

like grasp of the advantages to be attained by accommodating me in the matter of useless old things, the day closed with a gratifying achievement. In accordance with his own advice, I had left the Ssü-yeh alone to tackle the question of how to secure quietly the manuscripts and paintings selected. It was late at night when I heard cautious footsteps. It was Chiang who had come to make sure that nobody was stirring about my tent. A little later he returned with a big bundle over his shoulders. It contained everything I had picked out during the day's work.

The Tao-shih had summoned up courage to fall in with my wishes, on the solemn condition that nobody besides us three was to get the slightest inkling of what was being transacted, and that as long as I kept on Chinese soil the origin of these 'finds' was not to be revealed to any living being. He himself was afraid of being seen at night outside his temple precincts. So the Ssü-yeh, zealous and energetic as always, took it upon himself to be the sole carrier. For seven nights more he thus came to my tent, when everybody had gone to sleep, with the same precautions, his slight figure panting under loads which grew each time heavier, and ultimately required carriage by instalments. For hands accustomed only to wield pen and paper it was a trying task, and never shall I forget the good-natured ease and cheerful devotion with which it was performed by that most willing of helpmates.