

way he managed to get all his accounts and correspondence done by his young son of thirteen or so (Fig. 309), who alone in the family was able to read and write. It is true that the long letters he used to send me through this youthful scribe had sorely tried learned Mullahs all along my route from Tun-huang to Yarkand, and that the disentanglement of his accounts of expenses incurred on my behalf was a business which I had learned to dread from sad experience.

In the midst of all these distracting concerns it was a real relief when on July 20th my energetic Surveyor, Lal Singh, rejoined me after a separation of nearly three months. Injury to a level of the theodolite, which at the time could not be repaired, had prevented the hoped-for triangulation from Ak-su to Kashgar; but he had succeeded in effecting very useful surveys with the plane-table along the T'ien-shan range up to the watershed north of Kashgar. Then he had travelled to Guma by a route different from the high roads already surveyed, and had thence succeeded in mapping, as directed, the last portion of *terra incognita* on the northern slopes of the Kun-lun between the Kilian and Middle Kara-kash valleys. Our routes since Ak-su had crossed only at one point, the oasis of Abad north of Yarkand; and it was no small satisfaction to me to find that, though the distance covered by me from our common starting-point, Ak-su, amounted to over 350 miles, the position shown for Abad by my own plane-table survey differed from that of Lal Singh by only one mile in longitude and about two in latitude. Just about that time there arrived also Muhammadju, my old Yarkandi follower, invalided home from Abdal, but now ready to serve me again with his knowledge of the Polur route and the Kara-kash Valley.

A week later the final completion of packing allowed me to take my first day of relative quiet by paying a farewell visit to Yotkan, the site of the ancient Khotan capital. The annual washing for gold in the 'culture strata' deeply buried beneath the layers of fertile alluvial soil had already begun, and while staying during the heat of the day with my old host, the Yüz-bashi, I was able to acquire from the villagers a fair collection of terra-cotta grotesques, and