



*A ruin south of Qarashahr.*

in a litter), through the windows and door of which, opening in front, the view is limited. He does not speak the language of the people and, indeed, does not come in contact with anyone but his thoroughly depraved circle of begs, interpreters, servants and helpers. The only society he has is that of his wife or wives and occasionally a mandarin on a tour of inspection or passing through, as closely confined and guarded as himself, pays him a visit. And so it goes on, year after year. Never any leave or a pleasure trip or a visit to his native place. Money is collected in every conceivable way and paid out without securing much satisfaction or change. Besides collecting illegal taxes, most of the mandarins engage in business in the towns they govern. Either a mandarin is behind a moneylender's business or a pawnbroker's, or he owns caravansarais or else makes money by monopolising the sale of some kind of goods. The Dzian Dziun at Ili, for instance, holds the monopoly for the sale of tea. Even the Dzian Dziun Tchan did not scorn this source of income, when he resided here. The expenses are heavy. A large yamen must be maintained, inspectors must be kept in a good humour, superiors must have their palms well greased, new posts must be purchased and so forth. Above all, the man must be gifted with a good head for business, to make his large income and expenditure balance. The »ta je«, a kind of major domo, seems to be the trusted confidante, who pulls all the strings. Negotiations with the mandarin are carried on through him. He has great influence and his income is proportionately large (independently of his ridiculously small salary). Sometimes he represents a company of Chinese capitalists, who have for years subscribed the sums the mandarin required for his prolonged studies and exams and in this capacity it is his duty to manage the funds entrusted to him as a business concern owned by his principals.

The old man had a curious manner of talking with long pauses between his words. I was told that very cautious Chinamen do this, so that no unconsidered word should cross their lips.