

single-mindedness could have made his way up the official ladder.

It was a satisfaction to me to thank my dear old friend in person for all the help he had extended to me from afar, and my stay, which I prolonged for his sake to five days, passed most pleasantly. During our daily forgatherings there was so much to tell him about the results of my two years' explorations, and so many cheerful reminiscences of old Khotan days to revive. I had brought a few specimens of my finds from the Tun-huang *Limes* and elsewhere for P'an Ta-jên's benefit, and to see him reverently handle and study those Han relics was a treat. It was the same with the advance copy of my *Ancient Khotan* volumes which I was able to show him.

The practical objects of my Ak-su visit were obtained at the same time. Through the kind help of P'an Ta-jên I secured the local assistance which Rai Lal Singh needed for the continuous survey he was to carry through the outer T'ien-shan range as far as the passes north of Kashgar. My Surveyor was most keen on this chance of independent work before our return to India; for twenty-four years of hard service all over Asia from Arabian deserts to Mongolia had in no way blunted his energy and ardour.

Honest Chiang-ssŭ-yeh, too, well deserved a special effort on my part. P'an Ta-jên's friendship was to be utilized in order to obtain for Chiang the chance of official employment he had vainly striven for ever since he first came to the New Dominion some twenty-five years before. So a detailed report on his former services and all he had done for me was drawn up for submission to the Fu-t'ai or Governor-General at Urumchi, nominally in my name and ending with a recommendation for the grant of official rank. I myself did not expect success from such a document from a mere 'outsider,' and a foreigner in addition. But P'an Ta-jên thought well of Chiang's plan, and even took the trouble of revising the letter with his own hand. He also agreed to send it up to the fountain-head of official favours under his own seal and cover. So Chiang, ever sanguine, was buoyed up by hopes of thus gaining his way into the official hierarchy, even though he could not raise enough