

through the suburbs and the eastern gate Pereira arrived at the house of Père Schram of the Belgian Mission.

The city of Sining has a population of about 40,000, and Pereira computed its elevation at 7140 feet, though various other travellers have put it between 6978 feet and 7500 feet. The district of Sining was not brought under Chinese rule till about 1720 or 1730. Since then all the troubles in Kansu have been caused by religious antipathies. The rivalry between old and new sects of Mohammedans has been seized on by the Chinese for their own ends, but this has had the opposite effect of uniting the Mohammedans against them. At the time of Pereira's visit the new sect, of which Ma Ch'i was the leader, was in the ascendant. After the rebellion of the Mohammedans in 1895, when they attacked and failed to take Sining, the east suburb where they lived was totally destroyed. It was rebuilt entirely by Ma Ch'i, beginning in 1918, and by 1922 was once more a busy centre with a fine new mosque.

Ma Ch'i was originally a small military officer. He was pushed on by Ma Fu-hsiang, and when strong enough to act on his own quarrelled with the then head of the Kansu Mohammedans, who favoured the old sect while Ma Ch'i favoured the new sect. The difference between the two was that the old put their faith in the Koran whilst the new thought that book was not of much value and put their faith in later traditions. But of this new sect itself there are several varieties, a small one at T'aochow admitting a mixture of Christianity and Buddhism. The influence of Ma An