

me. The amiable old administrator did not deny the genuine interest and goodwill with which he had followed my work. But he politely insisted on attributing all the sympathy and support I had enjoyed from him and his Ambans to the benediction of my patron saint, 'Tang-Seng.' He even suggested as an explanation that we might both, in some previous birth, have been together under the direct spiritual influence of the great Buddhist monk! The Tao-tai talked of an early retirement to Hu-nan, and of his wish to end his days peacefully in a famous Buddhist convent near his home. This pious hope was not fulfilled; for illness and age caused him to pass away at his post within a year of my departure.

After a fortnight of busy work the demobilisation of my camp was completed, and all my antiquities safely packed in twelve large boxes. They were duly presented at the Russian Consulate for purposes of customs examination (a most gently conducted one), and then received their seals with the Imperial eagle, which I succeeded in keeping intact until I could unpack my treasures in the British Museum. I may mention the fact of my personally taking these boxes unopened over the various land frontiers from China to England as an indication of how much civilisation has done to obliterate in some respects the great barriers between Kashgar and London.

At last the day came when I had to say farewell to my hosts, whose unceasing kindness had made this first and practically only rest after my desert wanderings an experience of which the pleasure will not easily fade from my recollection. On the morning fixed for my own departure I saw Sub-Surveyor Ram Singh, the faithful companion of my travels, set out for the return journey to India. He had rendered excellent services in accurately surveying the whole of the ground covered by my journeys, and had in addition to his proper duties been always eager to make himself useful in connection with my archæological work. He had at all times cheerfully borne the fatigues inseparable from rapid travelling over difficult ground and often under trying climatic conditions, and had given me valuable help in the management of my camp. I had