

impressed me at once very favourably by his lively ways, frank and kindly look, and an unmistakable air of genial reasonability. His terms seemed at first by no means low, amounting, with allowances for a servant, to 50 Taels or about rupees 120 *per mensem*. But in view of the high rates of remuneration prevailing for Chinese clerical employment throughout this outlying province, there could be no questioning on that score.

Chiang-ssü-yeh cheerfully assured us he was prepared to face the 'Great Gobi,' and something in his round jovial face and in the alert gait of his slight but wiry body gave me hope that he would know how to shift for himself even on rough marches and among the discomforts of desert camps. Mr. Macartney, whose knowledge of everything Chinese is profound, and who can read human character in general with rare penetration, found Chiang both clever and straight, and thought he might do some day as a successor to the Agency Ssü-yeh. This hope would, of course, act as an inducement to my Chinese assistant and mentor to stick to me, and was therefore confidentially hinted at.

Chiang's stock of Turki was extremely slight, in spite of some seventeen years' stay in the country, and at first sounded scarcely more intelligible to me than Chinese. It was the queer lingo which has grown up in the 'New Dominion,' by a constant process of clipping and transmogrification in Chinese mouths unable to pronounce the consonantal combinations of real Turki or to use its elaborate inflectional system. Still, we soon managed to make intelligent guesses as to our mutual sayings, and within a few hours from our first interview Chiang was formally attached to my establishment and busily helping to check Chinese names in my proofs. How I then wished that years of Sinologist study could have provided, for intercourse with my new Chinese assistant, that common stock of scholarly interests which my knowledge of Sanskrit had given me from the start, for work with my Pandit friends in Kashmir!

But it did not take long, once we had been thrown together in the constant intercourse of daily travel, before