

purpose of my first stay at Srinagar. There were plenty of orders to give for mule trunks and leather-covered baskets or 'Kiltas,' in which stores, instruments, &c., were to be packed. Fur coats and warm winter clothing of all sorts had to be provided to protect myself and my followers against the cold of the Pamirs and the Turkestan winter; bags to carry provisions, and all the other paraphernalia which my previous experience showed to be necessary for a protracted campaign in the mountains. Clever and intelligent as the Kashmir craftsman ordinarily is, it requires protracted interviews to ensure that the work he is going to execute is really that intended. So what with endless particulars to be explained, and all the bargaining which local custom renders indispensable, there remained little time during these busy days to collect information on the important questions affecting the first part of my journey.

The Government of India in the Foreign Department had granted me permission to use the Gilgit-Hunza route for my journey to Kashgar. The special conditions prevailing along the "Gilgit Transport Road" made it necessary to give timely and exact intimation as to the amount of transport required, the number of followers, &c., all the more as the time I had fixed for my start, the end of May, was in advance of the regular transport season. Luckily, Captain G. H. Bretherton, D.S.O., Assistant Commissary-General for Kashmir, to whom I had to apply in the matter of these arrangements, proved exceptionally able and willing to afford information. Guided by his experience, I was soon in a position to prepare with fair accuracy my estimates as to the time, means of transport, and supplies needed not only up to Hunza, but also beyond towards the Chinese frontier. It was no small advantage to obtain quickly a clear working plan of these practical details. For upon the exact information which I could send ahead to Gilgit and Kashgar depended my hope of securing, without loss of time, all that was needful for the onward journey.