

wearisome camels were no longer required. I was fortunate in being able to effect an excellent arrangement with my "boy" Liu-san, by which he engaged to land me at Kashgar by contract on a certain date. I was to be regarded as a piece of merchandise to be carted from one place to the other, and he was to undertake the whole of the arrangement. He was to land me and my baggage at Kashgar in forty days, and was to be paid seventy taels (about £17 10s.) here at Hami, and thirty taels more if we reached Kashgar in the stipulated time. He was to receive two taels extra for every day in advance of that time, and two taels would be deducted for every day more than the forty days. This arrangement fully answered my expectations. The money which was to be made for transport went into my "boy's," and not into some outsider's pocket, so that he at once became directly interested in the journey. And instead of having to go through all the irritating and irksome process of perpetually nagging at the servants and pony-men, which utterly destroys the charm of travel, I could go about with my mind at rest, well-assured that my "boy" would be worrying