

possible ulterior objects. Recognising the soundness of his reasoning, I restricted my 'Dakshina,' or offering, to a piece of hacked silver, equal to about three rupees or four shillings. The gleam of satisfaction on the young Ho-shang's face showed that the people of Tun-huang, whatever else their weaknesses, were not much given to spoiling poor monks. As to Chiang, I thought I could in his attitude detect something closely akin to that mingled regard for the cult and self-conscious pity for its ignorant representatives, which in the old days never allowed of easy relations between my learned associates in Kashmir and the local priests at pilgrimage places we used to visit together for archaeological purposes.

It was getting dusk before I could tear myself away from this wonderful beehive of temples in its setting of barren rocks and sands. The route we followed when returning clambered up the riverine terrace by a steep detritus-covered slope, and then crossed the bare gravel plateau which edges the foot of the outer hills. The west wind which now swept it was piercing, and in the dust-laden atmosphere complete darkness soon overtook us. So there was nothing to interfere with the pictures full of vivid colour and grave pomp, all of ages long gone by, which that day's over-abundant sight-seeing had left impressed on my mind's eyes.