

day, as politeness required it should be, but on the following day, when he, while informing me with a show of goodwill that I might await the arrival of the reply from Kashgar at Polu, made it clear that he would render me no assistance. I produced my passport and asked him why he would not respect that formal document; but my remonstrance was of no avail, for he only talked round



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and round the matter, giving long explanations from which no information could be gathered.

It was clear that I must wait at Khotan, so, instead of delaying to make my purchases till I reached Kiria, I began at once to buy stores. Forage and corn being now scarce and dear, I followed the example of the natives, and, without any order, applied to the Government stores, where the surplus Government stock was being sold at prices much below those of the open market. My