

CHAPTER LIX

THE ROAD THROUGH BALUCHISTAN

WHEN the minimum has been 70.3° , not much can be expected of the day. The sun rose bright and clear, but by seven o'clock it was concealed by clouds. We bless this natural parasol and hope it will remain till we are at the next bungalow. It makes the light also more subdued. In the sunshine I am almost blinded in double snow spectacles by the tremendously strong reflexion from the ground.

Accompanied by Nevengk, who had come back in the night from the caravan, we set out at six o'clock and steer a course due east. To the right we have a low ridge, to the left one a little higher, but the ground slopes down to the north, and the erosion furrows from the southern hills cut through the northern. The country is slightly hillocky, absolutely barren, and bestrewn with reddish and greenish-purple pebbles of limestone, tuff, weathered porphyry, all rocks which occur *in situ* at a little distance.

Dreadfully monotonous is this country. For hours the scene does not change, and I can quietly sit and read on my dromedary. To the east it is raining over a small area, but to the south the sky is clear. If only we can reach the station before the clouds disappear! The telegraph wires hum beside the road. Political secrets are running to and fro along them.

Before nine o'clock the zenith is quite clear, and at one o'clock the thermometer shows 91.8° in the shade. Now and then a gadfly shoots like an arrow through the air,