before the sale was finally transacted I went, however, to our camp and talked with Meshedi Abbas, Gulam Hussein, and Abbas Kuli Bek. They heartily approved of the transaction, which was a striking proof of unselfishness, and removed my suspicion that each hoped to receive a camel as a present. It was their opinion that if we could take the animals to Seistan they would not fetch more than 300 tuman, especially if they were eaten up by gadflies; and the strongest and largest would succumb first. It was decided that we should remain over the next day to complete the nefarious business, and the Kafle-bashi undertook to procure us six hired camels to the lake; we did not want more, as we had no longer to think of the transport of camel fodder.

Late in the evening I went to pay a farewell visit to the camels, who lay, suspecting no evil, in two groups round their heaps of straw and cottonseed. I patted and caressed my old bearer, and he put out his shaggy head towards me, and looked at me with his large brown eyes. He was seven years old, and Meshedi Abbas said that he had ten years' more work before him—I wondered how many I had myself. I scarcely dared speak, lest my voice should tremble, as all the men stood round me silent and sad. The lantern threw a pale yellow light over the group of men and animals. I had had this great head in front of me for three months—it seemed an endless time since we left Teheran. Gulam Hussein said the camel understood that he was sold and would in future belong to another owner. He understood his hopeless state, and only wished he could speak and beg to remain with us, in spite of all