

caravans, one must suppose that military occupation was in view. Liu Ta-jin, the energetic Chow-Kuan of Yarkand, was charged to report on the matter, and he is credited with having stated that, unless China intended to abandon Sin-Chiang, the request of Russia should be refused.

The question of the Kanjut occupation of Raskam was used by Russia as the basis of a prospective claim for compensation. The Kanjuts had become subject to the Indian Government, though the Mir of Hunza, their head, paid a small tribute to China, and since they had been compelled to forsake their predatory habits they had grown too numerous to support themselves in the Hunza valley by peaceful means. They therefore resumed the cultivation of the patches of cultivable land in Raskam, otherwise unoccupied, and regarded by them as their own. Two of their number, employed in looking after the irrigation of their fields in 1897, were arrested by the Chinese on the ground that they were emissaries of the Indian Government; the Mir of Hunza thereupon made application directly to the Chinese for permission for his people to cultivate the Raskam soil which no one else desired; but Sir Buland Ali Sha, Beg of the Tajiks in the neighbourhood, also applied for similar permission on behalf of his people, not because they wanted the land, but because they were commanded to provide a pretext for refusing the Kanjut petition. The negotiation on the part of China was carried on by the Taotai at Kashgar, a weak and cringing man, who was directly under the influence of the Russian Consul-General. M. Petrovsky asserted that the Kanjut application was instigated by the Indian Government for the purpose of obtaining possession of Raskam, and that, if it were granted, Russia would demand Tagharma to counterbalance the British gain. This place is about one march north of Tashkur-