

surrounded by trees. It is built of stone and rather larger than Shiuza, but no more comfortable. Meat, and reeds instead of hay, are obtainable. The weary horses pounced greedily on this unappetising food.

The journey to-day was incomparably better than yesterday, especially in the upper part of the Hsiu-tzu gorge. The first 2 or 3 miles were very rocky and in two places in the Pai-yang-ho valley the road runs along a narrow mountain cornice; otherwise, though undeniably stony, especially where you cross the bed of the river, it is quite passable. The cornices can be avoided by a *détour* along the river. There is water, fuel, a little grass and reeds and good camping places in the Pai-yang-ho valley. Quite apart from the cornices I have mentioned, the road cannot be called broad. You follow a track, but the surrounding ground is wide enough, only the worst stones having to be removed. Up the Pai-yang-ho gorge a pass is reached, by which it is said Tyenza käi can be reached from Yaghan Terek (Pai-yang-ho) in a day. My guide assured me that it had been decided to open it to traffic by next summer, after a few obstacles had been removed.

*September 22nd.*

On the right bank of the river, a few miles above the sarai, there is a small village of 4 houses named Kona shahr after a small ruin, round which the houses are grouped. The base of a rectangular wall,  $79 \times 62$  paces, built on the edge of the slope of the bank, which is fairly steep here, dominates the valley of the river towards the north. There are no baked bricks, but the walls are supported on the side facing the river by greatly decayed poles or very small logs. It appears to be very old. A homestead was established among the ruins. Within the ruins all traces of old buildings had disappeared, nor could we see any human bones or the usual fragments of clay vessels. Across a ravine-like furrow cut by the water alongside the ruin, there is a raised piece of ground, slightly larger than the ruin. It looked as if it had served as the foundations of some building. Nothing was known about it in the village. The inhabitants had lived there for several years and were only able to tell me that the ruin was in existence before the Dungan revolt. The local people grow barley, peas and wheat. The land yields an 8 fold crop. — Westerly burans are common in the winter and also occur in summer. There is snow from November to April to a depth of 0.3 metres.

In the afternoon we rode about 4 miles down the river to another sarai Hsia Pai-yang-ho, where we spent the night. The mountains on either side of the river drew closer and closer together. The narrowest part was reached in about a mile and half. The bed of the river was not more than 100 fathoms wide here, but soon the mountains on the right retreated and the bed widened again, though only slightly. The belt of trees that ran along the river from the sarai, grew thinner and gave way to a few isolated trees. On the left the slope of the bank divided and made room for a dry, broad water-channel, and a mile or two further on we reached our camping place, a stone hovel with a single room occupied by the kitchen — Pai-yang-ho. There are westerly burans 5—6 times in the spring, rarely at other seasons. 45 houses. Peas, barley and wheat are grown. A 4—5 fold yield. Frost is common. — In Hsia Pai-yang-ho: snow from December to March, 0.15 m in depth. 4 burans mostly from the south 5—6 times in the spring.