

deep night of sand-clouds, we found stakes driven where the trail ought to be—a sort of raised-letter-print for the blind and groping caravan.

At intervals of about fifteen miles the Chinese Government has had langars built, houses of stone, without furniture, but offering welcome shelter from sun or snow or sand. If near a farm, one could buy horse provender, perhaps chickens or a sheep. We paid the attendant fifteen cents per night for this shelter—covering ten men and as many horses. Generally the same sum was paid as rent to a private owner for our rooms and a court where our men and horses were lodged. Chickens usually cost five cents each; wood for cooking dinner and breakfast, another five cents—a little more if in the blank desert. Forage for horses cost about ten cents per day per head. The scale of expense is pleasing, is it not? Trading generally seems all retail—straight from producer to consumer without intervention of the wholesaler. The turn-over is quick, I fancy. The stock may be incredibly small. While developing Achbar's English I one day painfully conversed thus:

“What did you do before you came with us?”

“Merchant.”

“In the bazaar?”

“Yes.”

“Who bought your goods when you left?”

“My brother.”

“How much?”

“Nineteen tenga.”

Now a tenga in Chinese Turkestan is worth about five cents, so it appears that Achbar's daily bread