

professional help far away in the desert, I arranged to include among the labourers a young cultivator who had been to a Mosque school and had acquired the art of writing Turki, not according to any high standard of orthography, it is true, but still legibly. Another was used to practise tailoring in his spare hours, while a third was proficient in leather work and could look after the men's boots. Each man had to bring his 'Ketman,' the hoe in common use throughout Turkestan, which proved an excellent implement for excavation work in the sand. Steel shovels of German make I had brought along from Kashgar; but I soon found that, except where there was a risk of causing damage to buried remains, the 'Ketman' to which the men were accustomed yielded much better results.

For the carriage of the men's food, supplies, and other impedimenta the few camels I could spare were not sufficient. So a dozen donkeys were engaged which offered the advantage of needing a minimum of fodder. For the camels only a quantity of oil made of rape seed could be taken along. Half a pound daily of this evil-smelling liquid for each animal proved wonderfully effective in keeping up their stamina during the trying desert marches, when they had to go without grazing or fodder of any kind and sometimes for a number of days without water. Our ponies, for which the desert to be crossed offered neither sufficient water nor fodder, were sent back to Khotan in charge of Niaz, the interpreter. The dejected faces of my servants, when it was made clear to them that they would have to trudge through the sands on foot like myself, were truly amusing.

A severe cold brought on by exposure made me glad for the day's halt at Tawakkel which these various preparations demanded, and which was the last I could pass in comparative comfort. My attempt to utilise it also for getting rid of a troublesome tooth through the local barber's help proved a painful failure. This worthy first vainly tortured me with a forceps of the most primitive description, then grew nervous, and finally prayed hard to be spared further efforts. Perhaps he had lost confidence in his hands and