

Kashgari is not adventurous. Our three recruits for permanent service were: one an Afghan, Mir Mullah; one a Ladaki, Lasso; and one a half-breed boy, a Yarkand-Kashmir cross, Achbar by name; he came at the eleventh hour, was joyously welcomed, and as an interpreter for many days strenuously tried us. His vocabulary was painfully extended from twenty-five up to fifty words, and one blank stare. Achbar was the only human being available as interpreter in all the province about us. Joseph was exhausted; he must return to the soft care of civilisation in Tiflis. The persons speaking European languages in Kashgar were the members of the Russian colony: Colonel Miles and his moon-shee (clerk), from India; Father Hendricks, Catholic missionary; a Swedish missionary family of Lutheran persuasion; and Achbar, whose English had come from another Swedish missionary, now dead. He had taught the boy to call the Bible "Angel Book," and enough of Christian doctrine to make of him an indifferent polytheist, ready to give youthful credence to any set of supernaturals presented by any respectable authority.

With all reverence for our Occidental faith, it may fairly be wished and believed that Achbar should soon be firmly re-established in the faith of his fathers, since, in the nature of the case, he could never be other than a hazy, slipshod Christian. His theology clearly resembled his English. After two days' labour to teach him the word "now" he startled me by stolidly saying: "You mean 'at present.' " And when despair had come to close further exertion on the word "perhaps," there came