

I was glad that, on the morning after my arrival, I still felt well enough to call on Pan-Darin, who received me at his Yamen like an old friend, and, as I imagined, somewhat like a fellow-scholar. Much I had to tell him of my excavations and the finds which rewarded them. When next day the old Amban came to return the visit, I had ready a little representative exhibition of my antiquities to satisfy his curiosity. Pan-Darin is undoubtedly a man of learning and versed in Chinese history. All the same I was surprised by the historical sense displayed in the questions which he put to me regarding the relative age, the import and character of the multifarious ancient documents I had discovered. When I attempted to explain by a reference to the plates in Professor Bühler's "Indian Palæography" how a study of the writing in the various manuscripts would enable us to fix their dates with approximate accuracy, Pan-Darin at once showed his appreciation of this evidence by writing down the modifications through which Chinese characters have passed in succeeding periods. I felt almost in company of a colleague, and forgot for a moment the irksome circumlocution and confusion which conversation through a not over-intelligent interpreter implies.

Only in one respect did the interest of Pan-Darin in my finds at first embarrass me. He dwelt on the fact of all these old records being carried away to the Far West. What could he show to the Fu-tai or Governor-General at Urumchi, who had been so inquisitive about the object of my excavations, and who undoubtedly would wish to hear of the results? I knew how sympathetically Pan-Darin had represented my case, and thanked him heartily for the support he had given to the cause of science. I assured him against the future curiosity of the Fu-tai by promising to send from Kashgar photographs of the various types of ancient documents. "But they should be in duplicate," was the cautious demand of my learned friend. For he seemed eager to retain for himself some samples of the strange records which the desert had yielded up after so many centuries. I feel confident that, of the copies of my