

heart-rending circumstances. They seemed to be quite cheerful and to have no thought of the black future before them when they would reach Peking or Shanghai and join the ever-increasing crowd of Russian refugees dependent entirely on foreign charity. And in spite of their distress they wanted to give Mons. Geerts a feast in acknowledgement of the kindness they had received.

Several thousands of Russians were still scattered over Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan; and Pereira reflected how impossible it would have seemed ten years ago that a great Empire like Russia should be dragged down so low and give such an exhibition of impotence and misery.

Pereira stayed at Lan-chow nineteen days and on April 3 left for Sining. There exists a shorter mule track by which that town may be reached in seven days. But he was tired of mules, and using carts travelled by the longer route. After crossing the iron bridge over the Yellow River he followed up the fertile valley of that river for 11 miles. At this time of year it was as bare and desolate as the rest of the country. Except for some fruit orchards there was not a tree to be seen, and the hills which rose to 200 or 300 feet above the plain were quite bare. Even villages were few. At 11 miles the road leads up a narrow desolate valley and is very sandy. At 24 miles is Hsiao-lao-ch'ih, a town of 70 families. A number of Mohammedans were passed on this march, and Pereira notes how strange it was in a country where prayer is little used to see two Mohammedans get out of