

tribes in the corner of the plateau still under Chinese direct control. M. Petrovsky also called in formal fashion, mounted Cossacks riding before and behind a quaint low carriage which looked homesick. He said that *since he had so promised* he would write his Aksakol (=white-beard=chief of merchants) at Khotan to advise him of our coming. And, indeed, the sleek Andijani who spoke for the Consul in Khotan was on the *qui vive* and watched us well, and did naught else. Whether our later misfortunes were in any way connected with the sealed letter, or were caused by the left hand of Chinese policy undoing the work of the right hand we never knew. Most probably 't was only the duplicity of the timid native Begs which undid us.

A pleasant visit we had from a young Mandarin of great name, acting as mayor of Kashgar, under general direction of the Provisional Governor (Taotai). This young man was the son of a Manchu general who reconquered, forty years ago, all Turkestan from the failing power of Yakoob Beg, whose rise and fall make the last great epic of ambition which has been played across these sands and within these waving oases.

While this delicate-featured, refined, peace-loving Asiatic was making his call, there came another caller, another Asiatic (?) whose personality, in its strong contrast with that of the young mayor, seemed to present the whole Russo-Chinese question. He was a captain of Cossacks, who might have been the original of the Russian officer in Kipling's powerful sketch, *The Man Who Was*. He had entertained us with song and drink, with tossing