

pair of pepucks or numnah stockings, a pair of long cherooks or native boots, and a pair of gloves. The preparations were simple, but the Oriental propensity to delay made it necessary for me to hurry and bustle to get things ready in time. By adopting this method I had the satisfaction of seeing everything complete and in order, two days before I intended to begin the journey. In bargaining for cash in exchange for bills I found I was no match for the Indian traders. A supply of small change was indispensable, and hitherto I had had no difficulty in finding purchasers for large rupee notes, cheques, and bills on Indian banks. Two Hindus agreed to cash a draft for 1,000 rupees at the rate of 6 tongas 20 dachen per rupee, but before the money was paid Utam Singh told me he could have got 7 tongas 2 dachen, and I found several traders who were willing to accept this rate. My transaction with the Hindus, however, became known, and all other offers were withdrawn, so that there was clearly an understanding among the traders not to spoil the market for each other.

One day when my rooms were in confusion with packing operations, and when I was setting out for a walk, I received an intimation that the Chow-Kuan had returned to Yarkand and was on the way to visit me. This was, of course, intended to be a ceremonious affair, and I had to hasten back to my quarters, order Abdul Karim to tidy my room, and Dass to prepare tea, and then to see that I myself was dressed suitably for the occasion. While I was actually putting on my best clothes the visitor was announced, and I had to hurry to the courtyard to receive him, buttoning and bowing and making profuse apologies for my unreadiness. I did my best to look dignified, but was unsuccessful. My unbuttoned smoking-jacket, knickerbockers unfastened at the knee, braces hanging loose behind, and boots unlaced, amused the retainers of