

have no letters to you, Colonel, but am sure we have mutual friends in London. We have just come over from Osh, and would like to know where we may find lodging in Kashgar."

"Why not stop here with me?"

"Gladly, Colonel."

Such was the beginning of a six days' "at home" with this sole Britisher in all Turkestan. His mission is that of sentinel on the picket line of empire. Uncomplainingly he labours under the awkward title, "Temporary Assistant to the Resident at Srinagar for Chinese Affairs." And Consul General Petrovsky had a habit of saying, whenever questions arose between British and Russian subjects, "*Mr.* Miles, my good friend, we shall discuss this matter, not because you have any official position justifying a demand, but because I like you." There was unnecessary emphasis on the "*Mr.*," for Miles's rank in the Indian army is independent of his temporary duty. Yet, in a way, M. Petrovsky was right—Colonel Miles's civil title is an absurd and embarrassing one, save on the theory that London might in some crisis freely disavow or adopt the acts of an official in Chinese Turkestan, who is a mere assistant to an official in "independent" Srinagar, who is in turn named by an official in Calcutta, who reports to the Secretary of State for India. The enjoyment of such independence in Downing Street may easily outweigh many years of annoyance to the lonely sentinel in Kashgar.

Colonel Miles helped us much in finding men and horses for the journey. The latter are easy, the former are hard, to obtain. The ordinary