

justice might perhaps take a view very different from ours. There was also the manifest difficulty of bringing the other members of the firm to book, not to mention the "extenuating circumstances" connected with the way in which encouragement had been afforded to the fraud by indiscriminating purchasers. Nevertheless, when I remembered the great loss of valuable time and labour which the fabrications of Islam Akhun and his associates had caused to scholars of distinction, it was a satisfaction to know that this clever scoundrel had already, on one count or another, received from Chinese justice his well-deserved punishment. For fraudulently obtaining from Badruddin a sum equivalent to about Rs.12 on the strength of a scrawl which he pretended to be Captain Deasy's order, he had been made to wear the wooden collar for a good time; for the imposture practised as Mr. Macartney's Agent he had suffered corporal punishment as well as a term of imprisonment.

I had ample opportunity in the course of these prolonged "interviews" to convince myself that Islam Akhun was a man of exceptional intelligence for those parts, and also possessed of a quick wit and humour, equally unusual among the ordinary 'Khotanliks.' He was of slender build, with a face and eyes expressing sharpness as well as sly restlessness. Something in his looks I thought suggested Kashmiri descent, but this I was not able to ascertain. He greatly amused me by his witty repartees to honest old Turdi, whom with humorous impudence he adduced as a living demonstration of the fact that "there was nothing to be got out of the desert." He was greatly impressed by seeing his own handiwork so perfectly reproduced in the photogravure plates accompanying Dr. Hoernle's Report, and was very anxious to learn how this feat could be accomplished. I had no doubt he was fully alive to the splendid opportunities for fresh frauds which this 'Wilayeti' art might provide. How much more proud would he have felt if he could but have seen, as I did a few months later, the fine morocco bindings with which a number of his block-printed Codices had been honoured in a great European library!