

## CHAPTER XVII

Trouble about money—The Khan Arik route—Large oasis—Khan Arik—Meeting Macartney—Hospitable hosts—Civilisation—Muz Tagh Ata and Mount Kungur—The Taotai—Formal complaints—His promise—Dinner with the Taotai—Feeling a fool—M. Petrovsky—Swedish missionaries—Macartney's position—Departure from Kashgar.

AT Yarkand I learned that the Chow-Kuan had recently sent to the Beg of Sarikol to inform him that I had gone to the mountains and was travelling without a passport, and that he had commanded the Beg to ascertain what I was doing. This order, which ended with the usual formula, "tremble and obey," had probably been sent by direction of the Taotai, for I had told the Chow-Kuan, before setting out, that it was my intention to travel in Sarikol, and, as far as possible, I kept him acquainted with my movements. Instead of objecting, the Chow-Kuan had sent a subordinate official with me to facilitate matters.

Remembering the sharp practice of the Indian traders in the matter of the bill of exchange in October, I made careful inquiry before offering another bill for sale. The chief traders at Yarkand formed a sort of "corner," at the head of which was Pundit Boota Ram, and they had conspired together to over-reach me a second time. Raju, who had been left behind during the winter to buy ponies, knew of their intention, and the rogue acted in