

Although the storm had abated slightly, it still continued. The air was so cold that *July 23rd.* I started riding in my raincoat, but had to don a thick coat later. For 20 minutes we rode *Chi-chi-* through the village and its fields. When the latter came to an end, a gravel plain began *tsao-tzu* on the right changing into a row of long raised ridges, behind which mountains covered *(Youdanza* with snow showed up indistinctly. Grass still grew on the left of the road. Two miles *in Sart).* further on we found ourselves in country enclosed by hillocks on which small creeping plants grew. After riding 5—5 1/2 miles, we noticed a long fen on the left, not far from the road, with such large deposits of salt along the shores that we were inclined to think it was covered with ice and snow. The road which goes NW had drawn much closer to the heights on the right. 8 miles from Davantchin we again had grass on either side for a mile or two, after which the ground was again covered with gravel. About 2/3 of a mile beyond we passed the ruins of an abandoned farm. A little further on the road nearly touched the hill on the right, but this receded again and described a curve. About 12 miles from Davantchin, after passing the ruins of abandoned dwellings on the left, we reached the T'ou-tun-tzu sarai on the right of the road. Water was obtained from a small spring. There is no cultivated land. Behind the sarai we came to a spur of the hills, which gradually receded and finally disappeared. The ruins of a small tower stand on the crest. The fen, known to the local people as »the salt lake», comes to an end hereabouts. About 2—3 miles from the sarai another, slightly wider fen begins rather further from the road. 2/3 of a mile from this place the road crosses a strip of loose earth, 1 1/2—2 miles in width. The fen ends about 6 miles from the sarai. 10 1/2 miles from the sarai we passed a large kurgan of gravel on the left about 17 feet in diameter at its base. On the W of it there are 13 smaller ones placed fairly regularly in a row; in the S two larger ones and 2 or 3 on the other side of the road, in the N. On the E of the kurgan there are two blocks of stone, slightly above the height of a man and scarcely 1/2 m wide, without any inscription. The sides facing the kurgan are blackened as though by fire. 30° from this spot a third fen begins at a greater distance from the road, also with salt deposits. The Tsai-opu sarai lies 12 miles from T'ou-tun-tzu. It consists of 13 houses inhabited by Dungans, who started tilling the land here 5 years ago. A military post (tchaza) of 3 men is lodged in a small impanj. Wheat yields a 4—5 fold crop. There are said to be copper mines in the neighbouring mountains. A mile or more from there we rode past a thin clump of trees on the left. On three occasions we passed ruins of abandoned houses on the left, 10, 11 and 12 miles from Tsai-opu. Beyond the last of them grass began again. The dusk was succeeded by darkness, the moon being hidden by clouds. About 14 1/2 miles from Tsai-opu we passed ruined houses on either side of the road, this time more numerous and with thicker walls than before. The ground now became broken, with large undulations. On the left we caught glimpses of water now and then in the darkness. After riding for 5 hours and 15 minutes we at last reached the Chi-chi-tsao-tzu sarai. We had covered about 44 miles, but felt sure of getting to Urumchi early the following day and securing quarters etc. Chi-chi-tsao-tzu, which is probably the same station that is called Jan shi dian on the 40 verst map, consists of 4 houses inhabited by Dungans. Wheat and graminaceous plants are grown. Wheat yields a 6—7 fold crop. A small stream coming from a spring flows