

life should possess the elementary virtues developed as they were in this band of nomads, dwelling in the western wilds of Tibet, hundreds of miles from their kind. They were dignified, yet respectful; they were poor, but honest; they were hospitable, but not fawning; we were helpless in their power, and they sold their scant provisions and their labour (vital to us) for the usual Central Asian prices. On the mere word of our men they took Russian gold in payment, though they were familiar with no money save the Chinese silver, and must send the gold to Yarkand or Kashgar for exchange.

The service of the camels that brought us out, including the men who tended them, was charged at forty cents per day each. The ponies which we rode were also forty cents each per day, including the necessary grain, which is here very precious, as it must be brought by caravan from Yarkand. The Good Samaritan could not have better played the rôle which he created than did these Mussulmen, astray from temple and from mosque. Judging from the glimpses of Kirghiz life which we had while crossing the Alaï Mountains from Osh to Kashgar, I had thought these nomads quite careless about all religious ceremonial, as, indeed, must be probable, since they are never in communities where they may be assembled in pious celebrations. Yet so strong was the hold of the Prophet's law that the morning sun, looking into their cheerless camp, found all the men in genuflexion toward Mecca. This persistent but unostentatious performance of the prayer rite is—well, it is *not* European, or, shall I say, not Protestant European.